

IDLE CHATTER Mark II

Newsletter No: 9

Thursday 27th September 2012

This newsletter is an initiative of the Quandialla Centenary Committee

Sponsored by Delta Agribusiness

I have been lucky enough to have an interested reader write a few lines (tongue in cheek comment) about Mr Jack Mitchell. This item gives us all an idea of who Jack was. I'm sorry to say I had to edit slightly so it would fit. P.S. I must tell you this reader was only a young man at the time so either he has a marvellous memory or he has done some homework. Whichever, I thank you.

JOHN LIONEL MITCHELL 1901 -1968

Jack Mitchell emigrated to Australia after WW II, landing in Melbourne late 1949-50. Although he had a son not a lot is known of his early life. He came to Quandi as a buyer of wool, skins and hides – setting up a little shop opposite Charlie Broben's shop (today this is the empty building next to the PO driveway). His shop was back from the footpath, about where the cedar tree is today behind the green fence. The business was expanded by becoming an agent for Winchombe Carson and dealing in livestock supplies and farming materials. It is thought that it was about this time that Idle Chatter started on a weekly basis.

The shop was not very big – only Jack knew where everything was. There was a very narrow aisle that led from the door to the office at the rear of the shop and the rest of the floor was covered in piles of merchandise, the heavier the item the closer to the door. The office was segregated piles of paper surrounding an old Remington typewriter with stacks of "Agricultural Gazettes" and product brochures along the wall.

Outside, on the vacant lot towards the bank, was all the fencing gear, discs, points etc. If anyone urgently needed something on a weekend they helped themselves and reported to Jack later. Jack always said that all

pickups were reported and paid for – he took great pride in the integrity of the community.

The most historically noted feature of Jack's was the dedicated "Seat of Knowledge". Originally it was just a plank across two five-gallon drums with the wall as a backrest. Here Jack engaged everyone and anyone on any subject and always had a solution to every problem. Many satirical observations and assessments were made to a bevy of locals notably Dr Blamey, Ken McLean, Bill Bailey, Vic Harris, Jack Anderson, Jim Pollard, Tony McNamara, Ned Kelly, Stuart Hope, Jack Hanstock and Reg Penfold to name a few. The Seat of Knowledge (mark II) was a park bench painted blue and was the scene of many more debates.

Jack's residence was the Bland Hotel. I had heard that Mrs Quine used to always lament at the condition of the room and seldom could she vacuum the floor because she could not find it – namely because of Jack's filing system.

The publication of the Idle Chatter was a portion of Jack's community input and was all good fun. His unique approach to social journalism – country style was readily accepted as a social commentary, as no-one knew just what Jack would come up with. If only he could now see its historical value as a curiosity he would be dumbfounded.

Jack took his community participation to heart and made sure he involved himself in whatever was going on. Whether it be golf (he maintained the 7th green – known as Mitchell's hole) or bowls, he could be counted on. He was Secretary of the local bushfire brigade and actively participated in the show society as well as giving support to the local junior farmers.

Unfortunately Jack passed away in May 1968 and an imported local legend was lost to all

Young Chap.

THE FUTURE – CENTENARY NEWS

Programme for History Weekend Sat /Sun 6th & 7th October
See insert.

NOW

I can't complain about not having any news this week, it's either a feast or a famine. Thank you for letting me know what is happening.

CONGRATULATIONS to Bradley Harris (Andrew & Kim's eldest son) and Natalie Barnes who will be getting married on Saturday in Young. Quandi wishes you both the very best for a very happy future together.

ALSO - Jane Sykes a former resident of the Bland will be getting married. The little bird who told me didn't know who to, or where this was going to happen, but we wish Jane the best of luck on her big day.

BIRTHDAY WISHES: It has been brought to my attention that a lovely lady who lives on the Driftway Rd will be turning 70 before our next newsletter goes out. So, without further ado "Happy Birthday to You" on your special day from all your friends in Quandi and that very good friend who let the cat out of the bag.

WELL DONE: Zoe Delphine was a major prize winner in the Art Section of this year's Temora Show which was held last Saturday.

Congratulations Zoe.

RICHMOND MERINO RAM SALE: The Ryan Family will be having their Annual on Property Ram Sale on Tues Oct 2nd commencing at 1.30pm. 80 rams will be offered including Poll's. For further info call 63471166.

CONGRATULATIONS to our local councillor John Niven who has been elected Deputy Mayor of the Weddin Shire. We wish the new councillors all the best in their first tour of duty. Hopefully with the mix of new and can I say old councillors it will be a breath of fresh air for our shire. I know they won't forget but I will remind them all that the villages need recognition too. (Hand up those councillors who have been to Quandialla)

A SPECIAL DAY on Sunday 30th September: Father Tony Hennessy who went to school in Quandialla when his father was the Station Master at Bribbaree will be travelling back to Quandialla to offer Mass on his 25th Jubilee of Priesthood. What a wonderful occasion this will be.

BURNING OFF: The Quandialla Fire Brigade would like to let all the residents of the village know they will be doing hazard reduction burning around the town over the next few weeks, weather permitting.

DELTA AGRIBUSINESS QUANDIALLA – for all your farm supplies

BLAST FROM THE PAST

 Extracts from IDLE CHATTER

The following extract is a response from last weeks' lazy letter.

NO: 11 **RETRIBUTION** **THURS JULY 5TH 1956**

If you get too silly and sarcastic, there is always someone on hand to slap you down. Remember the letter which I wrote for lazy letter writers last week? I thought it was quite good until the local wits started to send them back to me. They didn't play fair, because a lot of words were inserted which I never even thought of. So I start this week's sheet broken in spirit and determined never again to be sarcastic.

(I assure you Mr Mitchell did not remain broken in spirit for long as the next piece shows)

NO: 11 **THURS JULY 5TH 1956**

So I spelt straitjacket wrongly last week. I am heartbroken. There is a reader of IC who derives no pleasure from my humble little effort unless he can gloatingly find an error. This purist of the English language, this---this (cripes I get that wild I can't find words to express myself) this thing which hangs over my head like a sword of Damocles is wearing me down. I challenge him to write a full sheet and then let me get at him, because the only example of his spelling which I have seen is definitely bad, Any person who persists in spelling credit as d-e-b-i-t is weak. That's torn it, I'll be crawling again next week. Sorry Mr McLean, Sir.

This same day in 1956

Extract from IDLE CHATTER NO. 23 **THURS. SEPT 23RD 1956**

THE RAFFLE QUEEN. *There are very few functions held in this town that do not benefit by the efforts of a certain little lady. If I call her the Raffle Queen it is purely in a complimentary manner. Most of us, in town at least, know and appreciate the time and effort she spends on her activities for various charitable bodies. Miss Harris we salute you, even if you do help to keep us poor. (My generation knew Miss Harris as "Liddy" and she was still selling raffle tickets in the 1970's, she was a wonderful lady and an icon of our community)*

Cheers Everyone **Sue Priestley**