

GIPPSLAND



GIPPSLAND IS A geographically complex region. Dominated by the Great Divide, it contains some of Victoria's most rugged and picturesque country. Scattered alpine peaks give way to a system of high plains and mountain ranges that fall quickly to the low, level plains of east and central Gippsland. The plains are subject to heavy flooding.

Gippsland's geography dominated the region's early history. It was Victoria's most inaccessible region, cut off to the north and west by mountains and dense rainforests. Even after the railway reached the region in the 1880s, much of it remained relatively isolated until the early twentieth century. In Gippsland's European history, the sea therefore assumed a significance unknown elsewhere in the southern states.

The first European contact with the region came at the start of the nineteenth century. Whalers and sealers established temporary bases along the coasts, particularly in the east. To thwart any plans the French might have had for claiming the south coast, a temporary military garrison was established near **Corinella** in 1826. The whalers, sealers and soldiers showed little interest in the hinterland, partly because the government had forbidden settlement beyond the Nineteen Counties of New South Wales, partly because their occupations had little to do with the hinterland, and partly because of the Aborigines. Gippsland's tribes had a warlike reputation. Yet it was inevitable that the squatting boom of the 1830s would push the Europeans into the region on a more permanent basis.

Squatters landing at **Melbourne** in the mid-1830s quickly abandoned attempts to move east. Forests and swamps presented a natural barrier and it was easier to move north or west. The squatters who initially occupied Gippsland came instead from the north and then from the sea. Some of the squatters from the Monaro (see Cooma) had established runs in the **Omeo** district in 1835. Three years later, two runs were established near Buchan. Paul Strzelecki explored the region in 1840, naming it after the governor of NSW George Gipps. But it was the Scot Angus McMillan who opened up the region for the Europeans. He explored the eastern section of the region in 1839 and, in 1841, pioneered a path from the Omeo district to **Port Albert**. He later pioneered others, but this was the most significant, for it opened a way for squatters to overland stock from the Monaro and, with Port Albert, opened up a route from the sea. Gippsland's squatters subsequently came from two geographical sources, although in the early years the men from the Monaro dominated. Gippsland's squatters also included in their number a high proportion of Scots. Port Albert became Gippsland's major port during the 1840s and 1850s. Several other, smaller ports dotted the coastline to allow squatters to unload stock and provisions.

Yet settlement of the region by squatters was relatively slow. Runs were not taken up in any great number until the 1840s. Like the northern Wimmera and the Mallee, Gippsland was seen by the squatters as marginal country. As late as the mid-1850s, the pattern of squatting occupation in the region was patchy, with large areas left untouched because of the inhospitable nature of the terrain and vegetation and a climate unsuitable for sheep.

Aboriginal resistance to the Europeans was fierce, particularly in eastern Gippsland, where runs were abandoned and cattle theft became a major problem. Europeans did not meet fiercer resistance until they reached northern Queensland and the Kimberleys. The squatters' reactions were predictably harsh, and McMillan became one of the major forces behind the punitive expeditions of the 1850s. An Aboriginal reserve was established at Lake

Tyers in 1863 and title for the land was finally granted in 1971. The history of the Lake Tyers settlement was a bitter one.

Gold was discovered at **Omeo** in 1852, but did not spark a major rush. The field was poor and with the onset of winter, it was abandoned. Similar finds were made across the region, but Gippsland did not become a major gold region until the 1860s. The best discoveries were made by government parties sent out specifically to find gold to stem the flow of population from Victoria to New South Wales and New Zealand. Alluvial deposits were found across the region's mountain country, particularly in the Tambo, Wonnangatta and Jericho river systems, but they were rarely extensive and were not easy to mine. They were difficult to reach because of the terrain and were frequently abandoned during the winter months. Attention soon shifted to reef mining and the region proved to be very rich. **Walhalla** best illustrates Gippsland's gold mining history. Located in a narrow valley with steep, mountainous sides, alluvial deposits discovered during the 1860s were quickly worked out. Reef mining, however, proved highly profitable and Walhalla's mines operated until 1915. Today, Walhalla is a major tourist attraction. Others, such as the evocatively named Mormon Town, have vanished from the landscape.

Closer settlement under the guidance of various land acts from 1860 through to the twentieth century met with only limited success. The legislation failed to produce the expected results because, as elsewhere, squatters evaded its requirements. But Gippsland's selectors faced two additional problems, both related to the environment. The first was isolation. Farmers relied heavily on local markets and, cut off from the metropolitan market in **Melbourne**, tended to follow the squatters' lead in trading with New South Wales, Tasmania and even New Zealand which were more accessible through sea links. The other problem was the existence of widespread forests, particularly rainforests. Their nature was misunderstood; it was believed that they were a sign of fertile soil, and they were cleared. The soils, however, were heavily leached and often infertile. With the natural vegetation cleared, floods increased in frequency and destructive power. The region was also poorly suited to the cultivation of most commercial cereal crops. Farms failed and, in spite of the cultivation of some specialist crops like sugar beet (see Maffra), Gippsland's farmers came to rely mainly on pastoral activities. It was not until the introduction of dairying, improvements in dairying technology and the opening up of international markets in the twentieth century that the small farm became economically viable. Most of the soldier settlement farms established after the world wars near centres such as **Maffra** were dairy farms.

Demands for a rail link with **Melbourne** were both early and vociferous. A general belief that the government in Melbourne was not interested in Gippsland fostered a secessionist movement during the 1860s and 1870s. The railway to **Sale** was built in the late 1870s and was pushed further east during the 1880s and 1890s. Until then, it was the coast that provided Gippsland's trade and communication links. Several small ports sprang up along the coastline and coastal trade was economically significant. Some of the ports, such as **Port Albert**, declined once the railway was pushed through. Others such as **Sale** survived, depending on a vigorous steamer trade on the Gippsland Lakes. The last steamer left for Melbourne in 1920. Gippsland's sea orientation was also reflected in the early development of its fishing trade which still continues today, though in some crisis.

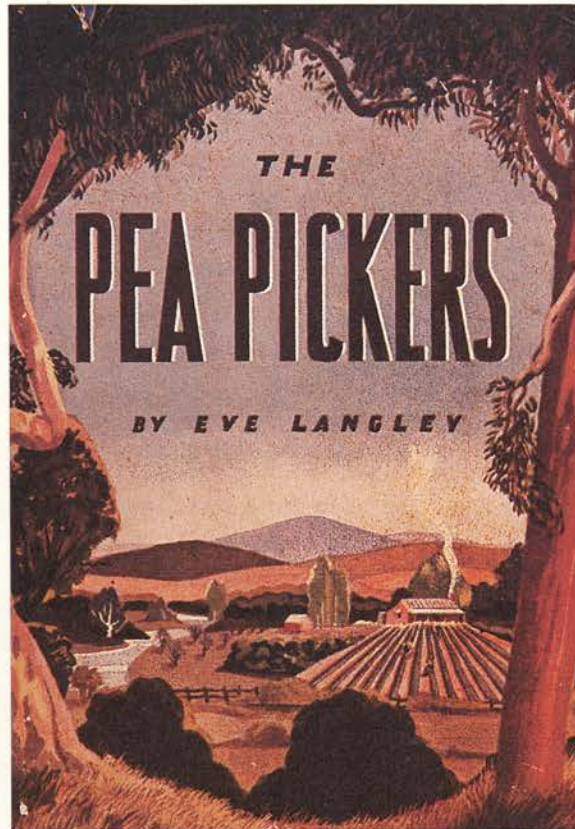
Substantial economic growth came to the region with coalmining. Deposits of both black and brown coal had been noted early in the nineteenth century. Coalmining began in the **Korumburra** district in the late nineteenth century, but was not in earnest until the twentieth century. A black coalmine was opened at **Wonthaggi** in 1909 by the state government and was finally closed in 1968. Of greater significance, however, was the mining of brown coal in the Latrobe Valley.

Open-cut mining was first used in Australia at **Morwell** in 1916 for the manufacture of briquettes. The major impetus for mining brown coal, however, came in the 1920s when the state government, on advice from John Monash, opted for the thermal generation of

electricity for Victoria, using the Latrobe Valley's brown coal resources. The Latrobe Valley remains the state's major source of electricity. Towns established or greatly expanded during this period included **Moe**, **Traralgon** and **Yallourn**. Yallourn was abandoned during the 1970s–80s to allow the coal underneath it to be mined. Ironically the Latrobe Valley's coal was chosen in preference to the hydro-electric potential of the Kiewa River valley. It was Gippsland's Snowy River that was diverted inland as part of the massive **Snowy Mountains** hydro-electric scheme in the postwar years.

Gippsland has made one other significant contribution to the energy resources of Victoria and Australia. Searches for oil and gas were made in Bass Strait close to the Gippsland coast. Both were found on the Gippsland Shelf in 1964 by Esso–BHP and have been systematically exploited since, giving the East Gippsland economy a substantial boost.

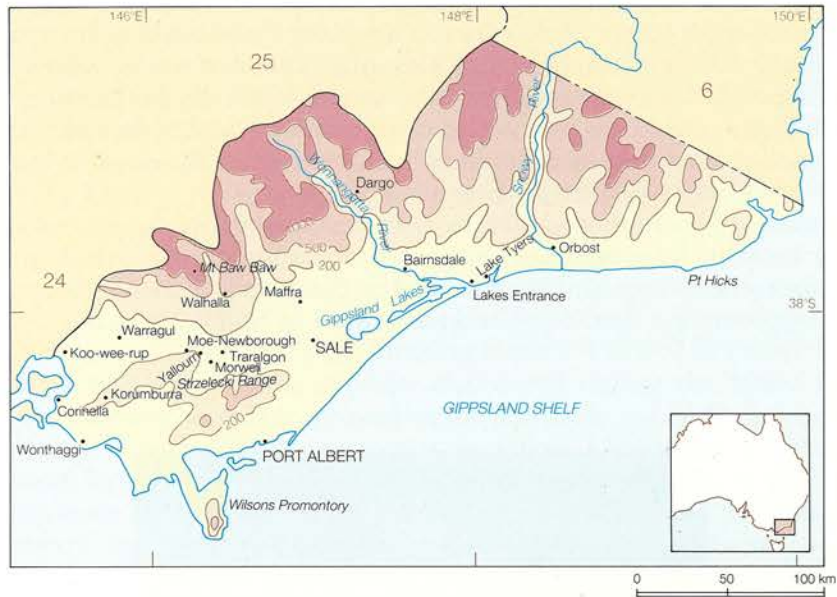
John McQuilton



Eve Langley's novel, The pea pickers, published by Angus & Robertson in 1942, is set in Gippsland. Dustjacket by Adrian Feint.

SUGGESTED READING

- C. Daley, *The story of Gippsland*, Melbourne 1960.
 O.S. Green, *The Gippsland Lakes*, Melbourne 1978.
 H. Porter, *Bairnsdale: portrait of an Australian country town*, St Ives 1977.

**BAIRNSDALE** [37°49'S 147°39'E]

Popn: 20 (1854), 3270 (1891), 7427 (1961), 9459 (1981). Named after Bernisdale, on the Isle of Skye, birthplace of an early settler. Angus McMillan explored district and named Mitchell R in 1840. Lucknow run, first European settlement in district, taken up in 1842, became horse breeding stud for Indian market. Archibald McLeod took up land in 1842, named Bernisdale station in 1844. McMillan proposed establishment of Mitchell Town on part of his run just before his death in 1861; name later used for post-World War II suburb. Post office opened in 1856. Town site gazetted in 1861, surveyed in 1862. Developed as port for East Gippsland and, to some extent, for Monaro district as well as for goldfields on Nicholson and Tambo rivers. Police station estab in 1862. Courthouse, post office and school built in 1862. Bridge over Mitchell R begun in 1870, opened in 1875. Tannery opened in 1876, mining tools factory in 1877. Town prospered after closer settlement by selectors in the 1880s. School of mines built in 1883–91. Rlwy opened in 1888. Attempts to estab oilseed industry in district 1890–1910; hops grown in area 1868–1916. Ice and butter factory opened in 1891. New courthouse (RNE) built 1892–93. Fruit cannery estab in 1907. St Mary's Roman Catholic church opened in 1914, ceiling later painted by Francesco Floriani during the depression. Riot followed visit of teetotaler and hot gospeller Tennyson Smith in 1920. Southern Italians arrived in district in the early 1920s and vegetable growing became important. Air service began in 1950. Won 1942 competition for largest war loan (£44 892) of any Aust town of 4000–6000 popn. Vegetable dehydration plant and RAAF training centre set up during World War II. Gazetted as a town, separate from shire, in 1967. Features prominently in writings of Hal Porter who grew up here.

CORINELLA [38°25'S 145°26'E]

Military outpost (Fort Dumaresq) estab by Capt Wright and Capt Weatherall at Rhyl (see Phillip Island) in 1826 soon moved to Settlement Point near modern Corinella. Abandoned 15 months later in 1828 when party withdrew to Sydney and burned buildings to prevent use by runaways.

DARGO [37°26'S 147°16'E]

Popn: 121 (1871), 237 (1911), 101 (1933), 162 (1961), 117 (1966). Name: Aborig = 'high hills'. Angus McMillan followed Mitchell R to Dargo Hill in 1839 and took up run for Lachlan Macalister. John Wilkinson sent by govt in 1850 to explore upper Mitchell R and reached Dargo and Wonnangatta branches. Gold discov on Crooked R in 1860 and thousands of miners came to area in 1863 rush: Grant, with popn of 2000, was largest settlement. Further gold found when McMillan pioneered track from Dargo to Omeo in 1864–65: many settlements sprang up around mines. Field had 1242 miners, 15 hotels, 8 batteries in 1865, but gold was proving too costly to extract. Good Hope mine at Grant worked until the 1870s, but town diminished by 1875, deserted by 1916. Talbotville, another mining settlement, survived until 1947. Dargo had been on route to mines, still on route to summer alpine pasture on the Dargo High Plains.

KOO-WEE-RUP [38°12'S 145°30'E]

Popn: 652 (1911), 1135 (1947), 839 (1954), 1047 (1981). Name corrupted from Aborig name = 'blackfish swimming'. Known as Yallock Settlement until rlwy opened in 1892. Area explored by William Hovell in 1827 during attempt to form settlement at Corinella. District crossed by Paul Strzelecki on journey to Port Phillip Bay in 1840. District settled by Europeans in the early 1840s. Large section of Koo-wee-rup

Swamp leased in 1861–64. Successful potato growing in district in the late 1870s led to more intensive settlement. Much of swamp reclaimed by early Pakenham settler Duncan McGregor and engineer Carlo Catani from 1885: about 500 men working on job in 1889. By 1894 workers who were to divide their time between farming and reclamation work had been allotted 295 blocks of 8 ha near Koo-wee-rup and Bunyip villages. Main Drain widened in 1894–96. After World War I about 300 returned servicemen took up blocks excised from large estates purchased by govt in 1918–22. Further drainage work after bad floods c1920 and again in 1934. Town grew as service centre for rich farming area and as rlwy centre enabling milk to be sent to Melbourne market. Branch rlwy to Strzelecki operated from 1922; closed beyond Yannathan in 1930, to Bayles in 1959. Mill estab in 1941 to treat flax grown in area during World War II. Large new Yallock Outfall begun after 1934 floods, completed in 1962. Much of land surface has sunk 2 m since first drained.

KORUMBURRA [38°25'S 145°50'E]

Popn: 65 (1891), 2778 (1933), 2414 (1947), 3237 (1961), 2291 (1966), 2798 (1981). Name: Aborig = 'blowfly'. Formerly known as Arawata. Black coal at Coal Creek known from c1843, mining rights held from c1863, but not worked until demand from rlwys and discov of good seam led to production beginning in the early 1890s. Village of Korumburra founded in 1880, grew after coalmining began at Coal Creek. When mining declined, town relied on dairying for prosperity: modern butter and cheese factory opened

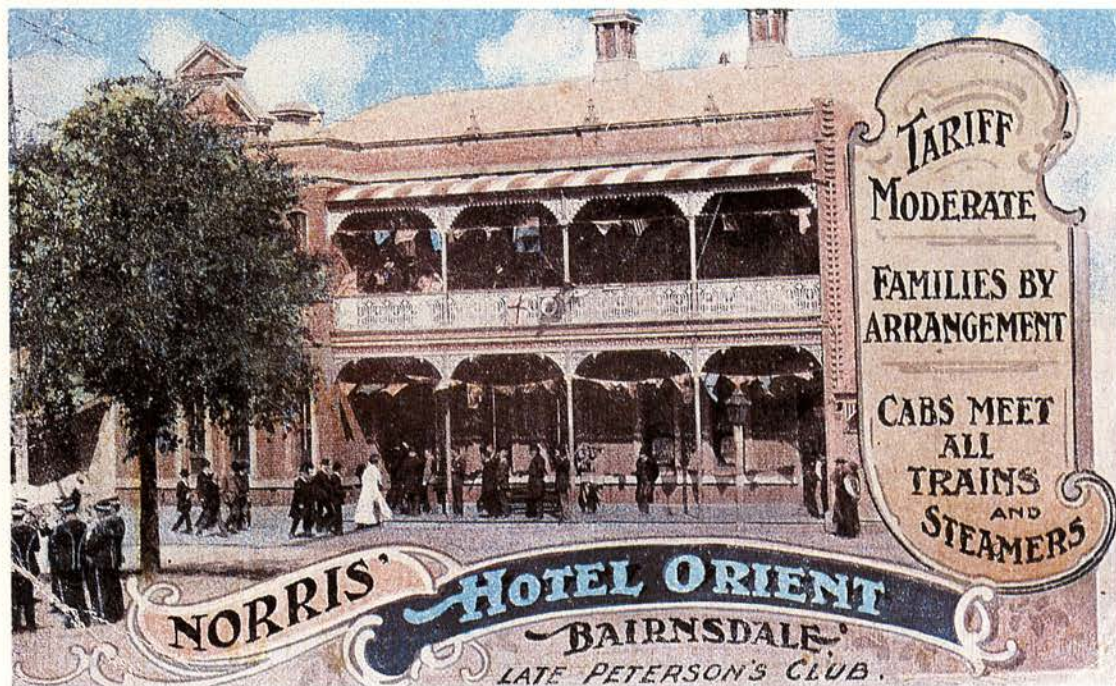
in 1900. Rlwy opened in the late 1880s. Last mine at Coal Creek closed in 1958, but over 30 buildings from early mining village have been restored as historical park. Dairy factory was world pioneer in production of edible casein in the 1970s.

LAKES ENTRANCE [37°52'S 148°02'E]

Popn: 882 (1933), 1602 (1961), 3414 (1981). Name from position at artificial entrance to Gippsland Lakes first made in 1889. Early name was Cunninghame. District settled by Europeans in the 1850s. Natural entrance to Gippsland Lakes was first navigated in 1858: it was changeable and unpredictable and debate about replacement with safe entrance reached a head in 1866. Contract let in 1869 and work completed by 1889. Trade to East Gippsland via entrance important from c1858 to c1931 when rlwys finally replaced lake and riverboats. First commercial fisherman in area in 1878. Lakes Entrance Salmon Co operated from 1900 to 1954. Scallop fishing in ocean began in 1970. First large fishmeal plant in Aust opened here in the late 1960s. Lakes Entrance became Vic's most important fishing port in the 1970s–80s with 101 boats in 1976. Aust's first oil discov at Lake Bunga nearby in 1924: field not very successful, but 480 000 litres treated at crude plant, sold during the 1930s and, more importantly, was first indication of vast Gippsland Shelf oil and gas field. Tourist resort from the early 20th cent.

LEONGATHA [38°29'S 145°57'E]

Popn: 232 (1891), 1875 (1911), 1657 (1933), 3736 (1981). Name: Aborig = 'teeth'. European settlement



Postcard, c1906.

MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA

from c1845. Dairying became important in the 1880s–90s, especially after rlwy opened in the late 1880s. Govt labour camp in area during 1890s depression: timber cutting carried out, small blocks of about 8 ha allotted. Only such camp in Vic remaining by 1903, but original 324 ha halved by sales and reserves for quarry and agric high school (estab c1911). Remainder run as labour training farm, then as experimental farm until sold in 1914. Potatoes increasingly important from c1910. Since c1970 site of one of five major milk products factories of Murray Goulburn Co-operative Co, though factory much older than that.

MAFFRA [37°57'S 147°00'E]

Popn: 247 (1871), 2238 (1933), 3822 (1981). Named after town of Mafra, Portugal. Angus McMillan was first European settler in 1839–40. Mewburn Park homestead (RNE) built in the 1840s. Village founded and named in the 1850s. McMillan took up Strathavon property in 1857, homestead (RNE) built 1858–59. Rlwy opened in 1888. Gippsland's major cattle market in 19th cent. Sugar beet first grown in 1894, factory opened in 1897. Industry not very successful at first, only prospering when govt enlarged and re-equipped factory in 1910: operated until 1946, life prolonged by World War II shortages despite competition from Qld cane sugar. Aust's only beet sugar growing area for most of period. Glenmaggie Reservoir to northwest opened in 1929, enlarged in 1958, leading to dairying on irrigated pastures: two dairy factories followed. Soldier settlement after World War II.

MOE-NEWBOROUGH [38°12'S 146°16'E]

Popn: 172 (1891), 898 (1933), 2260 (1947), 15 463 (1961), 23 198 (1966, including Yallourn), 18 159 (1981). Moe named from Aborig *moia* or *mouay* = 'swamp'. Shown as Mouay on early maps, also known as Westbury. District settled by Europeans by the 1850s, small gold discovery in 1852. Tanjil Hills homestead (RNE) to north built c1860. Rlwy from Morwell opened in 1877, and from Melbourne in 1879. Town site surveyed in 1879 after rlwy opened, grew as small agric township. Rlwy to Walhalla opened in 1910, closed in sections 1942–54. Rapid town growth accompanied development of Latrobe valley brown coal mines and opening of power stations at Yallourn and Morwell: State Electricity Commission built several thousand houses and flats in 1947–52. Became a borough in 1955, a city in 1963. Old Gipps town contains many early buildings brought from elsewhere including Bushy Park homestead built for Angus McMillan near Maffra in the 1840s and Loren (RNE), a two-storey prefabricated iron house made in London and erected in North Melbourne in 1853–54.

MORWELL [38°13'S 146°26'E]

Popn: 600 (1891), 2951 (1947), 9040 (1954), 16 853 (1971), 16 491 (1981). Name: Aborig *morwillie* = 'woolly possum'. Earlier known as Maryvale, name changed in 1888. Morwell R reached by Paul Strzelecki in 1840. Haslewood station taken up in 1844, Mary Ville run in 1846. Village founded in 1861

and grew as supply centre for Walhalla and Tanjil goldfields. Track from Lang Lang cut in 1860–62 as cattle route. Brown coal seam discov on Morwell R by prospector in 1873. Rlwy from Sale opened in 1877, from Melbourne in 1879. Town site surveyed in 1876, lots sold in 1878. Great Morwell Coal Mining Co began operations and estab briquette plant in 1889 but plant only lasted 5 yrs. Open-cut mining of brown coal begun by State Electricity Commission in 1916, Morwell coal used in Yallourn power station from 1924. Briquette factory estab in the early 1920s. Maryvale pulp and paper mill to north opened in 1939, attracted by district forests and cheap local fuel. Larger open cut and briquette factory opened in 1949. Town gas for Melbourne and other centres produced from brown coal at Morwell plant from 1956 until 1969 when supply replaced by natural gas from Gippsland Shelf. Morwell power station built in 1958–62. New briquette plant opened in 1960. Hazelwood power station opened in 1971; when completed had 1800 megawatts capacity. New town of Churchill to south built to house increased workforce: popn 2416 (1971), 4796 (1981).

ORBOST [37°42'S 148°28'E]

Popn: 368 (1891), 1130 (1911), 2938 (1971), 2586 (1981). Named after seat on Isle of Skye. First station taken up in 1838 but left unattended because of Aborig raids. Much tension, further raids, and reprisals by Europeans followed. Town settled c1878. Swing bridge built across Snowy River in 1890, replaced in 1922. Butter factory opened in 1893. Rlwy opened in 1916. Vegetable growing on riverflats has become important since World War II.

PORT ALBERT [38°39'S 146°41'E]

Popn: 126 (1854), 415 (1891), 131 (1933), 333 (1954), 267 (1981). Earlier named New Leith, but changed to honour Queen Victoria's consort in 1841. Gippsland's first town and only important port of entry to East Gippsland until the 1870s. Angus McMillan was first European in area in 1841. Also that yr *Clonmel* wrecked on outer sandbank and potential of port realised: later in yr speculators visited and explored area. First cattle shipped from port in 1842. Port Albert Hotel, estab in 1842, is one of Vic's oldest: present building dates from 1858, as does former Derwent Hotel (RNE). Land sales in 1843: original settlement known as Old Port, now abandoned. New settlement called New Leith estab in 1844, first lease of town allotments in 1854 with growth following discovery of gold at Omeo. Port Albert Steam Navigation Co formed to service goldfield with stores. Govt township of Palmerston surveyed alongside private town and control of port by few merchants lessened. Customs house built in the 1850s. Store and bakery built in 1856, immigration depot (RNE) in 1857–58. Christ Church built in 1858. Bank of Victoria built in 1861 received gold from Walhalla, Omeo and other diggings, now a maritime museum. Post office (RNE) built in 1864. Trade through port at peak in the late 1850s and early 1860s, declined after navigation through Gippsland Lakes estab from 1864, and even

more dramatically after rlwy from Melbourne to Sale opened in 1879. Alberton to north was originally two settlements: govt township of Alberton (gazetted in 1842) and public community of Victoria. Brewery built in 1847. Gippsland's administrative centre in the 1840s, town has first school on Vic register. Timber slab church (RNE) at Tarraville built c1856 — oldest church in Gippsland, second oldest timber church in Vic. Tarraville was Gippsland's largest town in 1851 with popn of 219.

SALE [38°06'S 147°04'E]

Popn: 116 (1854), 2105 (1871), 5119 (1947), 10 478 (1971), 12 968 (1981). Named in 1853 after soldier Robert Sale who died in battle in India in 1845. Earlier known as Flooding Creek. Angus McMillan was in district in 1839; buried here in 1865. Original Kilmany Park homestead (RNE) built in the 1840s on one of first properties estab in eastern Vic. Fulham Park taken up by Peter Imlay of Twofold Bay (see Eden) in 1853; homestead (RNE) built c1858. Settlement grew as it was at crossing place on Latrobe R on route to Port Albert: punt operated until toll bridge opened in 1845. Surveyed in 1851: became a borough in 1863, a town in 1924, a city in 1950. Building boom in 1855–65. Criterion Hotel (RNE) built in 1865. First vaguely reasonable road to Melbourne built in 1865. Regular steamer service operated to Sale from the 1860s until 1920, initial demand following discov of gold on northern Gippsland fields. Author Mary Grant Bruce born here in 1878. Rlwy to Melbourne completed in 1879. Swing bridge (RNE) over Latrobe R built in 1880–83. Town lit by gas from the 1880s until electricity came in 1925. Major training base for RAAF bomber pilots since World War II. Town has boomed since oil and gas discov on Gippsland Shelf as it became chief residential and service centre for project. Gas processing and oil stabilisation plant and gas metering and testing station opened in 1969 at Longford to the south.

TRARALGON [38°12'S 146°32'E]

Popn: 932 (1891), 2056 (1911), 4384 (1947), 8845 (1954), 14 666 (1971), 18 057 (1981). Name: Aborig *tarralgon*, with many meanings suggested. Settled by Europeans in the early 1840s as agric and pastoral centre. Town site surveyed in 1858; land sales began in 1859. Rlwy opened in 1877. Courthouse and post office opened in 1886. Aust's first successful vertical cement kiln built here in 1953. Became a borough in 1961, a city in 1964. Loy Yang power station built in the late 1970s and 1980s: when finished in the early 1990s it will have cost over \$3000m; will produce 2000 megawatts and will use 56 000 tonnes of brown coal each day. The open cut supplying Loy Yang, begun in 1979, is expected to ultimately cover 1100 ha.

WALHALLA [37°55'S 146°28'E]

Popn: 1484 (1871), 1771 (1891), 1549 (1911), 124 (1933), 54 (1961). Name from Valhalla, home of slain heroes in Norse legend. Gold first discov by Ned Stringer in 1862: town known as Stringers Creek until 1869. Elliott's bakery built in 1865. Long Tunnel mine produced 13.7 tonnes of gold 1865–1911, once Vic's



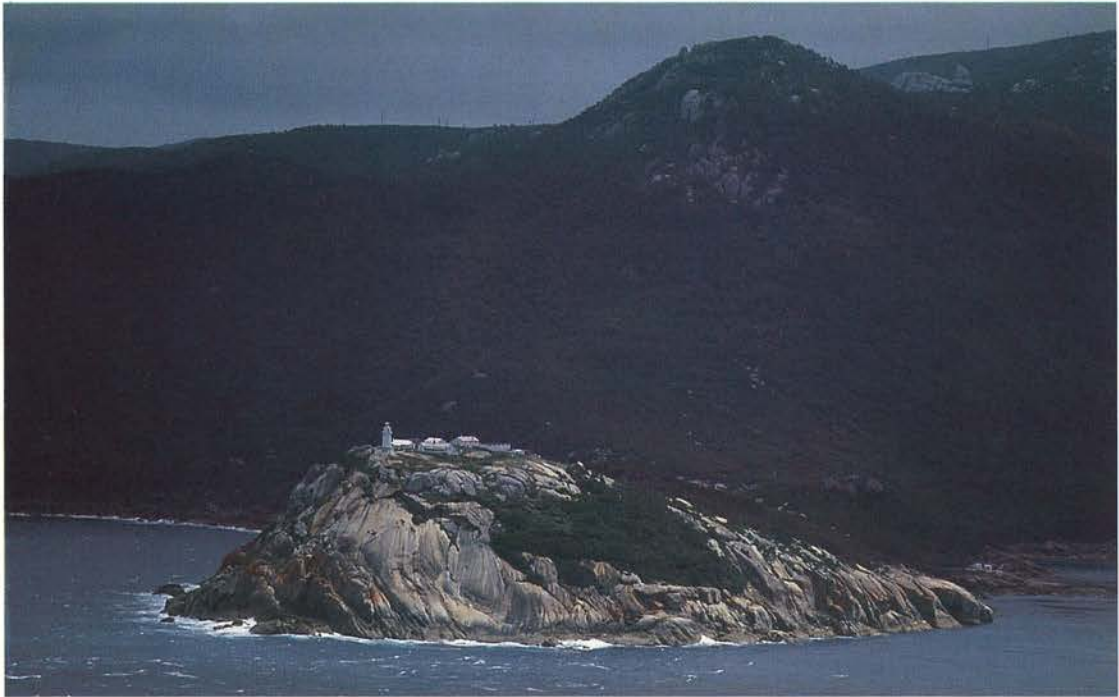
Christ Church Tarraville, near Port Albert. Built in 1856, it is Gippsland's oldest church. Photograph by Ray Joyce c1982.

WELDON TRANNIES

richest single mine, closed in 1915. Electric lighting used in mine from 1884. Grand Junction Hotel estab in 1868, dismantled in the early 1900s. Bank of Victoria built in 1868; larger bank built after serious 1888 fire in town and its vault held total of about 73 tonnes of gold over the yrs. Hillside cemetery with some vertical graves surveyed in 1872. Township was a borough 1879–86. Town flooded in 1891. Hospital built in 1891, larger one in 1909, closed in 1939. Surrounding hills largely bare by 1901, due to demands of mines for timber: tramways extended further and further to bring needed supplies. Rlwy from Moe opened in 1910, closed in sections 1942–54. Peak popn of about 4500 in Walhalla and nearby villages, including Happy Go Lucky, Maiden Town and Mormon Town, in 1885–95. Last large mine closed in 1915 and popn rapidly declined. Most of former town is a conservation area (RNE). Copper mined at Coopers Creek on Thomson R to south for over 100 yrs, one mine operating until 1973.

WARRAGUL [38°09'S 145°56'E]

Popn: 1634 (1891), 2823 (1933), 5324 (1954), 7712 (1981). Name: Aborig *warrigal* or *warragal* = 'wild dog'. First European settlement in district, 3 km to north, known as Brandy Creek, later as Buln Buln. First European settler at Brandy Creek in 1865. World's largest earthworm (*Megascolides australis*) discov at Brandy Creek in 1868: longest accurately measured earthworm found in 1930 was 2.19 m long, over 4 m



Lighthouse in Wilson's Promontory National Park, built in 1859. One of the oldest national parks in Victoria, Wilson's Promontory is noted for its variety of flora and fauna. Photograph by Reg Morrison.

WELDON TRANNIES

if stretched! Swamps in area drained in the 1860s to estab dairy pasture: district has since become major supplier of **Melbourne's** fresh milk market. New township of Warragul estab in 1878 following opening of rlwy from Oakleigh (Melbourne). Sawmilling important in district in the 1880s. Rlwy to Noojee opened in 1888, closed in 1956. Boxer Lionel Rose, first Aborig to win world sporting title, born here in 1948.

WILSONS PROMONTORY

[39°00'S 146°20'E]

Named Furneaux's Land by George Bass in 1797. Name changed by Gov Hunter to honour London merchant Thomas Wilson. Convicts built granite lighthouse erected on South East Point in 1859. Proposals to form park from 1884; most of peninsula declared a reserve in 1898. Army commando camps and training ground estab in 1941: army buildings became Tidal R campsite after war. Devastating bushfire in 1951 seriously affected fauna.

WONTHAGGI

[38°36'S 145°35'E]

Popn: 3223 (1911), 5593 (1933), 4225 (1947), 4797 (1981). Name: Aborig = 'to drag' or 'home'. William Hovell explored Cape Patterson area in 1826 and noted coal. Samuel Anderson settled on Bass R to west in 1835. Black coal mined at Cape Patterson 1859–1864, but lack of safe anchorage made it costly and difficult. Coal in town area discov in the 1850s, but only mined from early 20th cent. State coalmine

opened in 1909 after strike in NSW left Vic without supplies from Newcastle. Town estab by govt specifically to house miners. Rlwy opened in 1910. Brickworks operated 1910–14 to supply local needs while town being estab. Power station opened to supply electricity to town and mine in 1912. Five month strike by miners in 1934. New western area began production in 1936. Mine explosion in 1937 killed 13 men. Textile factory estab after World War II. Mines closed in 1968 after demand reduced by switch to diesel locomotives on Vic rlwys.

YALLOURN

[38°11'S 146°21'E]

Popn: 2520 (1933), 5580 (1954), later included under **Moe**. Name: Aborig = 'flat tray of plaited grass'. First commercial attempt to mine brown coal in Latrobe Valley was at Yallourn North in 1887–99 after rlwy link to **Melbourne** built. Mine reopened by Dept of Mines in 1916. State Electricity Commission built first power station in 1919 and built model town of Yallourn from 1921. Main Yallourn open cut developed in the early 1920s. By 1924 Yallourn was Vic's main source of electricity. Modernisation of mining came with introduction of bucket dredges and electric locomotives in 1928–32. Power station extended in 1962. New Yallourn 'W' power station of 1450 megawatts built in the 1970s: cooling towers built for it were first in Aust. Town removed during the late 1970s and early 1980s as situated on brown coal reserves due for mining: popn moved to other nearby towns such as **Moe**, **Morwell** and **Traralgon**.