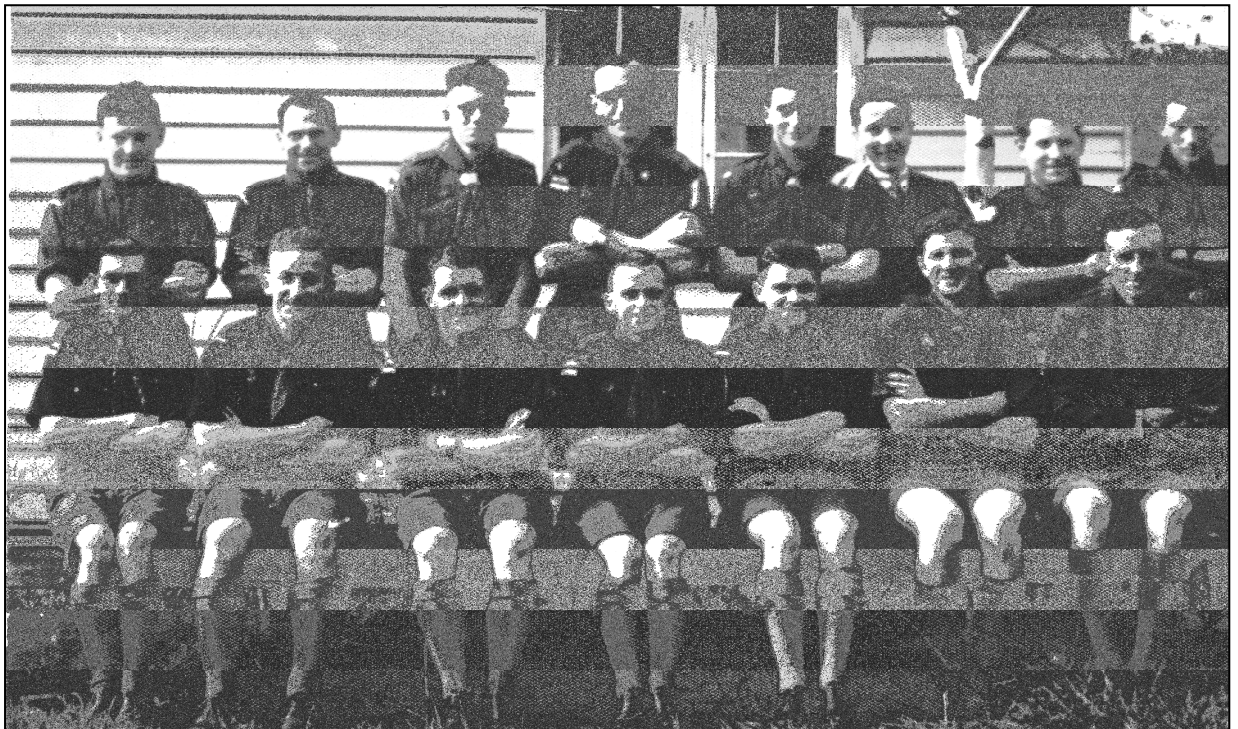


## Alex McAllister YHS 1935--1938

I read with interest Steve Gray's account of his time in the Yallourn Cubs, Scouts & Venturers (Rovers). My time was very much earlier - Cubs 1933, Scouts 1935 and Rovers 1939. During that period and until I left Yallourn, the Scout Hall was situated on the eastern side of Northway and the railway line. To get there from the general store, you walked or rode a bicycle north past Doctor Andrew's house, turned right into Centreway with the police station on the left and headed east, crossing Northway then under the railway bridge, turned right and the Scout Hall was on the left hand side, the Rover Hut was on the north west corner of the block. During my time in the Cubs, the leader Akela was a Mr Bingham who was assisted by Baloo, a Miss Hardacre his fiancée whom he later married. Her father owned one of the local bus companies. One of the highlights of being in the Cubs were the weekend camps at Morwell Bridge, leaving Friday after school & returning home on Sunday.

We had a trek cart - it had a wheel on each side roughly four feet (1.23 metres) diameter with a yoke in the front manned by two Cubs and a rope on either side with hand grips knotted, in which were taken up by others, the cart was loaded up with tents and provisions and was pulled from the Scout Hall along Northway as far as the Princes Highway, held back as we went down the hill across the railway line then on to a farm owned by McDonald's at Morwell Bridge. We camped alongside the Morwell River, collecting our milk Saturday and Sunday mornings from the farm, swam & caught yabbies in the river and then reluctantly returned home on the Sunday afternoon - life could not get much better than that.

The leader of the Scouts was a Mr Ron Boyd and during my time as a Scout, I rose to the dizzy heights of Patrol Leader and attended the World Jamboree held at Frankston just prior to the beginning of the war. After Scouts, it was on to the Rover Crew - the photograph below was probably taken early 1939. Ted Belcher was lost when the HMAS Sydney was sunk...



**Back Row:** ? Gloss, Ron Boyd, Bill Collins, Doc Andrew, Peter Gregson, Alex McAllister, ..... , Jim Irving

**Front Row:** Eddie Toy, ..... , Ernie Trusler, Cliff Cleverly, Ted Belcher, ..... , .....

The leader of the crew at that time was John McMahon & later Cliff Cleverly. The planning for the construction of the hut on Mt Erica, the gathering of the materials, the construction of the frames and the transport of the materials and completed frames to the bottom of Mt Erica by vehicle, then on to the Mushroom rocks on the backs of the members of the crew was almost completed before I joined and construction of the hut well under way however, I was involved in the transport of one frame and I can assure you it was work with a capital W!



*Not a good photo, I am the one on the extreme right*

During the construction and while on the mountain, we camped in the lee of the Mushroom rocks and eventually the hut was completed.



*Front*



*Interior - Vic Greer, Keith Carter & Jim Irving*

It is probably hard to believe but after a day on the slopes, once inside a sleeping bag the bunks shown at the back were very comfortable.

Once the hut was completed, the only thing that stopped us skiing was no skis and the only way we were going to get them was to make them. The timber we used was mountain ash. We shaped it and using a home-made steamer, managed to get the curve at the forward end then made the bindings to fit the ski. To waterproof the the army type boots, we used Dubbin, to waterproof our trousers we soaked them in a mixture of kerosene and paraffin wax, hung them out and when the kerosene had evaporated, ironed them. When all this was completed, we were in business. It was then get to Mt Erica after work on Friday, climb up to the hut, sleep; up at first light, breakfast, then either ski around Mushroom rocks or climb to the top - it was marvellous!



*Keith Carter, Vic Greer, Max Milner, Vern Dodemaide, John Irving, Bill Collins, unknown, Self,*

Peter Gregson  
Kneeling: Jim Irving, Bill Kerr



*Alex McAllister - Mushroom Rocks 1944*

I remained with the Rover Crew until I left Yallourn in January 1946 and for the next 8 years, sailed as an engineer on British ships. In 1950, I married and in 1954 came ashore and settled in WA. I still have fond memories of Yallourn - it was a wonderful town to grow up in.