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Editorial

Throbbing across the water tonight at Port Arthur are the motors of French and Australian frigates here as part of the Bicentenary. With First Fleet copies, and fireworks displays, the more obvious signs of 200 years of self-conscious cockiness. "Aussie" is repeated to a boring and trivializing degree. (Shouldn't "Aussie" be illegal in advertising? !)

The roots we've sown are spread much deeper and finer than that – roots that support us, but sometimes inhibit us too. Family networks that cradle us, yet threaten anyone daring to be different, which is why people move away – but always with an urge to return. Could it be that we've not quite become honest with ourselves yet? Perhaps the next step, which includes admitting that some ancestors were illegitimate, unmarried, convicts, illiterate, black, ambitious, as well as loving, money hungry, narrow-minded, generous, successful and neighbourly.

We used to sing honest songs about ourselves – explain ourselves to ourselves (like John Williamson not Paul Hogan). Shouldn't truck drivers, house wives and shop keepers write poetry about work, and love, about lovers, make sculptures and design houses, and not just talk about the latest in tractors or trucks, or fashions, or fads, like the Bi-Centennial?

If we're afraid to dig deeper, not just mock, but hug thy neighbour as thyself, after 1988 – if only money moves us and loyalty to our own clan stops us growing, if minds are closed, except for the next craze, then 1988 was just another year.

Some people will run away from the top of the hill once they've looked over. To simplify the past (the good old days) when 3 R's were king, is to tell lies and make the present comfortable and the past a mirage.

The Articles:-

1888 saw the start of education at Nubeena, and Kath Noye follows the school through 100 years of development. (We can only wonder at the relevance of a very British curriculum). The attraction of Eaglehawk Neck for visitors preceded the closing of the prison; the Nuroos offered hospitality to the genteel visitor earlier this century.

The Clarks and the Wellards are two families both connected with the Peninsula since the 1880's and their experiences make interesting, if contrasting, reading.

Reliance by the Peninsula on ferries, when time was counted in days and not micro-seconds, is evoked by the letter supplied by Alison Shoobridge.

Ravensbourne, Koonya, is a unique house, constructed in the mid-1880s by Alexander North, architect. Best known for his buildings in Northern Tasmania, North was a pioneer in the use of concrete.

Peter MacFie
Editor

Contents

5	A History of Nubeena State School	by Kath Noye
16	The Rare Retreat of Alexander North	by Peter MacFie
20	Sale Day	by Alison Shoobridge
22	Early Settler – Moses John Clark	by Donald Clark
25	The First Day at School	by Owen Reid
27	Eaglehawk Neck – Prison or Pleasure	by Peter MacFie
30	George How Wellard – Peninsula Pioneer	by Ann McGinniss
35	Letters from <i>Lufra</i>	by Peter MacFie
37	The Children of Axe and Billy Can	by Allen L. Briggs
41	An Unreliable Ferry	by Shoobridge, Alison
43	Nuroos of Lufra	by Mrs. U. Nuroo

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Index

Bicentenary (Australia).....	1	Noye, Kath.....	1, 2
Briggs, Allen L.	2	Nubeena school.....	1
Clark family	1	Nubeena State School.....	2
Clark, Donald.....	2	Nuroo family	1, 2
Clark, Moses John	2	Nuroo, Mrs. U.	2
Eaglehawk Neck.....	1, 2	<i>Ravensbourne</i>	2
Koonya.....	2	Reid, Owen	2
<i>Lufra</i>	2	Shoobridge, Alison	1, 2
MacFie, Peter.....	2	Wellard family.....	1
McGinniss, Ann.....	2	Wellard, George How	2
North, Alexander	2		