

BYGONE DAYS: Geelong - 100 years ago

Week 32: August 7th to August 13th, 1923

LIFE ON MARS was the headline in the Geelong Advertiser on August 10th. It had reproduced a *United Service Special Cable* article from London. The article reported that British astronomer, P.M. Ryves, after watching Mars for 12 months from Teneriffe (An Island in the North Atlantic Ocean.)

The professor:

"...concludes from his observations that there is life on the planet vegetable life is almost certain and animal life possible."

The professor notices changes of colour on the planets surface and observed seasonal changes with possibly snow at the poles in the Martian winter; therefore it has water and air. It also has lakes and canals.

"Ryves declares that Mars has air, water, warmth and vegetation which are necessary for the support of intelligent life"

Perhaps NASA is looking in the wrong places!

Golf was dominant in the news as the Geelong Golf Club Championships at Bell Park got underway on August 8th. It was the twenty-sixth annual open meeting and about 600 entries were received. Recent rain might have turned away some local competitors as the Geelong course had been sodden in the week prior to the start. Numbers were down a little on previous years. The wet greens prompted a new rule for the contest *"A ball embedded in a putting green shall be lifted and placed not nearer the hole without penalty."*

The Geelong Golf Club's green s were an issue before the contest began. On the days prior...

"Members of the Geelong Golf Club have been caused much expense and trouble owing to boys sliding on the greens. In places much damage has been done in spite of the watchfulness of the caretaker who has been out at all times to catch culprits but without success. The lads take a run and throwing out their arms slide in some cases the full width of the greens which cannot be brought back with a nice green sward until after the spring, after they have been resown."

Greens weren't the only problem.

Trouble is also caused to players who hit balls into the gullies. The youngsters who hide there, especially when ladies are on the links, pick up the balls and make off with them."

A sting operation was conducted by Sergeant O'Donnell who caught some of the boys and took their names and statements. It appears the boys sold the balls to parents for 3 pence and some were painted and sold to golfers for one shilling. The boys will be prosecuted, as will their parents who are 'receivers'.

Boys and parents were in the Geelong West Police Court over another issue with Golf at Queenscliff. Certain golfers, described as 'gentlemen' were taking boys away from school to act as caddies.

"The incident cropped up when a mother appeared to answer two charges of having failed to send her son to school the required number of days set down by the Education Act. The Chairman on the Bench, Mr Moodie, said:

"The education of lads is of far more importance than carrying around golf sticks. The education is provided for free and it should be taken advantage of by the young and their parents should see that they do so."

The mother was fined two shillings for each of the three offences.

High house rents appear to be a constant issue, like today and the Geelong Advertiser Editorial on August 8th, 1923 explained some of its effects and causes at that time.

"The question of house rents we have always with us. It affects, in some way or another, almost every head of a household. Legislators debate it, municipal councillors consider it, Trades Hall committees propound various schemes, but solutions remain unachieved."

Geelong's Legislative Council's Representative, Mr Richardson, was quoted in parliament as saying: "... it practically comes down to the cost of labour." He cited houses costing three times more than they did fifteen years ago, but the cost of materials had not risen by three times. However, a dissenting voice responded that it was the major reason.

Mr Richardson continued citing a bricklayer now lays 400 instead of 800 bricks a day and: "Rents will not come down until the workers do an honest day's work. I do not want wages cut down, but the go-slow policy is doing harm."

YES! We

FRAME

Photos. Pictures

ALL WORK DONE ON THE PREMISES.

LATEST SHEET MUSIC

POPULAR RECORDS

ALL MAKES GRAMOPHONES REPAIRED

AGENTS FOR EDISON DIA. DISC

BANJO MANDOLIN

STATES ART CO.

EDISON RE-CREATION

C. MOORABOOL ST. AND LT. MALOP ST.

EASY PAYMENTS ARRANGED

Trucks and Railway continued to do battle for business patronage in Geelong. Mr W Stott, a Jeweller, gave an example.

"On Wednesday morning Mr Stott purchased goods at one of the Melbourne warehouses, and, when asked how he preferred them sent, casually mentioned that he thought by motor would be best. No special request for haste was made. On arriving home in Geelong at six o'clock the same evening, he discovered to his surprise that the goods had arrived two hours before him...."

Mr Stott concluded:

"No wonder the railways are feeling the effects of motor competition!"

A "Bonza Boy", was how a father described his errand son in the Geelong West Police Court. Constable Shilds proceeded against Ronal Lucas on the charges of being drunk and disorderly and

using insulting words, to which Luces pleaded guilty. When called to an incident at Costa's Fish Shop that resulted in a broken window, Constable Shields took the drunken boy in charge. At the watchhouse the boy used insulting language.

Arriving later to bail out his son, the father used language that was even worse than that of his son and he was put in the same cell.

At the trial, in his defence the boy said he was; *"under the influence of drink."*

Sergeant Zimmer agreed stating:

"There is no doubt about that, your worship. I even had to go out late and quieten him in the cell, as he was disturbing my family and the neighbours by his disgraceful conduct.

Lewis' father claimed he was a 'bonza boy who gives his pay to his mother, but she gave him 10 shillings and he was drunk in the company of some men. He also apologised for using the 'shocking word' and would guarantee his boy, who just turned 17, would stop drinking.

"What! Only just 17 and in this position? It was a serious charge to have against one so young." Exclaimed Mr Moodie.

Sergeant Zimmer interrupted:

You did not look after him before, how can you do so now?

Zimmer said the 'bonza boy' had four prior convictions in the children's court – all for larceny.

The boy was find five shillings for drunkenness and twenty shillings for insulting words.

Poor supplies of gas would end with the arrival of coal from Maitland according to the Geelong Gas Company. A further shipment was expected in the following week. A ship was unloading at the Railway Pier.

Queenscliffe was about to receive a new Lifeboat. Member of the Legislative Assembly, Mr E Morley had been agitating for funds and they were eventually granted and that:

"...provision is to be made for the best boat possible to be had. Designs are being obtained and as soon as these are available the boat will be obtained. "

Electric Lights for Queenscliffe were also on their way.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING SCHEME FOR QUEENSCLIFFE

The Council of the Borough of Queenscliffe desires to intimate to all persons within the Borough that Tenders are now being called for by the Commission for the installation in dwellings within the Borough of the lighting scheme, and it suggests to those persons who have not yet booked their orders the propriety of doing so at once in order to avail themselves of the services of the contractor whilst on the spot, otherwise difficulty may arise in obtaining the service after he has left.

Residents! decide now to instal, and avail yourselves of the contractor's price

**G. ALEXANDER,
S. Town Clerk.**

Road funding was allocated by the Federal Government in the Geelong region and the proposal for a Fyansford Road Deviation was suggested by Member for the Legislative Assembly, Mr Brownbill.

"This suggestion, if acted upon, will help to relieve the unemployment problem as well as afford the country people better facilities for reaching Geelong."



Renovations to the Geelong Museum/Free Library were almost completed and preparations were being made for its re-opening.

"There will not be any new exhibitions of special note, but the re-arrangement that has taken place will show some of the curios to better advantage, notably the South Sea Islands exhibits collected by the late Rev. J. S. Royce."

Burglars in Geelong was the Headline to an article about the Richardson Exchange in Little Malaop Street being targeted by robbers. The Exchange Strong Room and safes were blown open, but the culprits received just 16 shillings for for bold and daring raid. It was believed the intruders were disturbed, before they could access some of the safes that contained significant funds.

Geelong's Davis Cup Representative was performing well in the United States where the competition was being conducted. A report from Chicago on August 11th conveyed the news that he and team-mate Anderson won their doubles match against a Japanese team.

"The Australians won the doubles in straight sets, 6-1, 6-2, 6-2. Anderson and Hawkes found gaps between their opponents, and drove puzzling returns which the Japanese were unable to hit.... In order to meet France in the next round Australia must win one of the remaining singles matches."

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.