



SHARROCK FAMILY

PENSHURST REUNION, 2008

HISTORICAL SITES AROUND
PENSHURST & BESSIEBELLE



By Helen Sharrock.
(Joseph – James – Benjamin – Edward – Wesley)
(also John – Charles – Sarah – Hilda – Wesley)



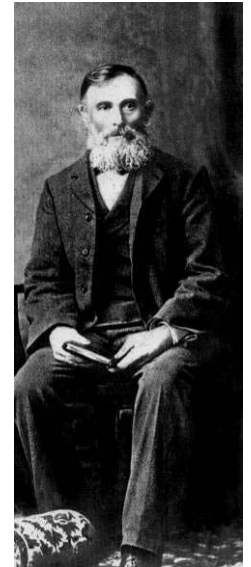
Mary Aner Sharrock (nee Faulkner) born : 1813
- Wife of Joseph Sharrock.
(No photo has been found of Joseph)

This article has been put together from various articles written by a number of our "Sharrock Historians" including Richard Rowbottom and Bruce Sharrock. Much of the information was originally from a Newspaper Article of an interview with James Sharrock (1838 – 1926) which appeared in the Hamilton Spectator 4/1/1921.

On the 29th March 1848, the ship "Mahomed Shah" sailed from Plymouth, England bound for the Port Phillip district in the colony of New South Wales. The "Mohamed Shah" was 615 or 750 Tones. It was built in Moulamein of teak, copper fastened, with the hull being coppered to stop the growth of barnacles.

Amongst the passengers was Joseph Sharrock, aged 33. His wife Mary (nee Faulkner), aged 35 and their four sons, John aged 13, James aged 10, Joseph aged 7 and Benjamin aged 5. Their daughter Elizabeth Ann Hazeldine, was born on the 22nd April 1848 during the voyage.

On the 5th of July 1848, after a passage of 98 days, the Sharrocks arrived at Port Phillip (later to be known as Melbourne). At the time Melbourne was only a small town. Crossing the Yarra River was by an old punt as there was no bridge. James recalled in his interview that there were about 20-30 aboriginals living on the site where Flinders Street Station now stands, and described Elizabeth Street as mud over the boot tops; a far cry from the Elizabeth Street of to-day.



John Sharrock
born : 8 June 1833
- Eldest son of Joseph & Mary Aner.

On arrival, the eldest son, John was engaged by W. L. Brodie of Moonee Ponds for twelve months at a wage of £8 per annum. The remainder of the family was housed at an immigration depot until they moved to Geelong where Joseph was employed in the construction of the first mail stables.

The following year, when James was about 11, he went to work on "Green Hills" Station at Colac looking after cattle. James recalled that at that time, there was only one building between Geelong and Colac and this was on the Barwon River. Colac consisted of only 3 huts and one hotel while Camperdown consisted of only 2 huts. On the 10th April 1851, Joseph purchased seventy acres from Thomas and Euphemia Hill for the sum of £50 sterling. He built a house and yards on the "run". It is said that he was the first person to grow wheat in this district.



James Sharrock
born : 5 August 1838
- Second son of Joseph & Mary Aner.

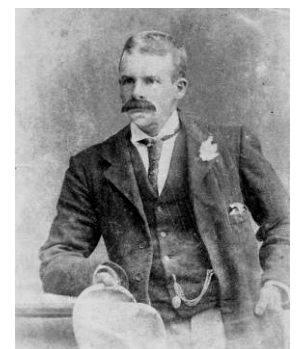
In July 1851 gold was discovered at Clunes. At the end of August that year, Joseph, with 3 of his sons (James included) set off to the Goldfields to "Strike it Rich". He left behind his wife, Mary Aner with 3 year old Elizabeth, new baby Thomas (born 20 April 1851), and the remaining elder son.

In those days there were no roads, so they had to travel cross-country with their team of eight bullocks and dray. When they reached the Leigh River at Winters Flat, two men told them that gold had been discovered at Ballarat, at the old Golden Point. They decided to go to Ballarat and turned up towards the Leigh River.

When they reached Ballarat there were 13 tents pitched. The Sharrocks stayed at the Ballarat Fields until the end of October. They left with £800 worth of gold. Next they went on to Castlemaine where they did not have much luck and left after two weeks. The next place was called White Horse Hill. They stayed here for another couple of months. This proved rewarding as they found £500 worth of gold.

Five days before Christmas, Joseph yoked up the bullocks and headed home to Colac. Christmas and New Year was spent at Colac. In the middle of January 1852, the Sharrocks arrived at the Bendigo diggings, where they started to work a claim. They stayed here for 2 months and did fairly well. The next claim was at Iron Bark Gully. James carted the wash dirt in the bullock dray to a creek about 8 miles away, and carted fresh drinking water on the return trip.

At the end of May they returned to Colac for the winter. During this winter they sent two dray loads of flour to the goldfields, getting about £18 per bag. In September, the Sharrocks headed back to the Eureka diggings setting up camp opposite the stockade. Later they went out to work on Pennyweight Flat. This proved to be a valuable endeavour.



Joseph Sharrock (jnr)
born : 25 September 1840
- Third son of Joseph & Mary Aner.

Joseph had met 3 men, a doctor, a lawyer and a School Master, who owned a good claim, but it had been poorly worked and was likely to fall in. They offered it to the Sharrocks for 6 ounces of gold. On examining it, a crack of eight feet was found in the east side. The agreement was that they would buy it if it could be made safe with props and slabs. Eventually, it proved to be safe, so they bought it. It was worked out in 3 weeks. This claim was on the site where the famous Eureka Rebellion took place. They made about £200 per man (about £800 all up).



Title: Bushranger stealthily robbing a traveller sleeping in the bush

Date: 1855

Creator: Frederick Grosse(engraver), Nicholas Chevalier (artist)

Source:State Library of Victoria

James recalls in his interview that on their way back to Colac from the diggings travel was very slow. On the second day, they made the Leigh River. After they crossed the river, unyoked the bullocks, and prepared the fire for cooking, 3 men were seen in the distance riding towards them.

Joseph was sitting on the pole of the dray with a loaded double barrel shotgun sitting next to him. The men rode up and stopped about 12 yards from the dray. They didn't look like diggers or squatters. One of the men asked for a drink. Joseph replied that they hadn't boiled the Billy yet. The man said, "Haven't you got anything a little stronger than tea?", so James got the bottle of gin and a pannikin and took it to the first man. When the man lifted his hand, James saw two revolvers in his belt. The other two men also had revolvers in their belts. After they had finished, Joseph asked if there was anything more he could do for them. The first man replied "No" and thanked them for the drink and then said, "Captain Melville is not fond of standing in front of a double barrel gun and a revolver". With that, they turned and rode the way they had come.

The bullocks were driven hard that afternoon. The next day they arrived at Colac, in time for Christmas. Joseph had apparently hidden gold in the axel of the bullock dray.

About the end of January 1853 they made their final trip to the goldfields. This time it was to the Canadian Gully diggings near Ballarat. This claim was about one hundred yards down the lead from the place where a one hundred and twenty pound nugget was found. This was called the Lady Orthum Nugget. This claim did not pay well, Joseph broke his collarbone and his partner, James Wearum, took fever and later died. James Wearum is said to have been the first to be buried in the old Ballarat cemetery. Not very long after this, Joseph and the boys returned to Colac.

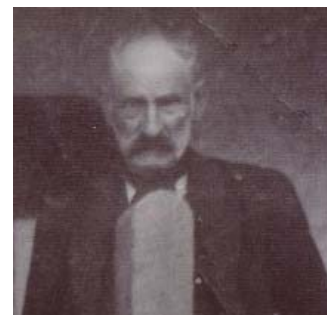
On 8 June 1853, Michael William Sharrock was born bringing the Sharrock family to 7 children.

Joseph decided to buy some good land, so he went to Melbourne, but the government was not selling any land. About two weeks after he returned home from Melbourne, Joseph received a letter from the Government saying they were selling 2 sections of land at Mt. Rouse. He then went back to Melbourne and on the 12th of September 1853, bought some of this land. The land was six hundred and twenty acres, two roods and thirty perches. Joseph paid six hundred and twenty pounds, thirteen shillings and nine pence for this land.

The land was called Moonambool, but Joseph and Mary called it "Lovely Banks". Later the Sharrocks went to "Lovely Banks" with 10 bullocks and a dray loaded with materials and commenced building a house and stockyards.

James recalls that before Christmas the same year he went to get 2 of his father's bullocks out of the Burbank pound. It was Friday and if not claimed they would be sold the next day. James rode fast for about thirty-five miles, and then he slowed the horse to a walk to give it a rest. Just then he saw a horseman riding out of the Mt. Mercer forest towards him. James did not stop, so the man rode along with him. The man asked for some matches.

When James passed them over, he saw two revolvers in his belt. James recognised him as Captain Melville the Bushranger. James was riding a good horse and Captain Melville had an eye on it. At last he looked at James and said, "I have met you before. I know that white curly head of yours." Then he rode into the forest.



Benjamin Sharrock
born : 7 July 1843
- Fourth son of Joseph & Mary Aner.



Thomas Sharrock
born : 20 April 1851 at
Eurack, Colac.



Elizabeth Sharrock
born : 22 April 1848 while
on the voyage to Australia.
- Only daughter of Joseph
& Mary Aner.



Michael William Sharrock
born : 8 June 1853 at
Eurack, Colac

Later he met a man from Gardeners Creek who told him that Captain Melville had been to the station, stealing about one hundred pounds. Before leaving, he returned the money to the two boys, saying "I don't rob boys". Maybe this is why he did not take the horse.

When James arrived home Colac he found that there was a draft of cattle ready to be taken to "Lovely Banks". These were taken property and left in the care of his brother and another man. Joseph and the others returned to Colac for the rest of their belongings. Joseph sold the land at Colac on the 28th March 1854 and the family moved to "Lovely Banks". The trip took 19 days, and required two teams and drays loaded with furniture and household goods and 150 head of cattle. They then set to work to finish their new home.

At "Lovely Banks" the Sharrocks had a dairy farm and also grew wheat. When Gold was discovered at Ararat, they went to the diggings each month with a dray load of dairy produce and received very good prices. They were the first to have their crop of wheat ground to flour at the mill situated on the Grange Creek in Hamilton. Dairying was carried on in a large scale until 1858.

Joseph was keen to have the rest of his brothers join him in Australia. He sent to England and three of his brothers, John and Elizabeth, James and Sophia, Michael and Mary and their families, and a nephew, James Ottaway (William's son) made the journey. They sailed from Liverpool on the 13th of March 1858 on the ship "The Rising Sun" and arrived in Melbourne on the 11th June 1858. They forwarded on to Port Fairy, and then to "Lovely Banks". James and John obtained land at Blackfellows Creek, near Peshurst and Michael settled across the road from "Lovely Banks".

In the same year, on 24 May 1858, Joseph and Mary Aner's last child, Francis was born

In 1859 the Sharrocks put in a lot of crops. Four days after the crops had been harvested, in January 1860 a bushfire came in from the North-West. Elizabeth later recalled to her family that she was twelve years old and at the kitchen helping to get breakfast when there seemed to be a sudden change in the wind. She went outside and walked up to the gate to one of the paddocks. Fires had been burning for several days in the distance but now the wind had changed and the fire was headed for "Lovely Banks". She had come outside with the coffee pot in her hand, and realising the danger of the now fast approaching fire, she put the coffee pot down on one of the two large gateposts, and ran indoors shouting that the fire was coming.

They fought the fire and when it had past, what she remembered very vividly was that outside, where she had stood looking towards the oncoming fire, there was nothing of the fencing, even the gate was gone. Every thing had been destroyed but for one thing in this scene of devastation. On the one remaining gatepost, stood the abandoned coffeepot. From its spout curled a wisp of steam rising into the now still air.

All the stacks of the crops, the milking sheds, the kitchen, the dairy, the storehouse and 1.5 tonnes of cheese and bacon went up in flames. The fattening paddock of 400 acres caught fire, but the Bullocks broke through the fence.

In 1864, the Mt. Rouse Shire separated from Port Fairy and Joseph was elected as one of first councilors. He remained in this role until he retired due to poor health. He passed away on the 22nd November 1871 and was buried at "Lovely Banks", but was re-interred in the Boram Boram Cemetery on the 9th July 1891. Mary Aner passed away on the 10th January 1895 and was also buried at the Boram Boram cemetery.

Joseph left "Lovely Banks" to his three youngest sons, Thomas, Michael and Francis, but it was sold due to near bankruptcy on the 4th September 1878 for £2200 pounds. Michael shifted to Young in NSW, Thomas shifted to Bessiebelle, and Francis went north and was not heard of again.

Joseph also left packages of land to his older sons John, James, Joseph and Benjamin. These pockets of land are described in his will as "*my other farms in the said Parish of Kangertong*". At that time, these farms were being farmed by John, James, Joseph, Ben and their families. To date, exact locations of these properties are not known.

At the end of January 1874 the Sharrock brothers purchased land at Bessiebelle and later went to live there. This began the next chapter of the Sharrock history.



Francis Sharrock
born :24 May 1858 at
"Lovely Banks", Peshurst.

PENSHURST AREA – GOING EAST.

SITE 1: “Lovely Banks” – The Site of the original home of Joseph and Mary Aner Sharrock.

The only evidence of this once thriving home is the foundations and the big old stone cellar. It withstood fires in the 1860’s but still succumbed to time.

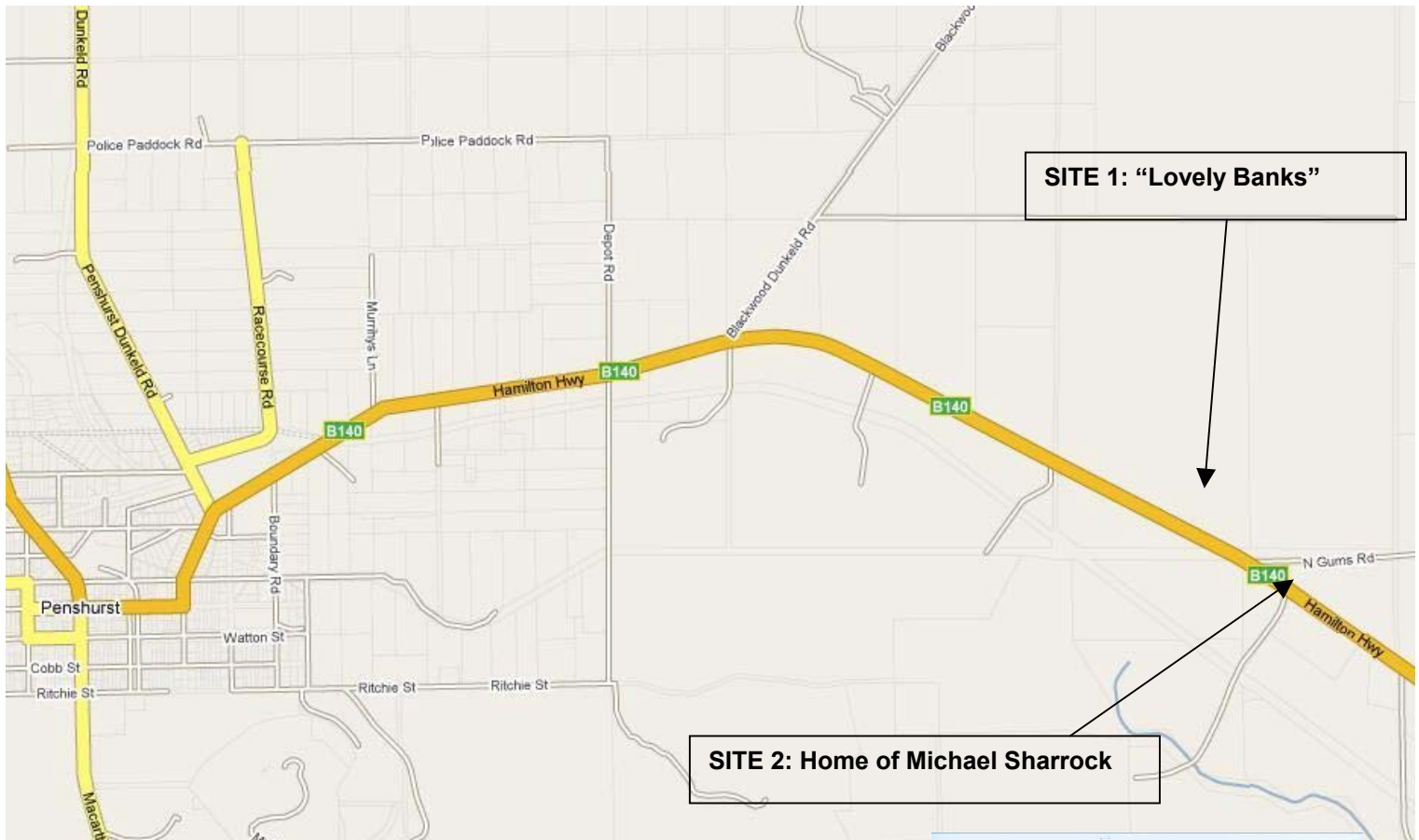
Joseph Sharrock purchased this land and moved his family (wife Mary Aner, and their 7 children) here in 1853. Their youngest child, Francis was born here in 1858.

When Joseph’s brothers arrived in Australia in 1858, they too stayed here until they could find more permanent accommodation.



Joseph died in 1871, and left this property to his three youngest sons, Thomas, Michael and Francis. The property was sold in 1878. Michael shifted to Young in NSW, Thomas shifted to Hawkesdale and then Bessiebelle, and Francis went north and was not heard of again.

Years later Joseph’s grandson, (Thomas’s son), Percival, purchased land at Gordon (near Geelong) and named that property “Lovely Banks” after this original land. The picture to the left is the second “Lovely Banks” in 1955.

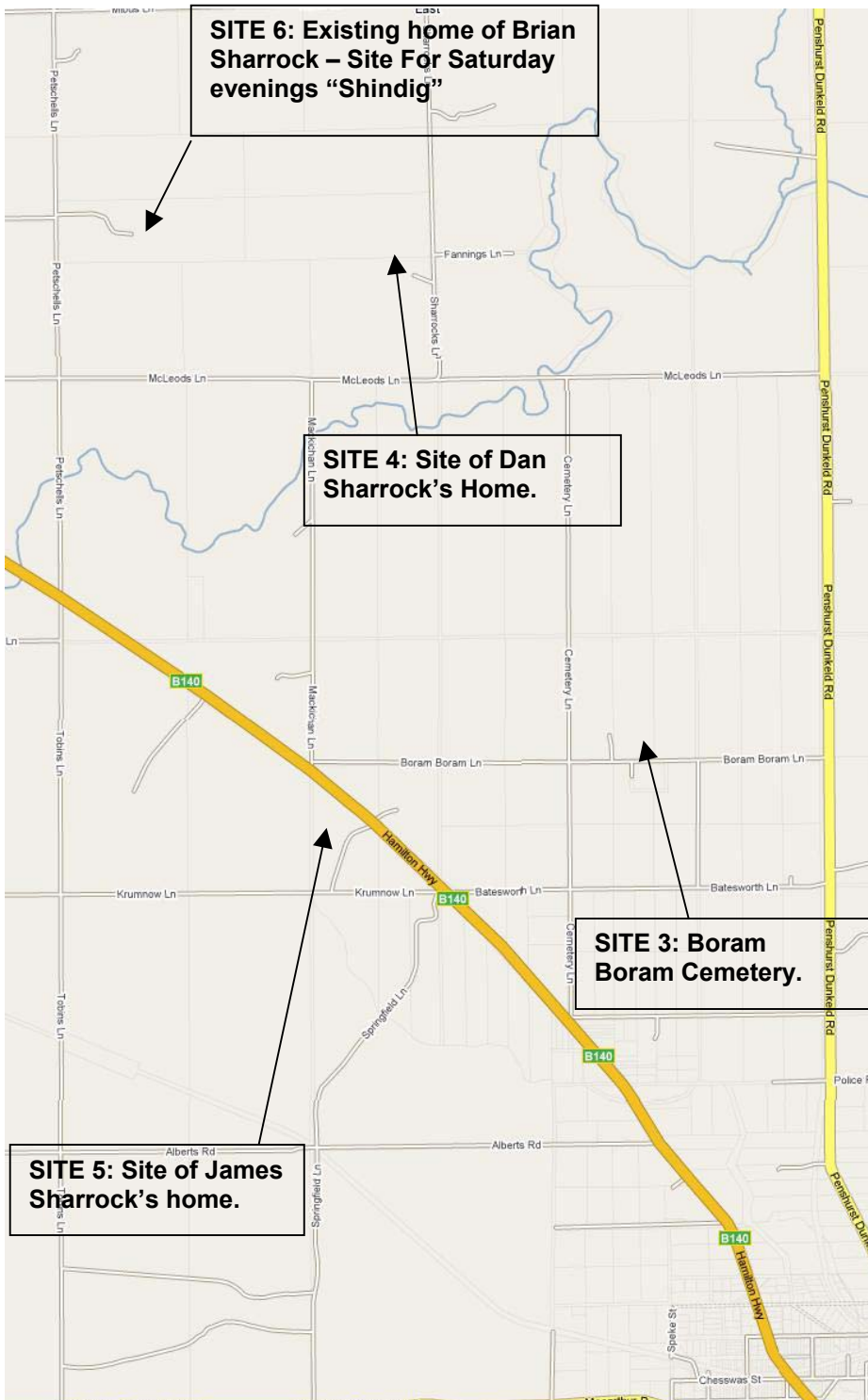


SITE 2: Home of Michael Sharrock – Corner of Nth Gums Rd and Hamilton Hwy is one of the only remaining “Sharrock” structures in the Penshurst area. This was the home of Joseph’s brother, Michael Sharrock, who ventured to Australia and Penshurst in 1858. Michael worked for Joseph at Lovely Banks. It is believed that this house was not built by the Sharrocks.



PENSHURST AREA – GOING NORTH.

SITE 3: Boram Boram Cemetery – The Final Resting Place of many of the original Sharrocks.



Mount Rouse from the Boram Boram Cemetery

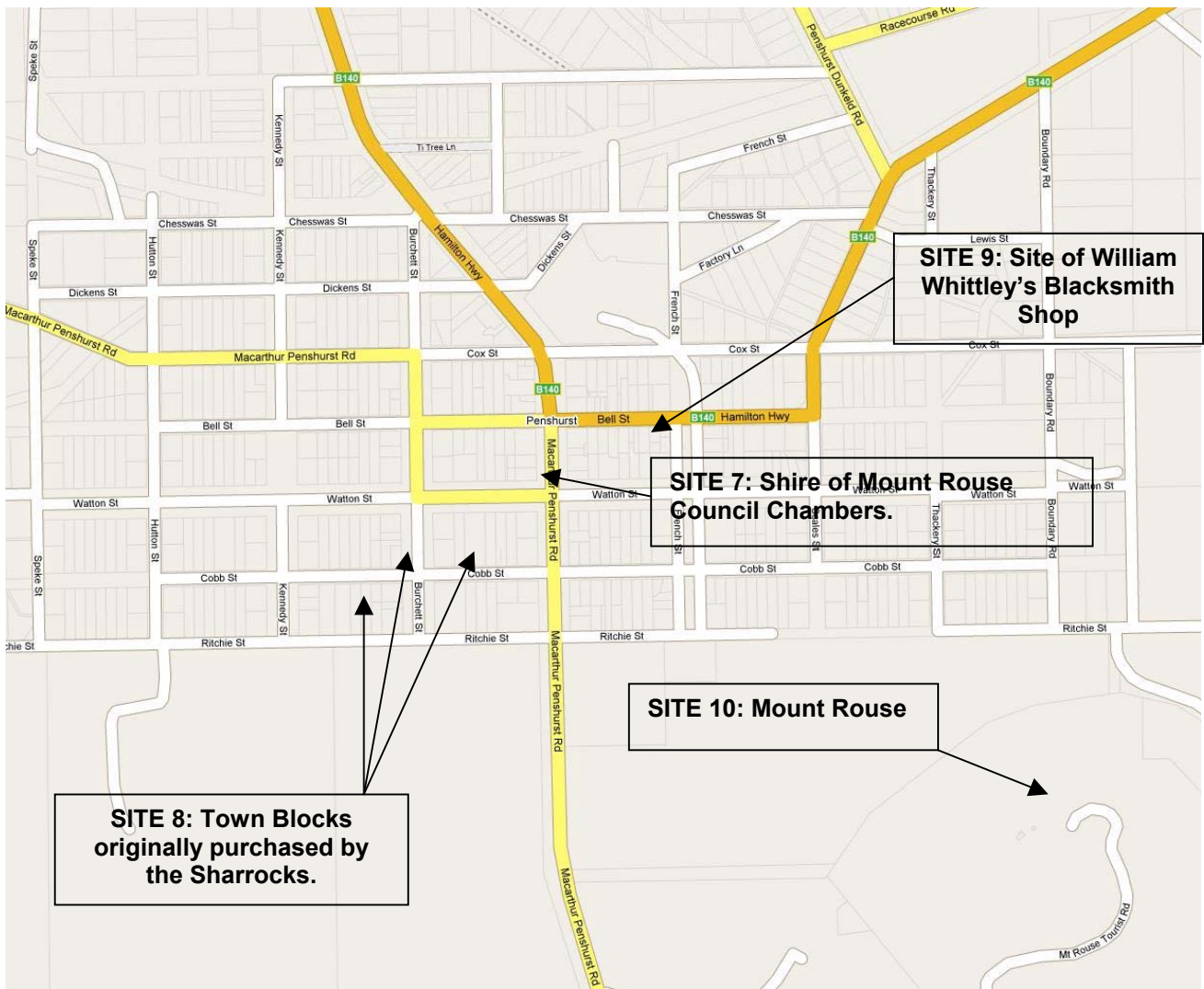
SITE 4: Remains of Daniel and Maria (nee Salt’s) Sharrock’s home – Daniel arrived in Australia with his father Michael, brother of Joseph, in 1858. He purchased this land 1879.



SITE 5: Possible site of James Sharrock’s home – Joseph’s brothers joined him in Australia in 1858. One of his older brothers, James, purchased land on the outskirts of Peshurst, and built a home for himself and his family. This property was described in the 1863 rate notices as consisting of “1 acre and a small hut”. This site was owned by J. Sharrock at the time and is believed to be the block owned by James. The joy and excitement of a new start was short lived as James committed suicide in December 1863.

SITE 6: Current home of Brian Sharrock – Please join other Sharrock descendants at the Sharrock Shindig on Saturday 8th March.

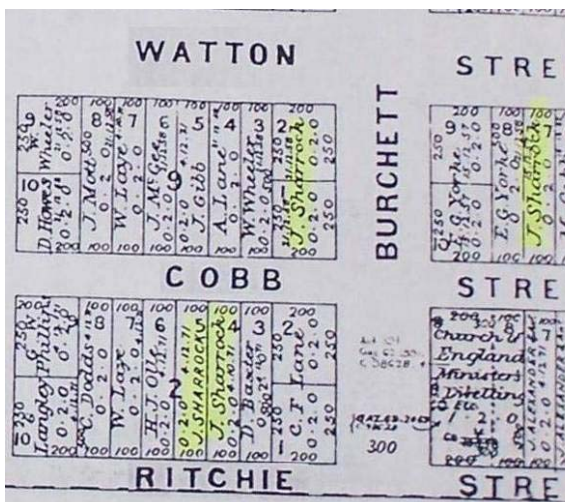
PENSHURST AREA – CENTRAL.



SITE 7: Shire of Mount Rouse Council Chambers – The Shire of Mount Rouse established in 1864 with Joseph Sharrock being one of the original councillors. These Chambers were built in 1865 and now home to the Penhurst Volcanoes Discovery Centre.



SITE 8: Blocks of land purchased by Sharrocks in the mid 1800s – The double block facing Burchett St, bounded by Watton Street and Cobb Street was purchased by J. Sharrock in December 1858. One of these blocks currently has a house that looks like it may have been built at the time the block was owned by J. Sharrock, but we have no evidence to justify this.



Another block is located between Watton and Cobb and was purchased by J. Sharrock in December 1857.

The final two blocks lie between Cobb and Ritchie St and were purchased by J. Sharrock in October 1871

In all blocks, it is still unknown "which" J. Sharrock purchased each.

SITE 9: Site of William Whittley's Blacksmith Shop – Joseph's grand-daughter, Aner Elizabeth Sharrock, married William Whittley in 1878. They had 4 children before their young family was struck down with diphtheria, killing Aner and 3 of her children. William was a blacksmith, and this was the site of his blacksmith shop and residence where this tragedy occurred.

It is not known whether the building still standing today, is the buildings that stood here in 1884.

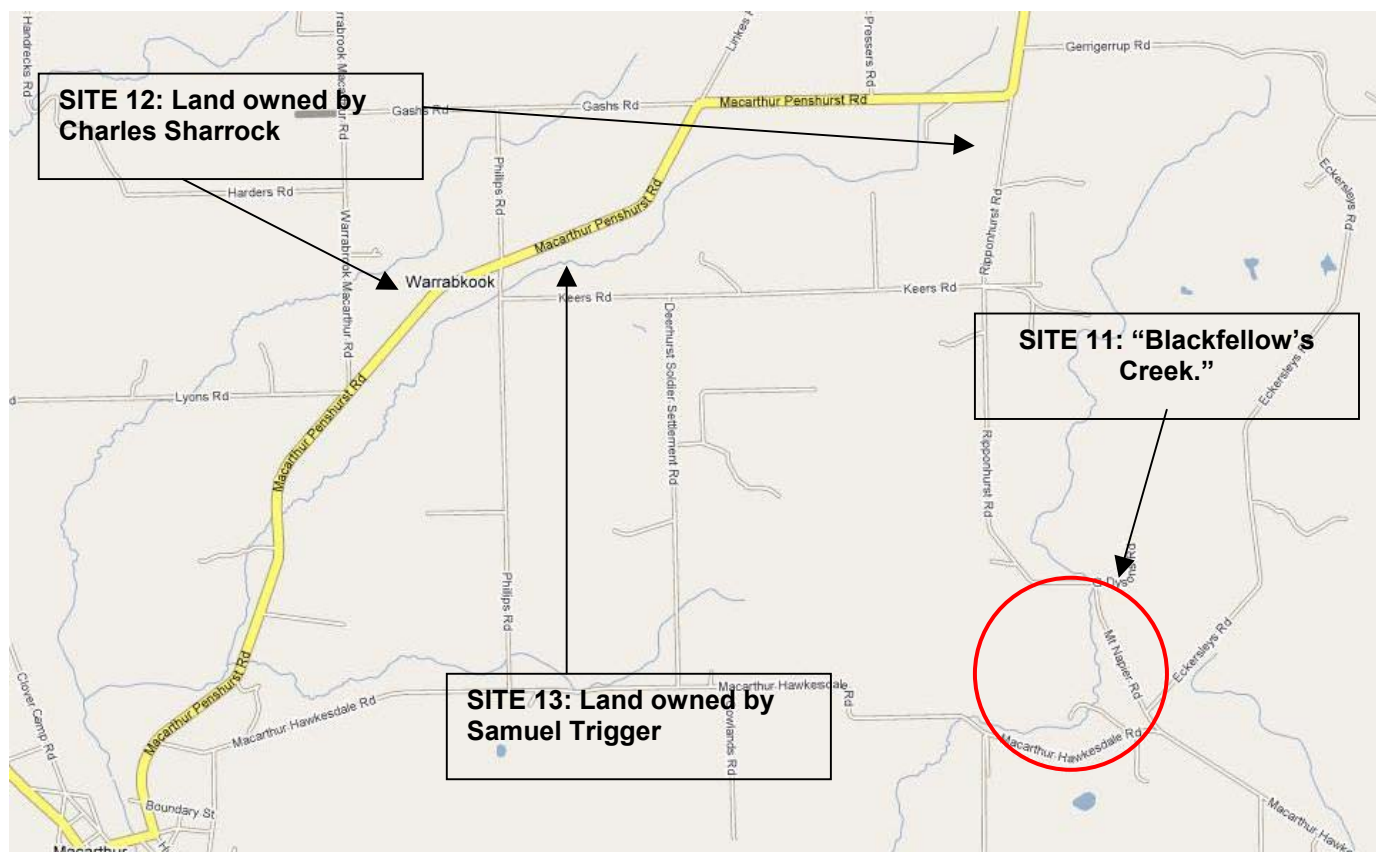


SITE 10: Mount Rouse – James Sharrock committed suicide on the top of Mount Rouse on 20 Dec 1863.

PENSHURST AREA – GOING WEST.

SITE 11: "Blackfellow's Creek" – Heading West from Peshurst along the Macarthur Rd, there is an area called Warrabkook. The start of the Eumeralla River is located East of Warrabkook. A section of the River was known as "Blackfellow's Creek"

It was in this area that another of Joseph's brother's John, purchased land, but at the time this booklet was finalized, the exact location of this land was not pinpointed.



SITE 12 & 13: Warrabkook – When John died, he left the land at Blackfellow's Creek to his son, Charles Sharrock, who purchased more land closer to Macarthur at an area called Warrabkook. Samuel Trigger also purchased land in this area. (His son, William, married Charles daughter Sarah.)

SHARROCKS ON THE MOVE.

SITE 14: “Kangertong” – When Joseph died in 1871, he left “Lovely Banks” to his three youngest sons, Thomas, Michael and Francis. The property was sold in 1878. Michael shifted to Young in NSW, Thomas shifted to Bessiebelle, and Francis went north and was not heard of again.

Joseph also left packages of land to his older sons John, James, Joseph and Benjamin. These pockets of land are described in his will as “*my other farms in the said Parish of Kangertong*”. At that time, these farms were being farmed by John, James, Joseph and Ben, and their families.

On the map below are marked the 3 parcels of land owned by Joseph, but it is not known which son inherited which block of land.

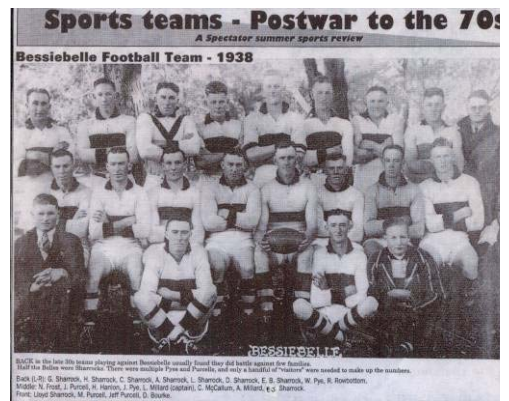
At this time, Joseph’s daughter Elizabeth, and her husband Lowry Anderson owned and operated the general store in Hawkesdale.



SITE 15: Hawkesdale Cemetery – Two of James’ children, Catherine & James, died in infancy and are buried at the Hawkesdale Cemetery. This is also the final resting place for Joseph junior (Joseph’s son) and his wife, Elizabeth Anne. (Note: Elizabeth Anne was Michael Sharrock’s daughter)

SITE 17: Bessiebelle Football Oval – The Spectator article in 1970 summarises the significance of this spot perfectly.

“Back in the late 30’s teams playing against Bessiebelle usually found they did battle against a few families. Half the Belles were Sharrocks. There were multiple Pyes and Purcells, and only a handful of visitors were needed to make up the numbers”



SITE 18: Bessiebelle Primary School – A section of the current building looks like the school in this photo taken in 1906, however, the oldest part of the current school was moved to the site from Hamilton in the early 1930’s. The school ceased operating in 2005



SITE 19: Bessiebelle Presbyterian Church – Every Sunday, many Sharrocks would have congregated at this site to worship. It would also have witnessed many Sharrock weddings and funerals.

The plaque states:
“By the Grace of God, worship was celebrated on this site between 1905 an 1977 in the Bessiebell Uniting Church (Formerly Presbyterian). God’s goodness endures forever.”

(SITE 15 - 17: Site of “Camp Swamp”, James and Mary, and Ben and Rebecca’s homes – These three sites are located on Raymond Sharrock’s land.

SITE 20: “Camp Swamp” – was the original site where James and Mary Sharrock and their children camped in a tent when they first took up this land in the mid 1870s.

Their tent accommodation was replaced by a mud hut. The only sign of the mud hut is the depression in the land where mud was taken.



SITE 21: James and Mary’s Home – And then eventually the home of James and Mary was built. Over the years, this home was extensively modified. Sebastian (James’s son) and Ethel (nee Trigger) Sharrock lived in this house until the mid 1950’s.

It was shifted up to the main road beside Ray Sharrock’s existing house, and then again to Tarrington where it has been restored.



It was just south of James’s house that the well known picture of James with his bullock dray was taken

SITE 22: Site of Benjamin and Rebecca Sharrock's Home – It wasn't long before the other Sharrock brothers followed James to Bessiebelle. Benjamin and his wife Rebecca bought land and built a house next door to James and Mary.

Benjamin and Rebecca lived and farmed this land until they retired to Port Fairy.

It is hard to imagine the lush gardens that were grown around these houses as you now stand in bare paddocks.



SITE 23: Site of John and Druesena Sharrock's House – Joseph's eldest son, John settled close by, and contributed well to the population explosion in Bessiebelle by parenting 16 children! Their 11th child, Frederick, broke away from the Western District and was the first to settle in Goodnight in 1921. Some of his brothers followed.

The story goes that when Druesena died of cancer in 1916, one of her sons was so scared that the cancer would spread that he burnt down the house that stood on this site.



SITE 24: Site of Thomas and Ellen Sharrock's Home. (Shiner Tom) – When Joseph died in 1871, he left "Lovely Banks" to his 3 youngest sons, Thomas, Michael & Francis. When they sold "Lovely Banks" in 1878, Thomas followed his older brothers to Bessiebelle.



SITE 25: Macarthur Cemetery – Bessiebelle did not have its own cemetery. Many of the Sharrocks who made their home in Bessiebelle, and the surrounding district, are buried at the Macarthur Cemetery. (Condah, Port Fairy and Wallacedale Cemeteries are also the final resting place of some of the Sharrock descendents)

