

HILLSBOROUGH

The history of Hillsborough is most interesting, but unfortunately in 1973 we know little of its past. The town of Hillsborough was situated in the range of hills overlooking the township of Yackandandah and after its early settlement it was reached by roads that ran to Yackandandah and Stanley. The first settlers were J. Osborne and W. Barber. An alluvial rush occurred in 1856 and in 1865 the first quartz was discovered at the Homeward Bound Reef.

Prior to the discoverer of gold in the nearby area of Clear Creek and then at Hillsborough, the area was part of the Kinchington Station and the Kinchington family had used the land as a grazing area for cattle since the early 1850's.

In 1865 there were 124 miners at Clear Creek and 60 miners at Kinchington's Creek. Messrs. Brown and Archie Clingin discovered the first gold.

By June, 1866 a small settlement of houses of the miners was to be found around the Homeward Bound Reef, and the area became known locally as Hillsborough. The first survey was made in 1866 under the direction of Henry Moores, District Surveyor. Eight sections were laid out, but only two were sold at a land sale conducted at the Stanley Court House on 30th April, 1867.

Purchases of land at this sale were John Land, H. Breustedt, A. Ingram, F. Devlin, A. Clingin, A. Armstrong, W. Armstrong, A. Welshman, J. Magill, Clark, E. Kennedy, W. Barnett, T. Weldon, P. Murray and W. Ellis. There was also a reserve for a Presbyterian Church.

Hillsborough had five streets, namely Stanley, Downshire, Osborne, High and Omagh Streets. There are three possible sources how the name of Hillsborough came about. It could have been named because of its position, being in a hollow to the surrounding ranges of hills; or it may have been named after its namesake Hillsborough in Northern Ireland.

The street name of Downshire seems to suggest that the street was called after the Marquis of Downshire, whose secondary title was Earl of Hillsborough and family name of Hill.

Hillsborough was part of the Shire of Yackandandah and the Police Office at Yackandandah was responsible for keeping law and order in the Hillsborough district.

Hillsborough was six miles distant from Stanley and 10 miles from Yackandandah.

In December, 1866, the Yackandandah Crushing Co. established quartz crushing mill with a 25 h.p. engine at Clear Creek to crush quartz from the reefs at Clear Creek and Hillsborough. The area was principally a reef gold mining area.

Mr. Arthur Welshman built the Southern Cross Hotel at Hillsborough and the hotel was opened on Friday, 15th February, 1867, with a grand ball, which lasted to daylight of the following morning.

Mrs. Ellen Kennedy possibly conducted the first hotel at Hillsborough, but she ceased business and her hotel building became the Hillsborough State School. Two other hotels at Hillsborough were the "Hillsborough" and "Reefers Arms", and they are recorded as being in business in 1885.

Not much is known of the early business houses at Hillsborough. John and Mary Brown had a bakery in 1868 and they were still there in September, 1872. Joseph Cramp was a butcher in 1869, whilst another John Brown was a butcher in 1876. In latter times there were no shops at Hillsborough and supplies of groceries, meat and bread were delivered to the local population from the stores at Stanley. Muters had a bread round at Hillsborough and Mr. Manton conducted a meat delivery service from Stanley.

In 1867 several coach lines ran to Hillsborough from Beechworth via Stanley, including Messrs, Crawford & Co. coaches.

In 1870 the coaches running to Beechworth via Stanley left the Reefers Arms, Hillsborough at 7.15 a.m. and 3.15 p.m. daily and returned from Beechworth at 1 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. The fare between Beechworth and Stanley each way was 1/6, a return ticket was 2/6, whilst the fare each way between Stanley and Hillsborough was 2/-. In 1885 the coach ran daily between Hillsborough via Stanley to Beechworth, the fare then 3/6.

A non-official Post Office was opened at Hillsborough on 1st. January, 1867, under the management of Mr. J. Brown. Mail was conveyed to and from Beechworth and Hillsborough by way of Stanley six days a week.

During 1878 Mr. Frank Vale took over the Management of the Post Office. In 1880 Miss A. McGowan became Postmistress and was still there in 1883. A mail return for 1884 shows that a total of 2544 letters were handled at the Hillsborough Post Office. No further information concerning the Post Office is available until 1914 when Mrs. James Folster was Postmistress. A. J. Ralph held the position in June, 1914, and the office was officially closed on 10th

November, 1916. The population census of 1881 recorded 131 people resident at Hillsborough.

The Rev. J. Henry May of Yackandandah was instrumental in establishing the Hillsborough School. An application for a vested Common School at Hillsborough was first made by John Brown on 20th March, 1867. District Inspector Geary visited on 3rd. August, 1867, and recommended that aid be granted. This was done by a Board Order of 3rd. October, 1867.

The local committee (after approval had been granted by the Board of Education), bought from Ellen Kennedy, a building previously a hotel, for pds110.

It was constructed partly of weatherboards and partly of vertical slabs and had a roof of shingles and a 53 feet 6 inches long front verandah. There were five rooms - the schoolroom 30 feet by 20 feet - and four attached dwelling rooms. The school site was bought for about pds12.

Approximately half the cost of the school was raised by local subscription. School No. 889 Hillsborough, opened on 1st. March, 1868, the headmaster being John Besley, assisted by Mr. Frank Vale.

In 1891 District Inspector Rix advised against the erection of a new school building. The school was closed on 31st. December, 1897. Some enrolment figures were 1870 69, 1872 49, 1873 58, 1879 66, 1882 61, 1839 37, 1891 19.

In 1867 the Anglican Minister at Yackandandah, Father J. Henry May, held divine service in the large room of the Southern Cross Hotel at Hillsborough, and he informed the congregation that he would come monthly to conduct a service.

On Saturday, 3rd. December, 1870, a weatherboard building used for social functions and church services at Hillsborough was destroyed by fire.

At Hillsborough the ministers of the Methodist, Anglican and Presbyterian faiths came regularly to hold services. A Sunday School class for the children was also established.

Records of the Holy Trinity Parish, Yackandandah indicate that the minister visited Hillsborough approximately every three months to conduct services for the years 1883 to 1899. For the period 6th December, 1867 until 28th November, 1897, 52 Anglican baptisms are recorded for Hillsborough.

It is thought the three faiths worshipped jointly in one church. The Catholic priest of the Beechworth Parish visited the Hillsborough area during the course of his pastoral duties.

In 1881 Mr. Wilberforce established a new battery for crushing of quartz mined in the Hillsborough district. One spokesman of Hillsborough in 1881 said "It is an intolerable nuisance - cattle, pigs and geese are allowed to wander the public street to invade and devastate private property."

The Hillsborough residents were fond of the sport of horse racing, and a racecourse was established on the Stanley side of the township. As well the young lads of the district enjoyed the game of cricket, Hillsborough fielding a team in the local competition.

On 13th February, 1897, the local team from Hillsborough played a team from Stanley at the Hillsborough ground. Stanley won the match. Players for Hillsborough in this match were J. Trezise, J. Wilberforce, Allen A. Stone, S. Jeffries, G. Clingin, H. Clingin, R. Ralph, G. Crawford, J. Stone, H. Dunstan. Members of the Stanley team were G. Wilberforce, C. Harridge, J. Lang, Chas Harridge, C. Rudolph, J. McGuinness, J. Finnie, J. Bigelow, J. McGuinness, Gleeson and H. Harridge.

In March, 1891, the Hillsborough State School Picnic was held with visitors present from Stanley and Yackandandah. The programme included races for the young folk, the main race being the Hillsborough Handicap, which was won by John Priesly and a dance in the school in the evening concluded a happy day.

By 1897 many of the miners in the Hillsborough area were worked out and the population began to shift away until by 1917 Mr. Alf and Bill Crawford were the last residents. Each later married and came to live at Stanley. Many of the early pioneers of Hillsborough are buried in the Stanley and Yackandandah cemeteries,

Some of the miners and mining reefs found in the Hillsborough and Clear Creek areas were the Homeward Bound, Bon Accord, Taff Reef, the Birthday Vein, the Bismark, Haphazard, Eureka Reef, Caladonian, Champion Reef, Wombat Reef, Pioneer Reef, Perseverence Reef, Welcome Reef.

Families who lived at Hillsborough included the names of Brown, Rogers, Smart, Daley, Wilberforce, Devlin, Johnston, Michell, Morris, Magill, Dunn Pillar, Glass, Michaelis, Adams, Vale, Paull, Ellis, Welshman, Stone, Dickey, Bigelow, Osborne, Barber, McGowan, Folster, Ralph, Clingin, Crawford, Waterson, McKibbon, Weldon, Trezise, Shugg, Knight Fulton, Pape, Peach, Dolan, Cramp, Doyle, Humphries, Oddy, Mason, Roberts, Moyle, Abbots, Chugger, Kennedy, Barnett, Murray, Grealy, Olsen, Blewitt, Stevens, Jardine, Nunn, McCartin, Olinier, Braidwood.