

BYGONE DAYS: Geelong - 100 years ago

Week 42: October 16th to October 23rd, 1923

Geelong Show was a dominant was extremely successful. event in October of 1923.

"The officials of the Agricultural Society are congratulating themselves, and rightly so, on a most successful Show. Favoured by the weather, despite many misgivings, it has been declared on all sides to be one of the best ever held. The fact of record entries being secured is a fitting instance of the spirit that prevailed"

Geelong workers were given the Wednesday afternoon off to attend the Show. School children as well as public offices and banks, were given the day off too. Transport from Geelong Railway Station direct to the ground conveyed large numbers of the public. Drags, cabs and cars also played their part.

For those still in the city a 2pm, a parade promoted the event. There were many who benefited from the Show.

SEE THE NEW RECORD MOTOR
CROSSCUTTING SAW
AT THE
GEELONG SHOW
MADE IN AUSTRALIA.



FASTEST MOTOR SAW IN AUSTRALIA. BELT DRIVEN. RELIABLE
I.H.C. KEROSENE MOTOR.
THE ONLY MOTOR SAW FITTED WITH CIRCULAR SAW.
AGENTS FOR GEELONG DISTRICT:—
H. PILLOW & CO.,
UNION STREET, GEELONG.

"The railway goods department had an appreciable addition to its activities, with the arrival of the machinery exhibits for the Show. There were reapers, binders, tractors, winnowers, threshing machines, saw benches etc. in abundance."

Trotting events, a special School section and animal judging attracted people in their thousands.

People's Day on the Thursday also attracted large numbers. Friday's Geelong Advertiser told of the success.

"The crowd that patronised the Show yesterday showed its approval of the Society's objects. It began in small numbers after 9 a.m. and when the

programme commenced at 11 o'clock, despite the cloudy sky overhead, it was evident that the gate receipts of last year would be exceeded..."

Geelong's orphans also had the opportunity to attend.

"The Geelong Show was voted a great success by the 30 boys and 27 girls who were present from the opening day from the Geelong and Western District Protestant Orphanage. This is an annual treat for the children through the generosity of the show authorities in admitting them free."

Many children were enthralled by the size of 'Billy the Pig'.

Organisation for the funding of Australia's Olympic team for the 1924 Olympics in Paris was underway.

"The cost of sending these picked athletes is rather heavy, and Victoria's quota is £4,000. The Presbyterian Guild Harriers are making a special effort on Thursday evening next, when a very well-organised concert programme will be submitted by Miss Gwen Apted, assisted by Miss Ivy Potter and the mysterious Zelwa Brothers."

Lady friends of the Harriers were encouraged to provide sweets for sale.

Sport was high on Geelong's agenda with the Geelong second Eighteen team of the Geelong VFL Club winning the premiership. Playing against Richmond, Geelong's performance was outstanding. The team finished the game with only seventeen players on the field. Richmond were minor premiers in the competition and Geelong had played them previously in a semi final match. Richmond began well and had the advantage of a strong wind, but Geelong wore them down and dominated the remainder of the game.

East Geelong Golf Club received notification from the Lands Department that they had received a ten year's lease for Golf links on 40 acres of land next to the botanical reserve.

"The lease is to date from October 1st, and the club will be made responsible for rent totalling £50 per annum."



East Geelong Golf Club



and the course today

Tenders were being called to eliminate the box thorn bushes and to cut fairways.

"The club expect to be in a fortunate position in the near future of having one of the best courses round the Geelong District, as they have an energetic and hardworking band of officers."

Heavy rain in the area resulted in the Barwon being flooded again. Three quarters of the Belmont Common was flooded, but the level was receding, and river banks were becoming visible. At its peak, the Barwon Heads Road was flooded and trees were partially submerged. Lake Connearre was also carrying large volumes of water.

Tregedy occurred when a Belmont resident was proceeding towards Queen's Bridge. His horse stalled on the unfamiliar sight of the flood waters.

"Someone sought to speed the horse up with a few smart cuts and so electrified the animal that off it went at the gallop, and never stopped until it fell in a hole over which the flood waters were flowing. The horse was drowned; but the driver and two children who were in the jinker escaped."

Counterfeiter took the opportunity to pass fake florins (two shilling coins) to pay for their goods at the Yarra Street Fete and some local businesses.

"Warning is issued to the general public about accepting coins without close examination as it has come to light that numbers of counterfeit florins are being circulated in Geelong. ... The coins are said to be excellent representations and it is only by close examination that they can be detected."

Local state parliamentarians had been receiving requests not only to duplicate the railway line between Geelong and Melbourne, but also to have the journey electrified. Western District parliamentary members have provided their support for the proposal.

Yes! The Austin clock was in the news AGAIN!

"Quotations have been accepted for the intricate work of moving the mechanism of the Austin clock which has occupied a prominent place in Market Square, Geelong ,for the past 70 years. It has been decided to remove the clock to the basement of the City Hall until everything is in readiness for its re-erection on a prominent section of the new buildings."

Age was no excuse for a 70 years old man from Ballarat. Mr Davies received assistance from the Poor Box in the city Court.

"He came to Geelong, where he wandered round the streets and evidently had sundry drinks which soon diminished his ready cash. On the change of weather in the evening, he attended at the city watchhouse in Little Malop Street with the request that he should be given a bed for the night in one of the cells."

Sergeant O'Donnell suggested he should get a bed elsewhere, but Mr. Davies refused to leave, threatening to do 'something desperate'.

"He was advised not to do anything rash and urged to go away, but resolutely refused, and before the police could prevent him, he thrust his right fist through the thick glass panel in the door leading into the watchhouse keeper's office. The glass was shattered and Davies badly cut his wrist."

First aid was administered by two constables, and he was charged with vagrancy and willfully damaging Government property damage. His stay at the watchhouse bed presumably lasted more than one night!

Mechanizing the Post began when an electric stamping machine was installed at Geelong Post Office.

"It is capable of disposing of letters at the rate of 400 per minute, as against 100 a minute by the hand-operated machine, which was looked upon for years as a marvel, and the original style of stamping at the rate of 50 a minute."

Geelong Post Office processed between 12,000 and 13,000 letters per day on average in 1923. The new machine was the first to be installed anywhere outside Melbourne.

Not **all** new technology worked. An experimental wireless demonstration at the Guild Hall was unsuccessful.

"Music was heard from Melbourne on the headphones, but when the Magnavox (large speaker) was connected the magnification of the music also magnified the crashes due to atmospheric electricity."

The goal of filling the hall with music failed and members of the Wireless Club couldn't even pick up telephony due to the static in the atmosphere.

Problems occurred with telephony at the Geelong Railway Station too, but not because the technology failed. Railway commissioners installed a telephone in the parcels' office to speed up delivery, but complaints arose because the phone was not answered without long delays.

"Recently, such instances have occurred and when I question was put last night as to whether the instrument was answered, the reply came 'Oh yes we do sometimes'."

Delay was due to human negligence and not technology.

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.

East Geelong photographs by the author.

