



*Balwyn Historical Society*

*A Compilation of  
Newsletter Articles*

*January 2011–December 2012*

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## The Symes of Tourmont (Tour Mont)\*

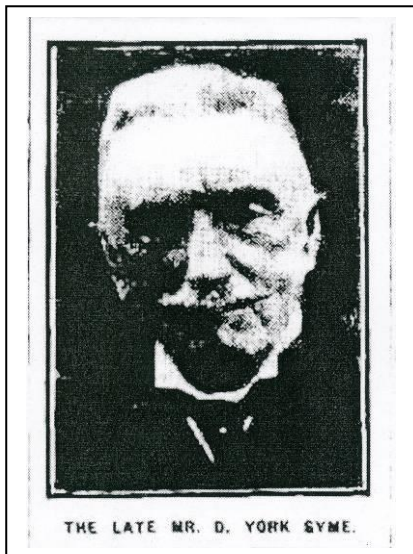


Photo: *Argus*, 19 Dec. 1932

David Yorke Syme was born in Castle Bellingham, County Louth, Ireland in 1844. As a young boy he was first apprenticed to a surgeon and apothecary. However, it appears that this career was not to his liking and he was later apprenticed to a draper in Dublin. At the age of 18 he left Ireland for Australia aboard the sailing ship, *Highflyer*. On his arrival in Sydney in February 1863, he found employment with a wholesale soft-goods firm. Some time after his arrival he also obtained a commission in the Royal Sydney Artillery and joined in the weekly field gun practice firing at Dawes point.

David York Syme married Mary Eliza Reid, daughter of Rev. John Reid in 1867. In the early 1870s when cotton was realizing a high price, David York Syme purchased a cotton plantation in Fiji. However, after trouble with labourers and a sharp decline in cotton prices, he abandoned the plantation. In 1873 the Symes left Sydney and sailed to Victoria where they settled in Williamstown. For some years David York Syme served as manager of the Floating Dock and Engineering Works at Williamstown. David York Syme, his brother-in-law Mr. Hugh Reid, and others then formed the Melbourne Steamship Company of which he was chairman of directors for over twenty years.

Throughout his long career David Yorke Syme held key positions in many business organizations and community institutions, including the Employers' Federation, the Marine Board, the Pilots' Superannuation Fund and the Provident Loan Society of Victoria, the Swinburne Technical College council and the Austin Hospital committee. He was also associated with other charitable institutions. Locally he was very involved with the Canterbury Presbyterian Church and the Canterbury Bowling Club.

Mary Eliza Syme was also engaged in charitable and political pursuits. (Her brother, Sir George Reid, served as Premier of New South Wales and was Australia's 4<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister from 1904-5). In 1904, together with Mrs. Edward Snowdon, Mrs Syme convened a meeting at the Camberwell Grammar School to form a local branch of the Australian Women's National League. The League, a conservative organization, played a large part in achieving universal women's suffrage throughout Australia. Besides educating women in politics, it also aimed to combat socialism, support the monarchy and empire, and safeguard the interests of home, women and children. In an article in the *Hobart Mercury* (1906) it was noted that Mrs Syme's home was often the scene of brilliant gatherings for all sorts of deserving causes. On one occasion she entertained about three hundred people in the grounds of *Tourmont* so that her guests could meet the "lady doctors at the Victoria Hospital". She also served on the committee of the Women's Hospital.

Mary Eliza Syme died at *Tourmont* on November 14, 1915. David York Syme died there on 17 December 1932. Both were buried in the Boroondara Cemetery. Five adult children survived them. Francis Mark Syme (b.1874) who married Marion Barr; David Yorke Syme jnr. (b.1876) who married Jessie Mary Laycock and who succeeded his father as chairman of the Melbourne Steamship Company; Marion Elizabeth Yorke Syme (b.1869) who married George Ernest Wiseman; Helen Isabella Syme (b.1871) who married Benjamin Bradshaw and Rona Martelli Syme (b.1885) who married James Murray. Another son, Ronald Martelli Syme died in 1884, aged 3.

### **Tourmont\* 79 Balwyn Road**

*Tourmont* was built on land which had originally been part of Andrew Murray's *Balwyn*. It is thought to have been designed by the architect John Beswicke. The Syme family moved into their newly built Balwyn Road house c 1892.

In the Camberwell Conservation Study of 1991 it is described as appearing to consist of: "two buildings of three-colour face brick: one a two-storey, iron verandahed house; the other a French chateaux with a dash of English Tudor. This duality (being) pronounced by the central placement of a trussed gable set into the upper verandah of the northern wing which, with its sparse detail, differs markedly from the other ornate and Tudoresque half-timbered and trussed gable to the south".



*Tourmont*

Photos: Steve McLean 2008



*Tourmont*

Following David Yorke Syme's death, *Tourmont* was advertised for sale in 1933. Interestingly the Syme family placed a covenant on the sale stipulating that the house never be used as a school, laundry or flats. At the time Margaret Cunningham, a teacher at *Fintona* which was then in Camberwell, was looking for a house in which to establish a new school. Fortunately she was able to persuade the Syme family, who were acquainted with her uncle, Sir Edward Cunningham, editor of the *Argus*, to sell her *Tourmont*. Not long afterwards Miss Hughston, owner of *Fintona*, offered to sell Margaret Cunningham the goodwill of the school. With Margaret Cunningham as headmistress, *Fintona Girls' School* moved to *Tourmont* in 1936.

\* *Tourmont* frequently appears as *Tour Mont* in newspaper articles and advertisements during the Syme years

(Patricia O'Dwyer - January-February 2011)

Sources: *Argus* 13 July, 1904, 19 December, 1932, 14 October, 1933, 13 July 1934  
Butler, Graeme, *Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, Vol. 4*  
Gillison, Joan, *Margaret Cunningham of Fintona*, Fintona Girls' School, 1982  
*Hobart Mercury*, 10 February, 1906  
NSW and Victorian Births, Deaths & Marriages

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## Deepdene State School Turns 100

### The first fifty years

In the early years of the twentieth century a growing number of families with children in the Deepdene area led to the need for a new school. In 1911 Deepdene State School opened in the Deepdene Congregational Church Hall\* which was then situated in Gordon Street (known as Normanby Road at that time) opposite King Street. Mr. Norman P Dick was the first head teacher in 1911. He was followed by Mr. Rueben Patton in 1912 and Mr. William Thomas in 1913.

Student numbers reached almost 100 in 1914 and complaints were being made to the Education Department about lack of playing space, an unsatisfactory water supply and insufficient toilet facilities. These complaints were usually accompanied by requests for a new school. By the beginning of 1915, a new two-roomed, wooden school had been erected on Education Department land in Burke Road. This building housed eight grades of students. William Thomas (head teacher 1913- 1927) supervised the transfer of students to the new school and oversaw its development for several years.

The years following World War 1 saw further sub-divisions of land in the Deepdene area. As school attendance increased so did the need for further accommodation. In 1922 a six-roomed two storey brick building was erected. Prefabricated buildings were supplied in the late 1940s to cater for the post war baby boom and further additions were made in 1966.

When Deepdene State School celebrated its seventy fifth anniversary in 1986, it published *Deepdene Primary School: The First Seventy-five Years – 1911-1986* in which some of the earliest students recalled their school days. Haidee Davies (Hagland), a student from 1911-1919, remembered the unheated one-room school in Gordon Street and the lovely fires in the new two-roomed school in Burke Road. She also remembered “Mr. Thomas (chasing) a naughty boy over the ‘Shoot’ paddock, so called because people shot birds there”.\*\*

Rose Lloyd (1919-1925) recalled:

*I used to stand on the post and rail fence to wave to the engine driver on the Outer Circle Line. Over the railway line and beyond Gordon Street were small farms, from which many of the children came to Deepdene. I started school in the little wooden building where we sat 3 to a desk in Grade 1... We did all our work on slates to start with. The teacher ticked the work with coloured chalk and I remember leaving these marks on my board all day to take home to show my mother at night. Once a week I bought a pie at the tuck shop for threepence or occasionally a rabbit pie for fourpence.*



Many of our members will have later memories of their days at Deepdene State School. We would be pleased to hear from them and perhaps compile a collection of members' memories to pass on to the school.

\*The Congregational Church building was later moved to the corner of Leonard Street and Whitehorse Road.

\*\*The "Shoot" paddock between King Street and Ropley Avenue was home of the Melbourne Sparrow and Starling Shooting Box, later the Hawthorn Shooting Club.

Sources:

Blake, L. J. ed. *Vision and Realisation: a centenary history of state education in Victoria*, Melb., Gov. Printer, 1973

*Deepdene Primary School: The First Seventy-five Years – 1911-1986.*

(Patricia O'Dwyer – March 2011)



Deepdene State School - Grade 1D 1947

Photo: Courtesy of Dawn Pritchard



Deepdene State School - Grade VA 1952

Photo: Courtesy of Dawn Pritchard

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## Australians in World War 1.

During the First World War 416,808 men and woman enlisted in the armed forces. They were all volunteers. This represented 8.5% of the Australian population and 38.7% of the population in the 18-44 age range.

Total Australian casualties (wounded or killed) were 215,585 out of the 331,781 i.e. 64.98% of those who embarked for service. This was a higher casualty figure than that of any other Commonwealth country.

Patsy Adam-Smith in her book *The Anzacs* states:

They had gone ardent innocents. Few would have read Rupert Brookes' concept of war and soldiering, 'like swimmers into cleanness leaping', but they would have agreed with him. They had been schooled on heroic literature and not until they walked on the 'sickly-sweet smelling corpses' in the mud of the Western Front did they meet their moment of truth. Once having faced it they could never go back, but the world they would return to was a stable world where values remained unchanged for centuries.

For over four years Australians troops endured the horrific conditions that prevailed at Gallipoli and the Western Front – heat, icy conditions, mud, flies, lice, the smell of death, the cries of the wounded, the sight of mangled bodies (some of whom were their own mates), the constant noise of gun and artillery fire, poor food and lack of water.

They marched long distances with heavy packs, they slept often in the open for long periods of time. They witnessed the destruction of towns and cities and the displacement and suffering of the local inhabitants. They had intermittent contact with 'home' despite the best efforts of the mail service. They worried about their families and they probably understated how they were faring so as not to alarm their loved ones.

Approximately 2,200 nurses served overseas staffing the hospitals which received huge numbers of wounded soldiers. They too saw the horrors of war, as they tended the wounded and watched many young men die from their injuries. Many nurses wrote to the families of these men about their sons' and husbands' last days.

When the war ended in November 1918, the repatriation process began. It took a year to complete. When eventually the service men and women did return, they were changed people. Apart from the physical effects of injuries and privation, they had locked away in their minds the horror of what they had been through, and these images never left them. They rarely spoke about such things and it was undoubtedly difficult for their families and friends to understand what they had been through.

### **Balwyn Families Touched by War – The White Family**

Charles William White and Edith Andrews were married in 1889. In the following years they had eight children - six boys (one of whom died in infancy) and two girls. The family moved to *Waratah* in Pembroke Road, Balwyn probably in the early 1900s. Charles was a bank manager with the London Bank and the family attended St Barnabas Church in Balwyn Road. The outbreak of war in 1914 began an involvement of the White family in two world wars.

The eldest White son, Norman Studwick, married Irene Smith in 1914 and a son was born to them in 1915. Norman was a 26 year old bank clerk when he enlisted as a gunner in the field artillery on 19 October 1916. He embarked on 11 May 1917 on the *HMAS Shropshire*. During his service in France, he was gassed and suffered wounds to the head and arms. Norman returned to Australia on 7 April 1919. He died in 1965 and is remembered on the Beckett Park War Memorial, the Honour Roll in St. Barnabas Church and on the Walls of Remembrance at Springvale. Both he and his wife, Irene, are buried at Box Hill Cemetery.

The White's elder daughter, Dorothy Sevilla White enlisted as a nurse in the Australian Army Nursing Service on 12 July 1917 and she embarked on the *HMAT Wiltshire* on 31 August 1917. She served in Salonika, Northern Greece, until February 1919 and then in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian Army Hospital in England. Dorothy returned to Australia on 6 November 1919. Dorothy did not marry and died in 1976. She is one of the three women remembered on the Beckett Park War memorial and her name also appears on the St. Barnabas Honour Roll.

The White's second son, Charles, was the first of the White boys to enlist when, as a nineteen year old, he joined the 37<sup>th</sup> Battalion on 6 March 1916. Charles embarked on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1916 on the *HMAS Persic*. He suffered a gunshot wound to his arm in 1917 and was Mentioned in Dispatches. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in the 38<sup>th</sup> Battalion and arrived home on 12 May 1919. In 1931 Charles married Frances Richardson. When World War II broke out, Charles once again enlisted and served in the 4<sup>th</sup> Training Battalion. Charles died in



1991 and is buried in the Box Hill Cemetery. His name also appears on the Beckett Park Memorial.

The White's fourth son, Robert Gordon, was too young to enlist for WW1. However, he served in World War 11, enlisting on 1 July 1940 with the 4<sup>th</sup> Reserve Motor Transport Company. After being captured by the Japanese, he fortunately survived as a prisoner of war in Thailand until the end of the war. He was discharged with the rank of Sergeant on 20 November 1945. Robert married Aileen Victoria Honybun in 1925 and died in 1983. He is remembered on the Walls of Remembrance at Springvale.

Geoffrey Morrice White, youngest son of the family, also served in World War 11. He enlisted on 17 March 1941 and was discharged on 19 September 1944.

It is interesting to note the connection of the White family with the Honybun family who lived on the corner of Belmore and Balwyn Roads. A White brother and sister married a Honybun sister and brother. As noted above Robert Gordon White married Aileen Victoria Honybun in 1925. Frances Emma White, the younger White daughter, married William Lewis Honybun.

Aileen and William Honybun's brother Anthony was also a WW1 soldier, enlisting on 14 August 1914 and returning to Australia in 1920 as a lieutenant with the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion. He was awarded the Military Cross for action at Polygon Wood in France, an action in which he was wounded.

Another brother, Charles Henry Honybun, also served in WW1. Both are named on the St. Barnabas Honour Roll.

Bill Pritchard  
(April 2011)

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## **Deepdene – Where did the name come from?**

On 3 November 1883 the *Argus* first advertised an area of land for sale called the *Deepdene Estate*. This land was on the south east corner of what is now the Burke and Whitehorse roads intersection. It was approximately 6 hectares and was subdivided into 35 building allotments. In 1858 the land had belonged to the market gardener Henry Finger, and then in 1870 to Harry Curtis, also a market gardener.

The advertisement for the sale of the land stated that: *the estate was so-called (Deepdene) after the celebrated estate of Mr.*

*Hope near London in consequence of the extraordinary similarity of magnificent views from the two estates.*

An early purchaser of an allotment was Mr. Robert Smythe who built *Highgate* on the hill facing Burke Road in 1885. The architect, David Askew, had built his home facing Whitehorse Road by 1889 and he named his house *Deepdene House* after the estate. Sadly it was demolished some years ago. A photograph of the property from circa 1910 is in Jan Pigot's charming *Pictures of Camberwell: a Progressive City*, (1989, p55).

In November 1890 Councillor Arthur Taylor, headmaster of the new Camberwell Grammar School, suggested Deepdene as the name for the new Outer Circle Railway station which was on the northern side of Whitehorse Road.

In later years Deepdene was used to name a school, churches, park, post office, and sporting clubs in the vicinity of Whitehorse Road.

(Thanks to Gwen McWilliam for this article.)

And Commanding  
**MAGNIFICENT VIEWS.**

**C** J. and T. HAM have been favoured by the owners with instructions to SELL by PUBLIC AUCTION, on the ground, corner of Hurke and Cotham roads, on Saturday, 10th April, at three o'clock,

That valuable property known as the  
**DEEFDENE ESTATE,**  
comprising in all  
**SIXTEEN ACRES,**  
occupying the grandest position in Hawthorn, opposite the residence of A. F. Moleson, Esq., and just beyond that of G. H. Taylor, Esq.  
Subdivided as under:—

**11 MAGNIFICENT ALLOTMENTS,**  
having frontages of 80ft. to 100ft. to  
**HURKE-ROAD**  
by the fine depth of 210ft.  
**5 SPLENDID SITES,**  
having frontages of 70ft. to 110ft. to  
**COTHAM-ROAD**  
by a grand depth of 200ft.  
**19 DESIRABLE ALLOTMENTS,**  
having frontages of about 80ft. each to  
**DEEFDENE-ROAD**  
by the unusual depth of 225ft. 7in.

This charming property is splendidly situated in one of the most popular of the Melbourne suburbs, within half-an-hour's ride by rail or road of the city. It may be confidently stated that no similar  
**SITES for LARGE MANSIONS**  
exist near Melbourne.

The outlook from Deepdene, combining extensive sea and inland views, forms a  
**PANORAMA of FIFTY MILES,**  
in which valleys and villages, snow-clad mountains, and verdure-clothed hills, sea and river, are so grouped as to form a picture that for variety and beauty is, perhaps, unequalled in the colony.

No building or plantation can ever intercept the prospect from this  
**UNIQUE SPOT,**  
The steepness of the land preventing any obstruction to the view.

The fine crops of healthy fruit trees, and fine flower-gardens now on the estate, are the best proofs of the  
**RICHNESS OF THE SOIL.**

The Camberwell Railway station is within easy walking distance of the estate, and there are  
**FIFTEEN MINUTE TRAINS**  
During the greater portion of the day.

The many large houses erected and in course of erection in the neighbourhood show clearly that the locality is rapidly growing in favour with the public, while it is indisputable that this land occupies one of the most hygienic spots in the  
**HEALTHIEST SUBURB**  
of Melbourne.

The Yan Yean is laid on to the ground, and the auctioneers can unhesitatingly urge those in search of an unrivalled site to make early inspection of this grand property.

For particulars of title, apply G. H. Taylor, Esq., solicitor, Queen-street.

Terms—One-fifth cash, balance 6, 12, 18, and 24 months, at 5 per cent.

Plans and railway passes can be obtained on application at the rooms of the auctioneers, 48 Swanston-street.

Advertisement for Deepdene Estate Allotments  
Source: *Argus*, 10 April, 1884

## Empire Day 1909

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Empire Day (24 May), which commemorated Queen Victoria's birthday, was widely celebrated in the local area with processions and illuminations. By 1921 an Empire Day bonfire at Beckett Park added to the carnival atmosphere of the occasion. The 1909 procession with its fleet of mock dreadnoughts (battleships) and decorated carts involved elaborate preparation by local shopkeepers and residents.

The residents of Balwyn have in one respect an advantage over the people in other parts of the district, because they form a compact community. Co-operation is much easier to arrange there than in a more scattered locality. And, moreover, the Balwynites all work together in any movement of a progressive kind. Mr. Charlie Werrett is always one of the prime movers. His shop is the centre from which the public spirit radiates like the spoke of a wheel. Naturally, therefore, The Empire Day celebration began in that very place. The proposal that Australia should present a Dreadnought to the Mother Country naturally suggested the utilization of one of those ships of battle in the procession. The idea seemed to strike several people at the one time, with the result that there were sufficient Dreadnoughts on wheels on Monday night to almost sink the fleet of the Kaiser. But the Balwyn Dreadnought was perhaps the best of them all. It was 23 feet long, with a beam of 6 ft. 9 in. There was a real furnace and a real fire, in charge of a juvenile stoker. "Admiral Werrett was in command, and showed off the gold lace on his uniform to advantage. It is, perhaps, not usual for an admiral to give orders direct to the stoke hole, but it was

wonderful to see the alacrity with which his order to "Stoke her up, Billy!" was obeyed. If the German emperor could have seen this "Dreadnought" he would no doubt haul down his flag. The timber used in building the ship was given by Mr. Leleu, and the armour plate was deftly manufactured out of kerosene tins. Mr. James Ainger supplied the splendid pair of horses and wagon on which the boat was placed. Another tableau from Balwyn was called "An Englishman's Home," arranged and built by Mr. Tudgey. There was a slab hut, with a properly thatched roof, standing in the midst of a garden with a big fruit tree in each corner laden with real fruit. This is just the kind of home a "Dreadnought" was made to defend. The dairy farming industry was represented by a real cow on a wagon and a number of decorated milk carts. The Balwyn procession started from Whitehorse road and joined the Surrey Hills contingent in Canterbury road after traversing Balwyn road, Mont Albert road, Victoria avenue and Maling road. There were 20 Scotchmen in kilts, the Darktown fire brigade, arranged by Mr. Percy Smith, and last, but not least, the Cranky band extracting music from frying pans and other culinary utensils.

Source: *The Box Hill Reporter* 28 May 1909.

(Thanks to Kew Lyall for this newspaper article.)

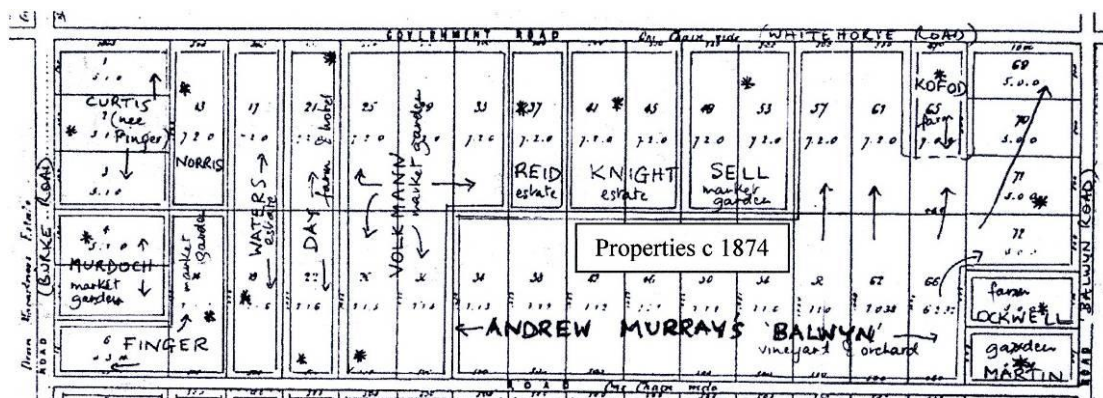
(May 2011)

### **Andrew Murray of Balwyn**

Andrew Murray was born in Kirkbean, Scotland and attended Glasgow University. In 1839 he arrived in Adelaide and formed a drapery business – Murray, Greig and Co. When this venture failed he turned to journalism, becoming the editor, and later proprietor, of the *South Australian*. In 1851 he founded the *Adelaide Morning Chronicle* but sold it in 1853. Murray, his wife Jessie, and children moved to Melbourne where he became the commercial and political editor of the *Argus*. Some years later (1855-6) he took over the editorship of the paper.

In 1859 Murray purchased several blocks of land in Boroondara at the cost of 1,437 pounds.<sup>1</sup> This land, totalling approximately 103 acres, had frontages to what are now Whitehorse, Balwyn, and Mont Albert roads. Here Murray established a vineyard and built a house for his family. John David Murray, Andrew Murray's oldest surviving son, wrote in response to a query about the origin of the name Balwyn:

the name was an invention of my father and he was very pleased with it. I pointed out that 'Bal' was Gaelic and 'Wyn' Saxon, but he said that it did not matter for 'Bal' was so often attached to other names in the sense of "the home of" ... and he said "The Home of the Vine" was near enough for him.<sup>1</sup>



Likely sites of properties according to research undertaken in Council rate records etc by G. McWilliam.

Source: McWilliam, Gwen, *A Balwyn Survey*, 2010

Murray had been interested in wine growing since his days in South Australia. His first venture as a vigneron was in 1851 when he planted one of the first vineyards in the vicinity of Adelaide.<sup>2</sup> During Murray's days as editor of the *Argus*, the paper reprinted an article on winegrowing which compared the favourable climate and soil conditions in South Australia and Spain.<sup>3</sup> He continued to encourage and promote the wine industry in both Victoria and South Australia for many years.

In 1860 the *Argus* offered a prize for vineyards and the Judges of the Vineyards visited Murray's property in 1861. At that time only about two acres had been cleared and planted with an assortment of table and wine grapes. The judges reported that:

about eight acres had been enclosed with a substantial five-feet paling fence whilst hedges of ... blue gum tree and the handsome *Grevillia robusta* are planted in a treble row near the northern boundary, sheltering thus the vines against northerly winds.<sup>4</sup>

Once settled at *Balwyn*, Andrew Murray played a significant part in the local community. Among other roles he was chairman of the Boroondara District Road Board for several years, chairman of St Barnabas church committee in 1872 and on committees to establish local schools.

Although Murray won prizes for his wines at the Grand National Exhibition in Geelong in 1866–2<sup>nd</sup> prize for his red wine and an honourable mention for his white wine - his vineyard was not sufficient to provide an adequate income. He continued his newspaper career, founding and editing *Murray's Prices Current* (1862-67) and the *Economist* (1862-75). By the mid sixties Murray began

<sup>1</sup> Reichl, Phyllis, *Andrew Murray of Balwyn House Boroondara*, Camberwell Historical Society, 1985

<sup>2</sup> *South Australian Register*, 23 Sept., 1873

<sup>3</sup> Reichl, op. cit

<sup>4</sup> Reichl, op. cit



to have financial difficulties. His seven roomed cottage, coach-house and stable at East Melbourne were on the market in 1866 and several blocks of his Balwyn land were mortgaged.

Numerous advertisements appeared in the *Argus* during 1870-71 for Murray's wine. At first pint bottles of wine were advertised at 12 shillings a dozen, later in the year the price had dropped to 9 shillings a dozen suggesting that sales were not readily forthcoming. In October 1871 the wine up for auction consisted of vintages from 1869-71 comprising Sauvignon, Cabernet, Verdelho, Hermitage, Reisling and Mataro. Reichl suggests that although the wines were good they did not suit the taste of Melbournians who, at that time, preferred heavier sweetened reinforced wines.<sup>5</sup>

In January 1872, 40 acres of land adjoining his vineyard were also put up for auction. However, by October 1874 Murray was insolvent – the causes given were losses on the Economist and Town and Country newspapers and an inability to collect debts. Shortly after, the first advertisement appeared for the sale of Murray's Balwyn property. It was not to be a quick sale. It was still on the market in 1876.

The advertisements do, however, give a picture of Murray's Balwyn house and property. On 30 January 1875 the property is described as comprising 102 acres, 13 perches with frontages to three roads, a vineyard of 30 acres, a 9 roomed family residence (fronting Balwyn Road), outbuildings, four stall stables, wine cellar, and two-roomed brick labourer's cottage. The house, built of Egyptian bricks had a slate roof and verandah. On the property was also "a very valuable deposit of finest stone clay – used in the manufacture of pottery". When advertised in 1876 further details of the house emerge. The commodious residence was then said to contain "drawing and dining rooms, parlour, three bedrooms, kitchen, servants' room, cool wine cellar, stables, coach-house, sheds, also a wine vault cellar...About ten acres around the house is laid out in garden and orchard...with many new and beautiful shrubs".<sup>6</sup>

It seems that when William Cherry bought 22 acres of Murray land with a house, it was this house he bought. It was most likely demolished by the Eaglesons after 1900 to build *Glencairn*. When additions were made to Fintona Girls School in 1965 remains of a two-roomed clay-brick, shingled roofed building were uncovered and demolished - possibly the servants' quarters and wine vault.<sup>7</sup>

Andrew Murray and his family moved to a property in Gippsland c1875 and there Murray died on 8 October 1880 at his home *Balbrechan* (Home of the Ferns) in Yarragon. His coffin was brought by train to Melbourne then conveyed to Kew. There he was interred in the Boroondara Cemetery in the grave which held two of his late daughters - Agnes Andalusia (b. & d. 1863) and Eliza Brodie (1846-1864).

### **Andrew Murray's family**

Andrew Murray married Jessie Spence in Adelaide in 1841. She had arrived with her family from Scotland in 1839. Her younger sister, Catherine Helen Spence (1825-1910), is a figure of national

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<sup>5</sup> Reichl, Phyllis, op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> McWilliam, Gwen *A Balwyn Survey*, McWilliam Enterprises, 2010 p.123

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.* pp.148-149



significance. Besides being one of the first women authors to use an Australian setting for her novels, Catherine Spence was also a renowned social and political activist in South Australia.

Andrew and Jessie's first five children were born in Adelaide – Helen (b.1842 d.1846), Mary Ann (1844), Eliza Brodie (1846), William (1848), John David (1851). After moving to 240 Albert Street, East Melbourne further children were born – Catherine Helen (Kate) (1853), George (1855), Edward Stirling (1856) and Margaret Brodie (1858) Agnes Andalusia (b. & d. 1863).

Around 1859 Jessie with some or all of the children travelled back to Scotland. There in Edinburgh in September 1860 the Murray's youngest son, Edward Stirling, died. Further tragedy was to follow once the family had settled on their property in Balwyn. Agnes Andalusia was born in 1863 and died before her first birthday. The following year the Murray's second daughter, Eliza Brodie, aged 17, also died.

Only one of the Murray children appears to have married. At *Balwyn* in 1869, Marianne (Mary Ann) married Andrew Handyside of Penola, South Australia. The other four surviving children – John, George, Kate and Margaret - accompanied their parents to Gippsland. There Jessie Murray died in 1888 from blood poisoning which resulted from injuries suffered when a tree branch fell on her.

Sources:

<http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/adbonline.htm>

*Argus*: September, 1860, 2 March, 1864, 30 May, 1866, 12 October, 1866, 12 September, 1869, 29 January, 1870, 1 October 1874, 14 October 1871, 15 December, 1874, 30 January, 1875, 22 December, 1875

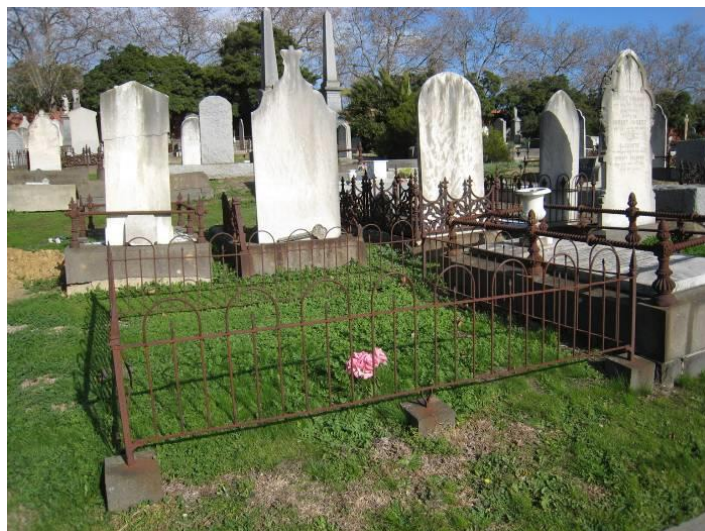
McWilliam, Gwen A *Balwyn Survey*, McWilliam Enterprises, 2010

Reichl, Phyllis, *Andrew Murray of Balwyn House Boroondara*, Camberwell Historical Society, 1985

*Victorian Births, Deaths & Marriages*

(Patricia O'Dwyer)

June 2011



*Grave of Andrew Murray, Agnes & Eliza Murray*

*Source: Steve McLean, 2008*

## **Deepdene and Balwyn Football Clubs – The early years**

Local sporting clubs played an important role in the life of the Balwyn community in the early nineteen hundreds. Not only did they encourage participation in sport but they also served a social role in the community with dances, and social evenings and fund-raising events. Ken Lyall has spent many years collecting information and photos of both Balwyn and Deepdene Football Clubs which he has kindly given us. Below is a brief account of the beginnings of both clubs based on his research.

The first football teams were established in the outer eastern suburbs a few years after the railway line was extended from Hawthorn to Lilydale in 1882. A Canterbury team is recorded as playing in 1883 and a Camberwell team dates from 1885.

The Deepdene Football Club was the first to be established in the Balwyn area. It fielded teams between 1911 and 1914 after which time all senior football was suspended for the duration of the First World War. Where the team played in those years is a matter of conjecture. However, as the team was said to have used a room at the Survey Hotel as a changing room it is probable the game was played behind the hotel or on land close by.

In 1924 Deepdene Park was officially opened. This land, approximately eight acres, had previously been known as McNeil's private recreation grounds and was generously donated to the Camberwell Council by Alexander McNeil. After the opening, local residents quickly set about raising funds to provide facilities so that the park could be used by a number of sporting teams including cricket, tennis and football teams.

In 1932 the Deepdene Football Club became part of the Eastern Suburban League and continued as a club until 1962, the only break being during the war years (1941-45) when many of the district's young men once again joined the armed forces. Local teams inspired great loyalty in many players. The *Argus* (7 June 1940) noted that Vice Captain of Deepdene, Archie Scott, (best and fairest in 1938 and 39) had travelled from Ballarat every week for five years to play with Deepdene.



**Deepdene Football Club 1932 – Photo courtesy Ken Lyall**

While senior football was suspended from 1915-1918, a junior team was established in Balwyn in 1917. In 1922 a senior Balwyn Football Team was up and playing in Balwyn Park on land which had been purchased by the Camberwell Council in 1911.

A two-storey weatherboard structure was erected behind the northern end of the oval. As well as serving as dressing room it was also the home of the Balwyn Brass Band. In 1929 Balwyn Park was fenced and became an “enclosed ground”. Many residents were unimpressed by this fence. They now had to purchase tickets for district final games which were played at Balwyn Park. The small ticket box can still be seen in the stone pillars which marked the entrance to the grounds. A grandstand was built on the site of the present clubrooms in 1935 and the old building was shifted to adjoin the tennis courts in 1941. It remains there although it has been brick veneered.

After four moderately successful seasons, Balwyn were finalists in 1926. In 1927 they won their first premiership which was celebrated with a large Premiership Ball. Under the coaching of Bill Hudd, the team again took the Eastern District League premiership flag in 1933 and 1934. For small boys living in the Balwyn area, local footballers were heroes. Several of the Balwyn players moved on to the AFL, including Ray Gibb who played for Hawthorn (1950-52) and Richmond (1952-3) and Freddy Wain who played for Hawthorn (1949-51).

After another enforced break during the Second World War, the team reformed and Balwyn Football Club continues to be a strong club in the Eastern Football League.



**Balwyn Football Club – 1927 – Photo Courtesy Ken Lyall**

1927 Senior team – Victorian Football League Sub-District Association – “B” Grade Premiers.

Back row: A.E. Morris, W. Smith, J. Harvey, W. Pockett (Pres), T. Page (Treas), H. Moss (Sec)

2<sup>nd</sup> back row: J. Nugent, R. Shaw, F. Fanning, P. Taylor, J. Brown, J. Bagley, W. Daley, A. Gough, J. Stewart, L. Smith.

Front row: L. Cooke, L. Jerrams, W. Hiscock, C. Hawking (Vice-capt), V. Empey (Capt & Coach), M. Feehan, A.

Rudd, K. Jenkins, A. Blake, A. Scanlan, D. Nelson, J. Sinclair, J. Mathews.

(July 2011)

### **Balwyn’s Aboriginal Connections**

Balwyn is located on Wurundjeri land. Before European settlement, the Wurundjeri, a clan of the Kulin Nation, moved seasonally in small groups hunting and gathering food around their territory in the Yarra Valley. The high ground of Robert Reid’s estate in Balwyn was an Aboriginal lookout

and camping ground. A scar on a large old river gum in Beckett Park is believed to have been made by the Wurundjeri to indicate the site of a permanent freshwater spring and two other tree trunks in the Maranoa Gardens bear the scars where bark was removed for other purposes such as fashioning a coolamon or constructing a mia mia. Another Aboriginal scar tree can be seen in Belmore Road, Balwyn.

European settlement displaced the Wurundjeri from their traditional land and by the 1860s the remnants of the groups along the Yarra were herded with others from different tribes to Coranderrk, near Healesville.

In the twentieth century Balwyn became the home or workplace of some prominent Aboriginal identities.

**Harold Blair**, the famous tenor, ran a milk bar for a time in Whitehorse Road, Deepdene, in the 1950s. Sponsored by John Lloyd in Kew, he had come to Melbourne from Cherbourg in Queensland to study singing at the Melba Conservatorium in Richmond. Harold married Dorothy Eden of Camberwell, a fellow student at the Conservatorium, and went on to achieve fame on the national and international stage. Harold was also a prominent campaigner for Aboriginal rights and was involved with the Aborigines Advancement League, the Aborigines Welfare Board and the Aboriginal Arts Board. He established the Harold Blair Holiday Project which for over fifteen years brought thousands of children from Cherbourg and other settlements to stay with families in Melbourne and give them an insight into the value of education and to open their horizons.

**Frances Bond** was one of the Aboriginal children from Cherbourg who initially came to Melbourne with the Harold Blair Holiday Project. She worked for Holeproof in Deepdene and studied shorthand and typing at night school. She then worked in various jobs in State and Commonwealth departments, including Aboriginal Education and the Health Department. She is very active in Melbourne's Aboriginal community and was one of the founders of the Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place in Croydon.

**Steve Tregonning**, from Lake Tyers, is another Aborigine who was billeted with a family in Melbourne under the Harold Blair Children's Holiday Project and he later moved to Hawthorn with his mother and older brother, Len. After doing an apprenticeship in Deepdene, Steve went on to become a ranger with Parks Victoria and then to work in the Indigenous Unit of the Victorian Department of Justice.

**Bill Onus**, one of Melbourne's best known Aboriginal identities, lived in Terry Street, Deepdene, for many years through the 1950s and 60s. He was born on Cummeragunja Mission and later settled in Balwyn with his Scottish-born wife, Mary McLintock Kelly. Bill established an Aboriginal handcrafts shop in Belgrave and was famous for his boomerang throwing ability. In 1954, Albert Namatjira visited Melbourne and Bill's shop and stayed with the family in Deepdene. Bill Onus was one of the founders of the Aboriginal Advancement League (Victoria) in 1957, served on the Aborigines Welfare Board and was a leader in the campaign for a 'Yes' vote in the 1967 Referendum.

**Lin Onus**, Bill's son, attended Deepdene State School and Balwyn High School. After leaving school at age 13, he worked for a panel beater in Deepdene. In his twenties, he began building a reputation as an urban Aboriginal artist. He became famous for his unique style of paintings and screen prints which combined western-realist and traditional Aboriginal techniques. He also applied welding and fibre glass skills learnt in panel beating to produce sculptures with powerful social and



political messages. His arresting art works appear in major art galleries across Australia, including the NGV and National Art Gallery.

**Sharon Hodgson**, a Boroondara Aboriginal artist, who once lived in Balwyn, knew Lin when he was still living in Terry Street and he later taught her screen printing in his Upwey studio.

By David Crawford – (David is a member of BHS and of ANTaR Boroondara)

(August 2011)



War Memorial – Beckett Park - 2010

## A Balwyn Death – Murder, Suicide or Accident?

### **MYSTERIOUS MURDER AT BALWYN: THE BODY OF A MAN FOUND IN A WATERHOLE. NO CLUE TO THE MURDERER.**

Such was the heading of a report in the *Argus*, 21 October, 1889.

The report covered the discovery of a body in a waterhole on the Mont Albert road property of Mr. Oliver Vial, a tea merchant of Flinders lane, on 17 October. George Redgrave, a groom, and Henry Gilmore, a gardener, were moving cattle from a paddock near Mr. Vial's house when they noticed what they thought to be a dead dog in a nearby waterhole. They attempted to retrieve the dog with a long pole and rake and were extremely surprised to discover that the body was that of an elderly man. With difficulty they removed the body from the waterhole and informed the police.

Senior Constable Kennedy of the Camberwell police station had the body conveyed to the *Survey Hotel* in Whitehorse road. He then informed the district Coroner, Mr. Candler, who ordered an autopsy to be carried out by Dr. Jenkins of Camberwell. At an inquest at the hotel on Saturday 19 October, Dr. Jenkins reported that the man had no alcohol in his stomach and “the case was not an ordinary one of (drowning) ...but that there were signs that the man had been murdered before he had been thrown into the waterhole”. The inquest was adjourned until 28 October.

In order to ensure that no mistake had been made, the Coroner instructed Dr. Maudsley of Collins Street, a man “who had considerable experience in post mortem work” to proceed to Balwyn. Together with Dr. Jenkins, Dr. Maudsley was to carry out a further examination of the body. This examination



bore out Dr. Jenkins' finding that the death was due to fractures to the skull following great violence.

The case was then passed on to Inspector Kennedy of the Criminal Investigation Branch who placed Detective Sergeant Cawsey in charge of further investigations. Cawsey soon discovered that the body was that of Parlan MacFarlane, who was about 70 years of age. At one time he had been connected with the Industrial Schools Department. However, for the past few years he had been employed bill-posting and electioneering. A law-abiding and sober man, he lived on and off at the Immigrants' Home in St Kilda road. When found MacFarlane had 1 shilling and 2 pence in his pocket so robbery was an unlikely motive. Other than Redgrave's and Gilmore's footprints, only one set of footprints, closely matching those of MacFarlane's boots led to the waterhole. Finding no signs of a struggle, Cawsey believed that "there was nothing to suggest that the man had been murdered and thrown into the water".

A suggestion was made that MacFarlane may have sustained the skull fractures after a "fatal blow on the roadway". The possibility of the injuries being self-inflicted was dismissed and it was decided that further investigation was warranted. The inquest was adjourned.

#### **THE MYSTERIOUS MURDER AT BALWYN** *Argus* 23 October 1889

A little more of MacFarlane's history appeared in this article. He had two sons, one in Windsor and one in South Melbourne, whom he visited regularly. The sons could offer no explanation for why he might have been in Balwyn. Black trackers from Dandenong were to be brought to Balwyn to trace MacFarlane's path through the paddock.

The following day **THE MYSTERIOUS MURDER** became **THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH IN BALWYN**.  
*Argus* 24 October 1889

The police re-questioned Henry Gilmore about his discovery of the body. He stated that after seeing what he took to be a dead black dog he took little notice of it. However, when he returned with the groom, George Redgrave, he took with him a "piece of hardwood quartering 7ft long, and aimed a violent blow at the object...to drive it to shore. The force of the blow caused the object to sink, but it soon rose again, and as it did so he struck it a second time with the same result". Not able to get the object to the edge of the hole, he used a rake to drag the object to the shore. He was concerned that these blows may have caused the skull fractures. However, Detectives Cawsey and Nixon did not attach much importance to his fears as Drs. Jenkins and Maudsley had already dismissed this suggestion.

The detectives were left to look for another explanation for the injuries. A further suggestion was made that MacFarlane may have fallen down the steep Outer Circle Railway embankment, hit his head on the rails then staggered to the waterhole to wash his wounds.

Finally on 29 October 1889 the *Argus* reported the results of the postponed inquest.

#### **THE SUSPICIOUS DEATH AT BALWYN: DEATH DUE TO PARALYSIS OF THE HEART**

At this inquest, Gilmore and Regreave (sic) repeated their stories of finding and retrieving MacFarlane's body, adding that a harrow, which had a footprint between the rungs, was standing in long grass just a short distance from the pond.

Detective Sergeant Cawsey gave evidence about the wandering tracks he had followed through Mr. Vial's orchard to a smaller waterhole about 100 yards away into which MacFarlane had fallen and then climbed out of. An examination of all the tracks led Cawsey to conclude that MacFarlane had lost himself in the dark and wandered into the orchard where he had run against several apple trees. After hitting his head on the

branch of one of them, he had then staggered towards the waterhole where he was found. On the way he had tripped over, or fallen on, the harrow thus possibly sustaining further injuries. Cawsey stated that the black trackers who had been brought to the site confirmed his findings.

Several witnesses then attested to Parlan MacFarlane's state of mind. Charles Webb (commission agent from Fitzroy), George Smith (wardsman from the Immigrants' Home), William MacFarlane (Parlan's son), and a South Melbourne newsagent, all attested that while MacFarlane's bodily health had been good, he had of late been very absent-minded. Webb stated that MacFarlane

(Patricia O'Dwyer)

Research by Pam Herrington suggests that Parlan MacFarland, his wife Ann, and a son Allan, arrived in Melbourne in 1853 on the ship *Goldfinder*. After Ann's death in 1859 it appears that Parlan married Amelia Harcourt with whom he had seven children – 2 boys and 5 girls. His wife Amelia had died in the previous August, just months before this accident.

Oliver Vial's house *Roystead* is now part of Camberwell Grammar School.

(September 2011)

### The Survey Hotel, Whitehorse Road

In September 1865, John Day applied for a publican's licence for a brick and wooden house in Whitehorse Road situated between Walsh Street and Barnsbury Road and conveniently located close to a creek. According to the application, the house contained two sitting rooms and two bedrooms exclusive of the accommodation required for his family and it would be called *Day's Survey Hotel*. The licence was granted the following month.

In 1869 the hotel was advertised to let for a term "to a respectable party". Subsequently over the next sixty years, the licence for the *Survey Hotel* changed hands many times. Among those who held it were, John Davis, John Veale, Ann Veale, William Muir, Samuel Cutts, Elizabeth Cutts, James

was "quite capable of walking from Melbourne to Balwyn and he had distributed bills at local sales in the vicinity of Camberwell".

Finally Dr. Maudsley detailed the post mortem he and Dr. Jenkins had carried out. His conclusion, which was supported by Dr. Jenkins, was that the cause of Parlan MacFarlane's death was "paralysis of the heart, brought on by sudden immersion in cold water whilst suffering from fractures of the skull". In summing up the Coroner concurred with the doctors' finding and the jury "returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence"

Bateman, Mary Ann Cryer, Edward Schmidt and Daisy Stone. Ann Veale, Elizabeth Cutts, Mary Ann Cryer and Daisy Stone were but a few of the many women who held city or suburban hotel licences. Running a hotel was one of the few respectable occupations that a woman could take up to support herself and her family. In fact, in 1899 approximately 30 per cent of licensees were women, many of them widows.

The hotel played an important role in the Balwyn community. Besides being a convenient place for coaches and travellers to stop for refreshments and to water their horses, the hotel also played many other roles in the community. On 26 May 1871 the *South Bourke Standard* reported that a "tolerable program of races and general sports

was carried out at Davis' *Survey Hotel*, for the Queen's Birthday celebrations" and while prizes were not very valuable this seemed "to create rather than spoil the fun of the day, and there were some close contests". The day's events ended with a ball.



Source: *South Bourke Standard*, 19 May, 1871

In the nineteenth century, local inns or hotels also served as a place for inquests into accidental or suspicious deaths. Besides the case of Parlan MacFarlane (reported in last month's newsletter) inquests were held at the hotel into the deaths of Thomas Robert, Jonathon Camm and Edward Tranter.

In the early years of the twentieth century the hotel was also used regularly for meetings of the Melbourne Harriers' Club and as the starting point for the East Suburban Cycling Club relay races and the 10 mile Kew Flyer Road Race.

The Licensing Act proscribed the minimum number of rooms a hotel must have for guests and the number of horses which must be able to be stabled, as well as regulating hours of opening. These were generally 6.00 am till midnight from Monday to Saturday, that is, until World War 1 when 6 o'clock closing was introduced. Only bone fide travellers could be served with alcohol on a Sunday i.e. travellers who were over twenty miles from home. Court records show that many of the

*Survey's* licensees including Elizabeth Cutts, James Bateman, Mary Ann Cryer and Edward Schmidt were charged with Sunday trading and were brought before the court. In most cases the licensees were fortunate enough to have cases against them dismissed.

With a growing temperance movement in the late nineteenth century, there was a move to decrease the number of hotels in Melbourne and the suburbs. A Licence Reduction Board compulsorily closed 773 hotels in the early 1900s and 629 hotels closed voluntarily between 1907 and 1921. The Liquor Reform Act of 1906 allowed for a local option poll to be conducted in suburbs whereby electors could decide whether they wished the existing hotels to continue, be reduced or be closed.

On 21 October, 1920 the poll was held and two licensing districts, Boroondara and Nunawading, voted for prohibition. Soon after Camberwell's hotels, including the *Survey Hotel* were delicensed.

In January 1922 the delicensed *Survey Hotel* was advertised for sale. The site of the hotel was close to where the Holeproof factory was established in the 1940s.

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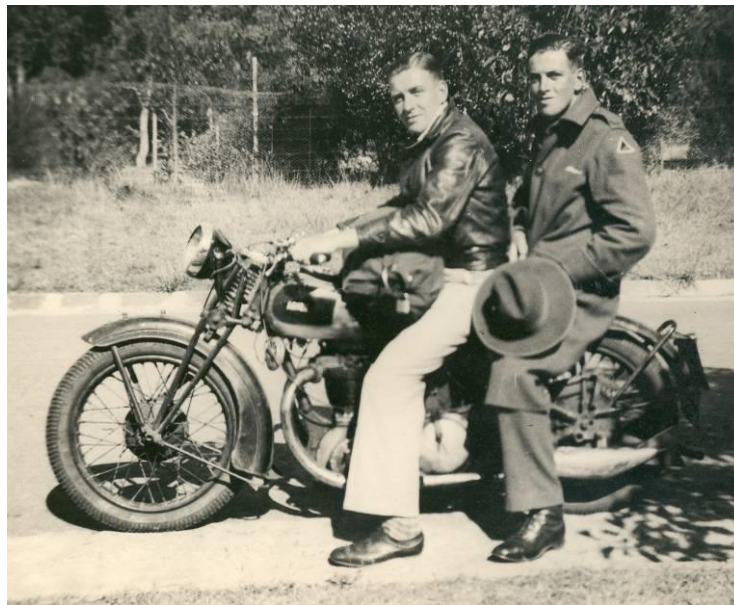
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Patricia O'Dwyer

(October 2011)

## Private Victor Lawrence Gale – a Brave and Gallant Soldier

This year on Remembrance Day as we remember those who served and died in WW1 and WW2, let us commemorate the life of one local hero – Private Victor Lawrence Gale. Victor was born in 1919 in Toronto, NSW, to Arthur and Annie Gale. Around 1923 Arthur and Annie moved to Surrey Hills with their four children, Nell, Eric, Victor and Cyril. Later in the 1930s the family settled into a new home at 37 Kireep Road, Balwyn.



Victor (left) and Cyril Gale  
Courtesy: Bruce Hotton

In July 1940 Victor's younger brother, Cyril, was the first of the Gale boys to join up. His older brother, Eric, also enlisted a month later. After the outbreak of war, Victor worked for a time as a fitter and turner in a munitions factory in Melbourne before travelling up to Sydney to work with the railways. In August 1941 he enlisted at Royal Park, hoping to join Cyril in the Middle East. However, this was not to be. Victor was posted to the 2/10 Ordnance Workshop Company which embarked for Singapore on New Year's Day 1942. On the fall of Singapore in February 1942, Victor became one of the many thousands of Australian and British service men and women taken as prisoner-of-war by the Japanese.

In May 1942 Victor together with Corporal Rodney Breavington, formerly a Northcote police sargeant who had lived in Fairfield, managed to escape from the Burik Timah Prisoner-of-War Camp in central Singapore. After seizing an open native fishing boat, they took to the open seas with only a little food and a few coconuts.

The story of what happened next differs. One version states that they headed for Ceylonese or Indian waters and that after sailing and rowing the small craft for 1,900 kilometres, they finally reached the coastal waters of Ceylon. Sighting a ship which they believed to be a British vessel, they hailed it only to find it was a Japanese warship. A second version states that they rowed and drifted for 200 miles before reaching an Indonesian island where they were recaptured. Both accounts agree that when re-taken by the Japanese, they were starving and in poor physical health as a result of their gruelling six week ordeal at sea.

They were returned to Singapore where on 12 July 1942 they were admitted to Changi Military Hospital. Gale recovered more quickly than Breavington and after discharge from hospital was moved to Changi Prison.

In late August 1942 the Japanese authorities tightened their policy on prison escapes. All prisoners were ordered to sign a statement swearing not to attempt to escape. Any attempt would result in the POW being shot. Because Gale and Breavington had escaped before this new regulation had been put in place, the Australian Commander in Changi did not expect the penalty to apply to them.

Believing this Japanese order to be against the Geneva Convention which gave POWs the right to escape without punishment on re-capture, the Changi POWs refused to sign. The Japanese retaliated by forcing the thousands of prisoners held in the camp to remain out of doors crowded into a parade ground with little water, food or sanitation.

Three days later on 2 September 1942 when the men in the parade ground showed no sign of backing down, the Japanese Commander ordered Breavington, Gale and the two British soldiers who had also been recaptured to be marched to Selarang Beach. There they were first forced to dig their own graves. Breavington made a plea to the Japanese officer to spare Gale's life, stating that he had only been acting under his orders. His plea was in vain. Allied officers were forced to watch as the four men were lined up in front of their graves and orders given to the firing squad to shoot. Their deaths were slow and brutal.

By 5 September with the POWs herded into the parade ground falling ill and some dying of dysentery, the allied commanders capitulated to the Japanese demand that all POWs sign the "No Escape Pledge".

Approximately two weeks after their execution and burial on Selarang Beach, Lieutenant Colonel Galeaghan negotiated with the Japanese authorities to have their bodies removed to the AIF Cemetery at Selarang Barracks. Their headstones and final resting places can today be seen at the Krangi War Cemetery on Singapore Island.

Corporal Breavington was Mentioned-in-Dispatches, and for their war service both Breavington and Gale were awarded the 1939/1945 Star, The Pacific Star, the British War Medal and the Australian Service Medal. An annual ceremony is held at Northcote Police Station to remember the bravery of Corporal Breavington before members of the police force march to the memorial in All Nations Park for a service in his memory. Breavington Park in Fairfield was also named after him. A memorial to both soldiers can also be seen in the RAAOC Memorial Park at Bandiana.



Breavington and Gale Memorial – RAAOC Memorial Park, Bandiana, Vic.

Photo: Bruce Hotton - 2010



In March 2011, 20 servicemen killed while escaping Japanese forces during World War 2 were recognized for their heroic escape attempts when they were awarded a posthumous medal for gallantry by the Australian Government. Private Victor Lawrence Gale was one of these courageous servicemen. Victor Gale's name is on the Roll of Honour at the Australian War Memorial.

Victor's brother Eric, a gunner with the 22 Field Regiment, was discharged from the Army in January 1942 on medical grounds and returned to live in Balwyn. While working as a milkman, he was killed in a road accident in Balwyn in 1968. Cyril served in the Middle East before being posted to Ceylon and eventually to Papua New Guinea with the 7 Reinforcements 2 Field Regiment. He was discharged in November 1945 and died in 2009.

Like the families of the other service men and women captured after the fall of Singapore, the Gale family had no news of Victor for many months. Eventually in June 1942 his name appeared in the *Argus* newspaper among the list of those missing in action. However, they had an even longer wait to be officially notified of his death. After the war Arthur Gale sought the help of the Red Cross to discover the circumstances of Victor's death – but to no avail. Only many years later did surviving family members discover the details of his bravery and ordeal. Arthur Gale's surviving sons, Eric and Cyril believed that the uncertainty surrounding Victor's death contributed to Arthur Gale's early demise in 1947.

Sources– *Commendation for Gallantry Awarded to 20 POW* - <http://www.actrsl.org.au/pow.htm>  
*The Selarang Barracks Incident* - <http://www.abc.net.au/changi/history/selarang.htm>  
*The Story of Breavington and Gale* - <http://www.raaoc.asn.au/>  
WW2 Nominal Rolls  
Interview with Bruce Hotton

Footnote: The Japanese Commander who ordered the executions was tried for war crimes in Singapore in 1946. He was taken to the same spot on Selarang Beach and there executed by firing squad.

(Patricia O'Dwyer)

(November 2011)

The following short story set in Balwyn at Christmas time appeared in the *Argus* on 2 January 1895.

## **The Mystery of Balwyn House A Melbourne Detective Story**

*By Lewis Findlay East*

### **- CHAPTER 1**

Sydney Graham was a colonial, and to say

that is to say that he was not superstitious. This every one will admit, Australian history does not date back to the ages when a belief

in supernatural phenomena was almost universal, when the weird legends of ghostly visitants first took shape, to be handed down from generation to generation, and to become almost inextricably interwoven with the truth in the literature of those credulous times. Many of those legends have died with the years, but there are many more which, even in this age of enlightenment, still obtain currency and credence in the remoter parts, and leave their traces, the smouldering embers of a dying fire, in the many superstitious customs and beliefs of even the most advanced of the races of the old world. But superstition cannot live in a young country.

Syd Graham ridiculed the idea of Balwyn-house being haunted. The story was this. Some ten years ago a successful old gold digger had built the place, and for a couple of years had lived in it with his only daughter, a lovely girl of eighteen. The old man simply worshipped his child, and was never happy but when in her company. But, alas, idols of clay are easily broken. In the early hours of one Christmas morning, just after the breaking up of a party, he sought her to give her his goodnight kiss, and found her lying upon the drawing-room floor, still and white, with a dark blue mark upon her temple-dead! When the servants came into the room they found the old man holding the dead girl's head upon his knee, with wild, unseeing eyes, moaning out the grief he could no more express in words - the old man was mad. The awful shock had hurled his reason from her throne, and left him a gibbering idiot. All through the long days of the summer he wandered through the garden and the empty rooms of the house, seeking someone whom he never found, and moaning as if in pain. Sometimes he would pause, listening intently, then a glad look would steal over his face, as though he heard the voice of his loved one, and trembling with joy he would raise his quavering voice and call, "Carina! Carina!"

But when no answer came the light would die away out of his eyes, and he would lapse into his old listlessness. And when the autumn

leaves began to fall the old man laid him down, like a tired child, and passed gently away. Then Balwyn-house was shut up and deserted, for no one would live in it. And folks said that on every Christmas Eve a ghostly light might be seen shining from the windows of the silent house, and then flickering from one room to another. And mingling with the moaning of the wind among the trees might be heard the old man's voice calling, "Carina! Carina!"

But Syd was sceptical. "I'll believe in the ghost when I see it," he laughed, "and if Fan will agree we'll spend a week in the old place at Christmas time and give the ghost a fine opportunity of appearing. The person referred to as "Fan" was his wife, also a colonial, and, like her husband sceptical as to the existence of the ghost. She readily fell in with the suggestion. It would be delightful to swing in a hammock under the trees in the old garden and let the hours float by in dreamy laziness, while Syd read aloud to her from Tennyson or Longfellow. What could be nearer an ideal holiday? Accordingly they walked out from Kew to make arrangements for entering into occupation of Balwyn-house a few days before Christmas. It stood about two miles to the eastward of Kew, on the road between Balwyn and Doncaster, and truly it looked like a wild forsaken place. It seemed as though Nature had been eager to reclaim the ground once wrested by man from her dominion, and had hastened to efface the marks of his hateful presence. Everywhere her agents, with their silent but untiring fingers, had been busy reducing the artificial to the natural and the order and systematic arrangement of human design to the wild disorder characteristic of their great mistress. The massive entrance gates, storm beaten and bleached, hung from rust-eaten hinges in the midst of long rank grasses, while the broad drive was hidden by a tangled growth of briars and pliant fern-like wattles.

In the centre of the garden, in the midst of the rugged, pyramidal pines, a tall gum-tree had shot up and then died, and now its gaunt

white limbs swayed backward and forward in the breeze, creaking and rattling like the outstretched arms of a grisly skeleton, standing sentinel over that scene of desolation.

Within the house the furniture stood as when the place had been locked up, shrouded in dingy yellow calico. The accumulated dust of years lay thick over the coverings and the carpet reducing all to one dull, level shade of sombre grey. Altogether, it looked far from an inviting place in which to spend the Christmas season. But Syd Graham looked at things in their best light. "Look here Fan," he exclaimed, "I reckon we can come right into the place as soon as a couple of the rooms have been cleaned. As for the furniture, when it is dusted and rubbed up a bit it will be better than our own, so we shall only require to bring along bedding and crockery in addition to the eatables."

So it was settled, and a couple of days before Christmas the Grahams had made things a bit ship shape in their temporary home. The first night passed without alarm but on the second a mysterious thing happened.

Syd was alone, for Mrs. Graham had retired early with a severe headache. Finding the house hot and close, he put on his hat and stepped through the long French window into the garden. The moon was in her last quarter, and from behind a bank of fleece-like cloud shed just enough light upon the scene to render objects distinguishable. Away to the west the lights of the metropolis twinkled, and down by the Yarra could be seen the tiny, glimmering fires of the night fishers. But not a breath of air moved the leaves. The air was heavy and perfectly motionless, oppressing one with a sense almost of suffocation. Hark! What was that? A weird, mournful cry, with a cadence of indescribable sadness, rose softly on the still air. In one swift moment it flashed upon him. This was Christmas Eve, and the cry was that of the old man calling his daughter. Again it came, but whence he could not tell, "Carina! Carina!" and his blood

ran cold, and the perspiration started out in beads upon his forehead. But once again the long-drawn, mournful cry broke the silence nearer and longer, and clearer than before, and in the reaction from sudden fear Syd laughed aloud; it was but the cry of the curlews down by the river.

He turned and went indoors again. The garden was too dark and lonely. Drawing the armchair up to the table he opened a book with the intention of passing the time in reading. But here again he was disappointed. Intruding thoughts ran riot through his brain. He endeavoured to concentrate his mind upon the story, but every now and then he would awake to the fact that his eyes were mechanically following the printed lines while his thoughts were running in a totally different direction. So he tossed the book aside and lit a cigar. Then leaning back he followed with his eyes the eddying rings of smoke as they wound slowly toward the ceiling. As he watched them melt away his thoughts run idly back over the twelve months of his married life, twelve short months of mutual love and perfect confidence. But here the complacency of his reflections was broken.

Was there perfect confidence? He remembered one evening as he had paced up and down the little garden at Kew with his wife upon his arm, the conversation had turned upon broken engagements. "I consider an engagement," he had said, "one of the most solemnly binding of the undertakings of life, and the person who breaks one without very good cause to be guilty of a fault amounting almost to a crime, and calculated to destroy confidence in that person forever. For myself, I could hardly respect, much less love, a woman who had broken troth with another man." His wife did not reply, but he felt a tremor pass through the hand that rested within his arm. She complained of feeling cold, and asked to be taken indoors. He had not thought much of the occurrence at the time, but had afterwards noticed that if ever the subject were broached his wife betrayed

signs of painful agitation, and speedily changed the topic. Now the incident occurred to his mind with a new significance. Could it be that there was a chapter in Fanny's life that she wished to keep forever closed? It certainly looked like it. Hark! What was that? The floor creaked as beneath someone's tread. No, he would not look. And he returned to his ruminations.

Fanny's behaviour certainly gave colour to the belief that she had been concerned in some broken engagement before he knew her. Else why was she so affected by any reference to the subject? But he would stake his life that she had done nothing but what was honourable. He knew her, that she was the very soul of honour. He could trust – Crash! A swinging blow fell upon the side of his head that for one brief instant filled his brain with surging fire, and then all was black. Syd Graham fell heavily to the floor, unconscious.

## CHAPTER 2

Detective Ryan rubbed his hands cheerfully as he moved about Balwyn-house on Christmas Day. This promised to be the best case he had had in hand for some time.

It had been somewhere between 9 and 10 o'clock the previous night when Syd had been struck down, and about midnight his wife, alarmed at his absence, came to seek him, and found him lying insensible upon the floor. Pinned to the table was a scrap of paper on which was scrawled in pencil the words, "May broken vows be ever thus avenged," and signed with the initials "M.R."

Mrs. Graham was a brave woman. Finding that her husband's heart was still beating she had taken prompt measures to restore him to consciousness, and after some time was greatly relieved to see him open his eyes and look wonderingly at her. She assisted him to bed, and next morning he was so far recovered as to be able to receive the detective, whom Mrs. Graham had promptly

sent for, and to give him the very meagre particulars of the case. Nothing whatever had been stolen, revenge seemed to have been the sole motive of the assailant. And now Syd sat in an arm chair in the dining room and waited for the detective, who, after carefully examining the room, had passed into the garden. Presently he returned. "Now, Mr. Graham," he said, "I'll trouble you to come into the drawing-room for a few minutes. I want you to show me just how you were sitting when the blow was struck." Syd complied, and the detective took a mental note of this position.

"Where did you have the lamp?" he asked.

"On the table here in front of me."

"H'm. Was there a light in the drawing-room at the time?"

"No." The detective took another mental note.

"Another thing, Mr. Graham," he continued. "Have you had any visitors since you came here?"

"Not a soul."

"What matches do you use?"

"The ordinary wooden ones," answered Syd, wondering what matches had to do with his broken head.

"Safety matches, I presume?"

"Yes."

"H'm. Well, Mr. Graham, I'm pretty well sure that I will be able to put hands on your assailant, for he has left behind a splendid description of himself. Not in writing," he smilingly explained, as he noted the look of astonishment upon the face of his listener, "but to those who can read, the signs are as legible as print."

Syd looked incredulous. "Do you mind describing him?" he asked. "No, not at all. He is an Irishman, about 6ft in height, of stout build; walks with a limp, owing to his right leg being shorter than his left; left handed. He was wearing a blue serge coat, and he is the captain or an officer of some vessel at present in port."

The look of incredulity on Syd's face changed to one of angry resentment. Did Detective Ryan think he was talking to a fool when he asked him to believe such arrant nonsense? If the detective had seen the man he could hardly have described him so accurately. The detective noticed the look, and was quick to divine the cause." "Mr. Graham," he said quietly, "I can see you doubt me. I only ask that you will wait for events to verify or to disprove what I have said."

"Well," said Syd, "that is only fair. I honestly confess that I doubt you. Can you explain how you managed to find out all this?" The detective smiled good-naturedly. "Well," he said, "It's not usual for me to explain how I form my conclusions. But this is a very plain case, and I have no objection to explaining the very simple steps by which I arrived at the conclusions I did. First, I stated that your assailant was an Irishman. This may appear to you nothing more than wild guessing, but it is far from such. You will notice here," and he took from his pocket the scrap of writing which had been found pinned to the table, "that there is a slight peculiarity about the formation of the letter 'M' in the word 'May'. It is formed upon the usual copy book model, but the final curve is carried up and back in the way in which some people cross their capital 'H's' and 'A's'. That this is the writer's customary way of forming the letter is shown by the fact that it occurs again in the initials, an exact facsimile of the first. Now, I have made a special study of handwriting for many years, and among the many thousands of signatures that I have examined I have frequently come across the letter 'M' formed as this one is, and I have noticed that the writers have in every case, been Irishmen who

have been educated in the National Schools of Ireland. It's barely possible that the writer of this note may have been born in some other part of the United Kingdom, but I will guarantee that he was taught writing in Ireland, and is to all intents and purposes an Irishman.

"The next point is his height, which I stated to be about six feet. On this point I have very little doubt. This mark", and he led the way into the dining-room and laid his finger upon a dark scratch upon the wall, "has been made by striking a wax match upon the plaster. If you look closely at it you will see that minute particles of the head of the match are still adhering to the wall. This proves that it was made quite recently. Had it been made before you had the house cleaned these particles would have been removed when the dust was brushed from the wall. You have told me that the only matches you have used since you came into the house have been the matches that strike only on the box, and that you have had no visitors. It follows that the only person who could have struck that match was your assailant. You see, also, that the top of the mark slopes obliquely to the left, that it is pointed and dark at the top gradually widening and disappearing at the bottom. This shows that the match was struck downwards, and from left to right. Now, a man in striking a match upon the wall naturally does so about the height of his shoulder. This mark is at a height of just five feet and an inch from the floor. The distance of a person's shoulder from the ground is, roughly speaking, seventeen twentieths of his height. This makes the height of the person who struck the match just 6ft. This may be an inch or so out, as the match may have been struck slightly higher or lower than the shoulder, but the probabilities are twenty to one that I am correct." "Yes, I follow you," said Syd, answering the question in the eye of the detective. "Another thing the mark teaches us," Ryan went on, "is that it was made by a left-handed man, having been struck from left to right downwards, which is the most natural and easy motion for the left hand to make on



a level with the shoulder. After striking this match our man lit the candle on the overmantel, and helped himself to a glass of water, and in doing this he furnished us with some other valuable clues."

The detective carefully lifted the large cut-glass water bottle from the sideboard by its top, and took it to the window, where he held it up in the light. "This you see," he continued, as he pointed to the imprint of a hand around the neck, "has been grasped by a man's left hand. You will see that the fine lines of the hand are almost unbroken, showing that the person was unused to manual labour. Another point is that this imprint is that of a large hand, one quite in proportion to a man 6ft. high.

"Now let us go into the garden for a few minutes," and he walked through the drawing-room to a window just behind where Syd had been sitting.

"Now step through, carefully please, on to the grass here."

A narrow path ran close under the window. It had, like the rest of the garden been overgrown with weeds, but Syd had cleared these off and leveled the surface. No rain had fallen upon it since, and the loosened earth had been reduced by the wind and sun to a fine dust. In this were the imprints of a rather large foot. "These," said the detective, "show that a man, evidently of larger build than you or I, came round from the back of the house as far as this window, and there is a track going back again. Now look closely at the footprints. You will see that those of the right foot are deeper than those of the left, and that that foot at each step made a shorter advance than did the left. This shows that the person who made the marks walked with a very decided limp, coming down with greater weight upon the right foot, and also that the right leg was some inches shorter than its fellow.

"The depth of the imprints also gives us a clue to the size and build of the person who made them. Now, I will walk along near these footprints, and you will see that although my boots are smaller than those that made the prints I sink less deeply into the ground. The very palpable inference is that the wearer of the boots was a much heavier man than myself.

"Finally, I said that he was wearing a blue serge coat, and that he was the captain or the officer of a ship at present in port. I learned this from two articles I found lying under the window. The first," and he held up what appeared to Syd a small bundle of dirty brown string, "is a piece of marline, which is used almost exclusively aboard ship for binding up ropes and such work. This was probably drawn from the man's pocket as he pulled out his knife to press back the catch of the window which, by the way, he most likely opened while you were out of the room, and points to the conclusion that the person who carried it was a seafaring man. Now we saw by the impression of the hand upon the glass water bottle that the man was not used to hard manual labour. He must, therefore, have been a captain or an officer. Additional weight is given to this latter conclusion by the finding of this second article," and he produced a black bone coat button. "There is nothing very peculiar about this button to a casual observer, but on looking again you will notice that instead of being pierced with holes through which to sew it on, it has a long brass shank. It is designed to be fastened to the coat by passing the shank through an eyelet-hole, when a small loop of brass wire slipped through the shank keeps it in position. This special make of button is used chiefly by captains and officers who, by removing the gilt buttons from their uniform jackets and substituting these, turn them to all appearances into ordinary coats.

"The piece of marline shows, at the same time, that he belonged to a vessel in port. This marline is a kind of soft cord saturated with tar and is kept aboard ship in large hanks,

pieces being cut off as required. After being taken from the hank and exposed to the air for a short time, it becomes slightly stiffer and harder. This piece, you see, is quite flexible and soft, and moreover it is not dusty, as it would have been had it been carried in the pocket for any time. It therefore follows that the piece of marline was cut from the hank just before the wearer of the coat paid you a visit. There are several other clues which are of minor significance, but which give additional strength to the hypothesis I have formulated. For instance, some little chips of wood which I found upon the drawing-room table were cut from the lead pencil with which that note was written, and by a left-handed man. But I think I have said sufficient to show you that I did not make assertions without evidence to support them. If you will meet me on the Custom-house steps at 10 tomorrow morning I'll take you to the man who struck the blow. Good morning," and he was gone before Syd had time to say a word.

### CHAPTER 3

Next morning was calm and clear, and the sun flashed brightly upon the glazed hats of the men in the water police boat as it shot out from Williamstown. Detective Ryan and Sydney Graham sat in the stern. "I went to the Custom-house yesterday," the detective was saying, "and examined the papers of every ship in port, and I found that the mate of this vessel was an Irishman, and that his handwriting and initials corresponded with the writing and initials upon the scrape of paper we have. So I have no doubt we will catch our man."

Presently the boat touched alongside a large ship lying at anchor in the bay, and in a few moments Detective Ryan and Syd stood upon the deck of the Indian Chieftain. A man in the dress of an officer came from the deck-house amidships, and Syd started as he saw him. About 6ft. in height, heavily built, and walking with a decided limp - he was *the* man.

The detective stepped up to him and laid his hand upon his shoulder. "Michael Reilly," he said, "I arrest you on warrant for that you did, on the night of 24<sup>th</sup> inst., feloniously enter the dwelling house of Sydney Graham, and assault the said Sydney Graham with intent to do him grievous bodily harm."

The man's face had been haggard and careworn when he appeared, but it now flushed, and his eye gleamed with the fierce light of a wild animal brought to bay. He cast one swift glance around, as though seeking an avenue of escape, but when his eyes fell upon the uniforms of the water police the fierce light died away, and was succeeded by a look of despair. "Well take me," he cried with an oath. "I tried to kill him and I wish I had." He sat down upon a spar and buried his face in his hands. Then he suddenly rose. "Come down to the cabin, officer," he said, "I have a confession to make before I go."

"No," answered the detective, "if you want to make a confession you must do so here on deck. But I must warn you that anything you say may be used against you at your trial."

"I don't care," he answered, in fierce recklessness, "what will it matter to me? Officer, you'll have to take me for murder if you take me at all. You need not stare, it is only too true. Eight years ago last Christmas Eve I killed a girl in Balwyn-house. I was a poor sailor then. I had run away from my ship and tramped all over the country looking for work, but I couldn't find any and I was starving. I was passing the house on Christmas Eve, and could see that there was a large party, so I crept in to steal something to sell for food. I hid in the garden and watched till the people were all gone. Then I got in through a window. I was taking some silver ornaments from a table when a young girl came in, so quietly that I did not hear her. She gave a cry, and then sprang at me and held me, calling for help. Then I struck her - only one blow. I swear I did not intend to kill her. No, I did not. And I thought she was only stunned. But I saw in the papers next

day that she was dead – murdered! Oh! What a discovery that was to me. I could see her again, just as she fell, with such a look of agony in her eyes. I swore then that I would lead a better life - that I would live honestly, or die. I went to sea and I worked hard. But whenever my ship was in Melbourne on Christmas Eve I felt dragged by some irresistible power to go and see the place where I had killed the girl. I know not why. I cannot explain it; but I could not stop away-I was possessed, for the time, with a wild, insane desire to see the spot again. But no one knew that I was a murderer. At last I won the affections of as sweet a girl as ever lived. It was arranged that after one more voyage we were to be married. But on that voyage my ship was wrecked, and for five years I could not write to my intended. And this time when I came back I found she was married, gone. I could not find out where. But I discovered her husband's name, and one day he was pointed out to me in the street, and I hated him. Then on Christmas Eve I visited the old house again, and I found her husband there alone. The devil was in me, and I tried to kill him as I had killed the girl. And when he fell as dead, I came quietly away. I felt no remorse. But every moment since then the dead girl's face has haunted me. I cannot sleep because of it Oh my God!" and his eyes almost started from his head, while his voice rose to a wild maniacal yell. "I see it again, now! No! No!" With one swift spring he crossed the deck, and before a hand could be raised to stay him he had leaped with a wild, despairing cry far out into the rippling sea. The police boat darted out to pick him up, but he never rose again. He had gone before a higher tribunal than that of earth. And the boat returned to land without him.

That night a couple sat in the drawing room at Balwyn-house. Syd had told his wife the occurrences of the day, and had recounted, almost word for word, the mate's confession. Mrs. Graham sat beside him, pale and trembling. When he had finished she looked up at him and in her tearful eyes there was a great fear. "Syd," she said, "can you ever

forgive me? When I met you I knew I had never really loved Michael Reilly. But he was away at sea, and I had not heard of him for three years, and I was afraid to tell you. Then one night, when I had made up my mind to tell you all, you said that you could not respect, much less love, a woman who had broken troth with another man, and I could not tell you then. For I felt that to lose your love would be worse than death. Oh, Syd, don't tell me that I have lost it. Will you, can you ever forgive me?"

Syd looked down into her swimming eyes. "Fanny, my darling, you should have trusted me, but I do forgive you." And he sealed his forgiveness with a kiss.

And thus was cleared up forever the double mystery of Balwyn-house.

Source:<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/9339976>

(December 2011 – March 2011)

Florence Louise was born in 1881 in Melbourne. She was the third of five children born to Ludwig Kugelman and Mary Susannah Victoria Smith. Her father was born in South Australia in 1850 and was the first son of German immigrants, Carl Kugelman and Wilhelmina Hesse, who had married in St John's Church, Adelaide, on 10 February 1849.

Ludwig moved to Melbourne where he married Mary Smith in 1877. He established a general store on the corner of Canterbury Road and Wentworth Avenue c1886 where he sold everything from gunpowder to assorted wines from South Australia. At one time he also conducted a business in Carlton. The Kugelman home at 1 Wentworth Avenue was next to the store.

During World War 1, Ludwig changed his name by deed poll to "Love Wisdom Power", probably because of the anti-German sentiment of the time. His daughter Florence also adopted the name Power when she enlisted with the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF). (Her brother, Orient Ludwig Kugelman, who by then was married and living in Normanby Road (Gordon Street), Balwyn did not change his name.)

Florence Louise Power enlisted on 30 July 1917. She was aged 36 at the time. Prior to her enlistment she had spent four years nursing at Launceston Hospital and two years at the Eye and Ear Hospital in Melbourne. She embarked from Melbourne on the *Kyarra* on 7 September 1917 and disembarked at Bombay, India. There she was posted to the Victoria War Hospital for two months and then in December she was posted to the Officers' Hospital. In April 1918 she was sent to the hospital in Port Said for treatment for myocarditis. She returned to Australia on the

hospital ship *Kanowna*, embarking on 22 July 1918 and disembarking in Melbourne on 1 February 1918. Florence Power was awarded the British War Medal and discharged from the AIF on 4 October 1918. She did not marry. She died at the age of 84 at Canterbury in 1965.

Florence Power was one of the 2139 nursing sisters who served abroad with the 1<sup>st</sup> AIF. She, together with Harriet Cecelia Hordern Williams and Dorothy Sevilla White, are the three nurses commemorated on the Beckett Park War Memorial. The WWI Honour Board in St Barnabas Church also commemorates the service of Florence Power and Dorothy Servilla White.

(With thanks to Bill Pritchard for this article.)



Soldiers' Memorial, Beckett Park.

## **Vale All Hallows Catholic Primary School**

All Hallows Catholic Primary School in Brenbeal Street Balwyn opened in 1942 with teachers from the order of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Sisters from this order taught at the school for its first twenty years.

In 1962 responsibility for the school was taken over by the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus who had their convent at Mary's Mount, Yarrbat Avenue. Over the years lay staff gradually replaced religious staff. The sisters relinquished All Hallows School at the end of 1975 although some of the sisters continued to teach at the school.

The school closed at the end of 2011 due to falling enrolments. During the seventy years of its existence the school educated many local children.



*All Hallows School –*

(P. O'Dwyer - April 2012)



## Balwyn's Fancy Birds

In 1926, it was reported in the *Argus* that Mr Alan Jaques of Balwyn had a fine collection of different varieties of pheasants which had originated from China, India and the Malay States. For centuries, pheasants from Asia were exported to England as game birds and for their small chicken-like eggs. In centuries past, pheasant poaching was usually punishable by death.

Alan Jaques was born in England in Wiltshire in 1859. He was a metallurgist by profession. However, by 1898 he was studying the ability of these beautiful birds to adapt to the Australian climate. It was in a lovely old garden in Balwyn, "7 miles from Melbourne", that he began his venture with these birds for breeding and commercial purposes. His family lived in a house known as *Belgrove* situated on the southeast corner of Belmore and Balwyn roads. The house later gave its name to Belgrove Avenue when the property was subdivided.

Such was Jaques' attention to these birds, that he kept them in pens in surroundings which closely resembled their native habitat. A great advantage in breeding these birds in Australia was that disease in the birds was virtually unknown. English breeders fed their birds on ants' eggs and insects whereas Jaques fed his on egg custard and chicken feed! Alan Jaques was recognised as having more success in breeding with his imported birds than any other enthusiast in Australia.

As early as 1914, he was instrumental in successfully stocking King Island with pheasants. However, in other areas such as the Western District and the Dandenong Ranges

pheasant breeding failed due to predatory foxes.

Alan Jaques found himself not without problems on his own property. Neighbouring dogs raided his aviaries in 1939, killing some 21 fancy ducks. Four years later dogs destroyed 114 pounds worth of rare Oriental and Indian pheasants, Javanese peacocks and waterfowl. At the time, Jaques, then 84 and Australia's foremost pheasant fancier, lamented that the losses represented 50 years of collecting. Sadly, there was no redress because of a let out clause in the Dog Act.

Breeding with imported eggs also had its problems. One delivery from England was 14 days in flight but together with red tape delays, the eggs were actually a month old when Jaques finally received them. Imported eggs, costing as much as three pounds each, were packed in damp moss for the journey. However despite all care, the failure rate was high and eggs frequently arrived in a rotten state. Once the eggs arrived, bantam hens were used to hatch them as pheasants were often not good sitters.



Alan Jaques with two of his pheasants  
*Argus*, 21 March 1931

In the *Argus* 7 December 1935, Jaques' birds were eloquently described as having exquisite plumage like *feathered jewels so dazzling in the glory of their courting plumage that no description, verbal or portrayed, can do them justice.*

Among his pheasants were the Mongolian Pheasant with its dark red shades, black bands and white rings encircling its neck and the Argus Pheasant, an arrogant six foot long bird from Malaya's Penang Mountains, which bred successfully in its secluded pens and which sold for 60-100 pounds. Conversely, the Gold and Amherst Pheasants sold for just 3-8 pounds a pair and yet it ranked among the loveliest of the birds. The Gold male's plumage was like metal with tints of copper orange, bronze green and pure gold with a mantle of orange tipped with steel blue. The Lady Amherst Pheasant, known as the flower pheasant, came from the wooded mountains of East Tibet and Western China where these birds could be found in groups of 20-30. It was bronze green with a dark red crest, a white cape barred over with steel blue, and an iridescent green breast. Jaques also imported a beautiful specimen from

France and it is from this bird that many of the Victorian Amhersts came, as it bred easily but was known as a bully towards the little brown hens.

The Reeves Pheasant with a tail five feet long was another of Jaques' majestic birds. This variety came from Central and Northern China. Interestingly, it could fly very swiftly and suddenly brake to drop into a tree using its expanded wings and sweeping tail as resistance to the air. He also owned a rare Barnier crested fireback pheasant with a powder blue glistening back and a tail of brilliant tango blue.

Many of Jaques' pheasants found their way to properties belonging to Mr. W. Forster Woods at Macedon, Mr. Ben Nathan's estate at Ripponlea, Mr. W. A. Tucker of Blackburn and R. Burston of East Malvern. Mr. Douglas Picking of Dromana was a notable fancier who hoped to garner Jaques' involvement in a society to promote interest in these beautiful birds. In 1931 a show had been organised to raise interest, but the keeping of these birds had not increased. Perhaps it was their secretive and nervous temperament, although they could have a lifespan of 15-25 years. They were mainly ground-dwelling, nesting on the ground and fleeing on foot. It seemed that aviaries of canaries and ponds of goldfish were an easier option!

Alan Jaques' involvement in breeding pheasants and his attraction to their beauty remained right up to his final year, 1949, when he died on August 13<sup>th</sup> at his home, 180 Balwyn Rd, aged 90.

Sources: *Argus*, 4/11/1926, 1/12/1928, 7/12/1935, 21/3/1936, 20/2/1937, 13/6/1939, 27/7/1939, 16/12/1940  
*Army News*, 17/11/1943

(Barbara Russell - May 2012)

## Arthur Herbert Schlesinger

Many people will have looked at the directional tablet in Beckett Park which was erected as a monument to Arthur H. Schlesinger and wondered who he was and why the monument was erected. Arthur Herbert Schlesinger was born in 1869 in Collingwood to Ferdinand and Esther Schlesinger. He became an accountant and moved to View Street, Canterbury. When he died in March 1932 he left a wife, Agnes, and daughters, Hazel and Phyllis. At the time of his death he was living with his family in Union Road, Balwyn.

The following article appeared in *The Box Hill Reporter* 9 September 1932.

### THE LATE MR. ARTHUR H. SCHLESINGER.

A memorial tablet was unveiled in Beckett Park, Balwyn, on Sunday last in memory of Arthur H. Schlesinger, who was a leading member of the Balwyn Ratepayers' and Citizens' League.



He took a prominent part in its debates, and in all of its activities, particularly those devoted to the establishment of parks and gardens. He was keenly interested in the proposal to subdivide the North Ward, and shortly before his death he outlined an original idea for stimulating public interest in this matter. He was always willing to give advice out of his seasoned experience

and support to any worthy movement. He gave of his best generously, and the example of service set by him is one that may well be followed by any who come after. In this regard we lament his loss most: for the shoulders that are prepared to carry forward the banner of progress, as he did, are becoming increasingly rare. The memory he leaves with us is fragrant and compact of tireless energy and boundless enthusiasm for the orderly development of the city. The service he rendered was of such a quality as to merit public recognition, and this tablet, together with the niche he carved for himself in the abiding affection of many friends, affords in some measure that recognition. The City of Camberwell is the richer for his having worked in its interests and for its advancement.



(Thanks to Ken Lyall for this news article)  
Photos – P. O'Dwyer

### **Balwyn Progress Association - Improvements Appreciated.**

The following article appeared in *The Box Hill Reporter* 29<sup>th</sup> October, 1922.

The fortnightly meeting of the above Association was held in the Pavilion, Balwyn Park, on Wednesday evening, 11<sup>th</sup> inst. There was a fair attendance. Mr. Cooke, the president, occupied the chair.

Cr. Howie, who was present, was welcomed by the president, on behalf of the members of the Association, and gave a brief outline of the recent conference between representatives of municipalities and sporting bodies, in the Melbourne Town Hall, and convened by the Playgrounds' Association. He stressed the need of the City of Camberwell regarding areas for recreative purposes, and the fact that the children were in need of greater breathing space than was at present allotted. Since last report, the council has decided to take the necessary steps regarding the motor-speeding menace, especially on a Sunday, on White Horse road, and it is hoped that some improvement will result.

The trees near the tram loop are to be removed, and the erection of a seat there will be a great boon to people waiting for the trams.

The council has also decided to remove the water trough in White Horse road, near Balwyn road. At present drivers of vehicles coming from the west side of the

road are obliged to cross over to the opposite side to give their horses a drink, much to the inconvenience of those coming from an easterly direction. Wonderment has often been expressed that accidents have not resulted from this procedure. It was pointed out that if a seat were erected in its stead, it would be an improvement, and also a boon to the traveling public. The secretary was instructed to write to the council to this effect.

The establishment of an auxiliary fire brigade in Balwyn is of vital importance to this fast-growing part of Camberwell city. It is understood that the Fire Brigades' Board is considering the matter.

Whilst much is being done in regard to the making of certain roads, and street lighting, there is still room for expansion before the roads and streets are made passable. Some of the roads are greatly in need of formation, as in many places they are almost impassable in wet weather. The drains, too, require similar formation, as storm waters are not carried off as they should be. The time is at hand when something should be done to relieve inconvenience in this respect.

Footpaths in various streets are to be tar-paved, and that in Balwyn road, is being referred to in the estimates.

The number of shop sites being built in White Horse road will, in the near future, call for a further extension of the shopping area.

Arrangements are being made regarding the carnival that is to be held in Balwyn early next year, and a special committee has been formed. It is hoped to eclipse the past year's effort.

White Horse road, within the shopping centre, has been undergoing repairs, and looks much better for the trouble taken. The footpaths are the next to be attended to.

(Thanks to Ken Lyall for this news article.)

(June 2012)



## A Glimpse of Balwyn in 1969

Clive Enticott has kindly given us digital copies of photographs he took in Balwyn in 1969. Mathewson's was situated on the south-east corner of the Whitehorse and Balwyn roads intersection. Immediately south of Mathewson's was the Balwyn Hall in Balwyn Road.



Photo: Clive Enticott 1969



Photo: Clive Enticott 1969

Le Leu's 1920 Buildings on the corner of Mangan Street was replaced by the present day Safeway store. The Fuel and Fodder Store which sold wood, coal, coke and briquettes was on the on the corner of Weir Street and Whitehorse Road where McDonalds now stands.



Photo: Clive Enticott 1969



Photo: Clive Enticott 1969

(July 2012)

## **Tram and Train Collison - Deepdene 1923**

The following slightly abridged news item appeared in *The Argus* 6 August 1923

### **TRAIN STRIKES TRAM. DEEPDENE SENSATION. SEVERAL PERSONS INJURED. ELECTRIC CAR SPLINTERED.**

An unprotected level crossing where White Horse road crosses the Outer Circle railway line near the Deepdene railway station was the scene of a sensational collision between a train and an electric tram late on Saturday night. When the 11.10 p.m. train from East Camberwell was crossing White Horse road at 25 minutes to 12 o'clock it crashed into a tram bound from Victoria street bridge to Mont Albert. Several of the passengers on the tram were slightly injured or sustained shock. It seems certain that only the fact that the tram was travelling at reduced speed at the time of the collision prevented serious loss of life.

The names of the injured are:

COOPER, CLARA, married, Cremorne street, Deepdene, injured knee.

COOPER, JOHN, husband of Clara Cooper, bruises.

WELLING, RITA, Bevan street, Deepdene, cut forehead and injured finger.

KITSON, LILIAN, married, Hardwicke street, Balwyn, shock and bump on head.

KITSON, HERBERT, husband of Lilian Kitson, knee injured and bruises on leg.

Others who were slightly injured or sustained shock are:

Mr. and Mrs. MATTHEWMAN, Yerrin street, Balwyn.

Mr. EMERY, Winmallee road, Balwyn.

Mr. McDONOUGH, Clyde street, Surrey Hills.

Mr. MARKINS, Kireep street, Balwyn.

Neither the motorman nor the conductor of the tram was injured.

In a statement which he made to the Camberwell police, the driver of the train (Robert Rounds, of Derby street, Camberwell) said that before crossing White Horse road to enter the Deepdene station he pulled the train up to allow a tram

proceeding from Mont Albert to the Victoria street bridge terminus to cross the line. When the tram had crossed, the train moved forward, and when half-way across the road struck a tram bound for Mont Albert.

The force of the impact dislodged the tram from the rails, and the side of the car was smashed in, the woodwork being badly damaged. During the night the tram was replaced on the rails and taken to the Kew depot in Barkers road for repairs. Neither the engine of the train nor the permanent way was damaged, but the train was delayed for 25 minutes. Two doctors attended to the injured passengers who, after treatment, were allowed to leave for their homes.

### **Severe Impact.**

The train arrived at the crossing, which is about 150 yards south of the Deepdene station at 11.35 p.m. It is the custom for train and tram to stop and for the officials in charge of them each to ascertain which has the right of passage. When about 200 yards away from the crossing the train sounds two warning whistles, and again, before the train moves over the crossing, which is done by releasing the brakes, the whistle is sounded. On this occasion the train and the tram both proceeded on their way. The tram was one of the type which has a smokers' compartment, with cross seats at each end, and a non-smoking compartment, with the seats running along the sides of the car, in the middle. The approach to the crossing is on a steep down grade, and the tram, moving on momentum, passed slowly across the railway line.

The front smokers' compartment and the main part of the centre car had passed over the rails, when those on the seat facing south were horrified to see the engine of the Deepdene train, which was running tender first, almost against the tram. The next instant there was a splintering of wood and the crash of falling glass as the massive steel tender crushed in the right hand side of the tramcar like an eggshell.

The impact threw the rear set of wheels of the tram off the line, the car was plunged into darkness, and a scene of confusion ensued, made pitiful by the hysterical cries of a young woman who feared for her baby. Luckily the greater number of passengers was on the left hand side of the car, but they did not escape unhurt.

About 10 people were seated inside the tram.

Coal from the tender was flung in a shower into the wrecked car by the shock of the collision, together with fragments of the splintered woodwork. The only damage that appeared to have been suffered by the train was a bent lamp.

A chemist, Mr. Cooke, of Balwyn, happened to be on the tram, and he did what he could for the sufferers. A fleet of motor-cars appeared on the scene as if by magic, and their owners hurried off the injured to doctors in the vicinity. The train was in charge of Round, the driver, and Bennett the guard, while Cartwright was conductor of the tram.

### **A Dangerous Spot.**

Although it was stated authoritatively last night that the crossing is not considered especially dangerous by tramway officials, several accidents have occurred at the same spot in the past, and representations have been made with a view to having the crossing made safer. About eight years ago a train collided with a motor-car at the crossing, and one of the occupants of the car was killed. Since then a motor-hearse was struck by a train, but no one was injured. The district police consider that the crossing is dangerous, particularly for motorists driving along White Horse road towards Mont Albert, as a school and a number of pine trees obstruct the view of portion of the line.

It is stated by the police that a number of the passengers on the tram which was struck on Saturday night heard the whistle of the engine before the train reached the crossing. It has been suggested in the past that to obviate the possibility of accidents the Deepdene station should be removed to the south side of White Horse road; or, failing that, that gates should be installed at the crossing. No definite action in either direction, however, has been taken.

### **Women Hysterical.**

Some of the patients were treated by Dr. Winifred Kennan of White Horse road, and others were taken to the residence of Dr. Inglis, of Balwyn. They were all suffering severely from shock, and most of them received deep cuts about the head and face.

Among the first people to arrive at the scene of the accident were Mr. and Mrs. C.F. Munroe, who live a few doors from the railway crossing on White Horse road. Mr. Munroe said last night that he had just gone to bed when he heard a tram, coming from the direction of Burke road, stop at the crossing. It stopped for what seemed a second or two, and then moved on again. He thought that he heard a tinkle of the tram bell, and then there was a sound like the loud report of a gun. He called to his wife, who was in another part of the house, and asked her to see whether the train had collided with anything. She ran outside and found that the tram had been struck by the train. Mr. Munroe dressed hurriedly and followed her....A number of the passengers were bleeding profusely, and one man had a large piece of glass embedded in his nose. A drizzling rain was falling. The engine remained in position against the car for some time, and then moved back up the line towards East Camberwell. Several of the injured were taken into Mr. Munroe's house, where he and his wife attended to them, before their removal to the doctor.

Mr. Munroe said that the crossing was an "absolute death trap," and he did not know how some motorists and other drivers he had seen avoided colliding with the train. Some time ago, a motor-car containing several men and women was travelling along White Horse road, and reached the crossing almost at the same moment as the train came on to the road. The driver turned the car sharply and raced along the train line, over the cattle-pit, in front of the engine. He swerved off the line on to the embankment just in time to avoid being struck.

Mr. Munroe added that a warning bell, or some other means of notifying traffic of the approach of the train, should be provided.

Councillor Bowley, of the Camberwell Council, said that he could not understand how the accident could have happened. Instructions were issued to tram conductors and engine-drivers which, if carried out, should prevent all fear of danger. There was a gate at the crossing up to the time

when the tramway was built, when it was taken down. When a request was made for the gate or gates to be replaced the Railways Commissioners informed the Camberwell City Council that they would provide gates if the council would pay the wages of men to operate (them). The cost, so far as he remembered, would be about £400 a year. The council refused to pay this amount.

The then chairman of the commissioners (Mr. Fitzpatrick) visited the scene, and after inspecting the crossing, admitted that it was very dangerous. He said, however, that he would leave the crossing open for 12 months. Meanwhile Mr. Fitzpatrick retired from the position, and nothing further had been done.

### **Passenger's Story.**

One of the passengers on the tram was Mr. H. L. Kitson, of Hardwicke street, Balwyn. On being interviewed last night he gave an interesting outline of what occurred. "With my wife and baby, aged 2½ years, I was sitting in the middle compartment of the tram," he said, "when suddenly I saw the light on the engine of the Deepdene train and heard a crash. There were about 10 persons in that portion of the car. We were seated on the left-hand side of the tram facing the approaching engine. My mother-in-law, Mrs. Cooper, had a fortunate escape, as she had been sitting on the seat opposite to us right in the

corner where the engine struck the tram; but after passing Deepdene she had crossed over to our seat to talk to us. There were very few on that other side of the car, as luck would have it. My wife was struck with flying fragments of wood or coal, being hit on the forehead and on the shoulder, and in several other places. I escaped with a knock on the leg. The baby escaped without a scratch. There was another baby in the car, and the mother was hysterical because she feared it had been hurt. There was blood on it, but I think it was from the father's wound. He had been struck on the nose with a flying splinter. There was argument concerning whether the train whistle was blown. The tram stopped just before crossing the line, then moved on, and was almost across when—Bang! Motor-cars seemed to spring up everywhere to take people to doctors, and we cannot speak too highly of the services they gave."

### **Conflicting Reports.**

The manager and secretary of the Tramways Board (Mr. W.O. Strangward) said last night that officials of the board would investigate the accident this morning. He added that reports received regarding the cause of the collision were of a conflicting nature.

Source: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/2008988>

(August 2012)



The humble and modest violet has a long history as a medicinal and decorative plant. In the past its leaves were not only used for poultices but also for violet tea. The torn leaves were also added to mixed green salads. Sugared violet flowers were used as cake decoration and bouquets of violets were frequently carried by brides and bridesmaids. Society hostesses often decorated their tables with baskets or vases of violets and violets sprays adorned ladies' gowns. In 1953 St. Luke's Church of England in North Melbourne continued a forty-six year old tradition of celebrating its Sunday School anniversary by inviting worshippers to bring violets and oranges to the church to be distributed to the Children's Hospital, the Prince Henry Hospital and to St Gabriel's Babies' Home in Whitehorse Road.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century a large violet farm was situated in Burke Road East Hawthorn. By the twentieth century Balwyn had a violet farm in Yarrbat Avenue. Mrs Esmond Kinnear nee Robb lived with her family on a farm situated to the east of Beckett Street which stretched from Yarrbat Avenue to Winmalee Avenue. In *Voices of Camberwell: from Alamein to North Balwyn* she recalls that next to her family's farm was a violet farm run by two women who lived with their family in Whitehorse Road. The sisters "used to come and pick the violets day by day, particularly on weekends...the violet farm was immense – from Yarrbat Avenue to Winmalee Road and it had just a little hut on it" When the McClellans (?) purchased the block they "turned the hut into a very tiny house".

By 1934 a large violet farm was to be found on the corner of Belmore and Greythorn roads. In January of that year Mr. R. A. Smith and his family had the unfortunate experience of having a fire burn down the

house on their farm. *The Argus* on 19 January 1934, reported that - "Brigades from Surrey Hills and Box Hill fought the flames for nearly an hour, but they were hampered by poor water supply." Mrs Smith who was alone at the time was not aware of how the fire started. All she was able to save were "a few pieces of furniture and some clothing"

Undeterred by the fire, Mr Smith continued to grow violets on his property and presumably rebuilt the house. Picking violets is labour-intensive and back-breaking work – akin to picking strawberries – and violet farmers came up with the same solution that strawberry farmers use today – invite the public along to pick their own flowers.

On 7 August, 1937, the *Argus* advertised that:  
By courtesy of Mr. R. A. Smith his violet farm at the corner of Greythorn and Belmore roads North Balwyn will be opened for public inspection for one week commencing at noon to-day. Tomorrow the farm will be opened at noon until 5 pm and it will be open for the remainder of the week from 10 am to 5 pm each day. Visitors going by tram should take either the Mont Albert tram to the terminus and then proceed for three quarters of a mile by Union road or take the East Kew tram to the Harp of Erin Hotel and transfer to a bus which passes the tram. Admission will be by silver coin collection which entitles the visitor to pick a bunch of violets. The proceeds will be devoted to the Lord Mayor's Fund.

Some days later it reported that:  
...between 15,000 and 20,000 people visited Mr R. A. Smith's violet farm...and as a result the entire crop of violets was picked. A collection raised \$27/2/3, and this money will go to the Lord Mayor's Fund. Intending visitors are advised that it will not be until Saturday that a further supply of violets will be ready for

picking. Visitors will be admitted on Saturday and Sunday for a silver coin, and the proceeds will again be devoted to the Lord Mayor's fund.

The following year, with thousands of plants in full bloom making a beautiful display, Mr. Smith's violet farm was again opened to the public. That year an admittance fee of sixpence entitled visitors to take a bunch of violets with proceeds again going to the Lord Mayor's Fund.

By 1939 Mr. W. R. Maughan had built a house further along Greythorn Road. While his property was best known as a Wild Life Reserve, a visitor to the reserve described violets running all over the hillside. For the payment of 1/- (one shilling), Maughan offered visitors the opportunity to both pick a bunch of violets and to inspect his collection of birds and other wildlife. Like Smith he was generous in his donations to charity, with proceeds going to aid the Melbourne District Nursing Society and Aftercare Hospital for many years.

Sources: McFarlane, Geraldine, *Voices of Camberwell: from Alamein to North Balwyn, Boroondara Library Service, 1999, p. 13*

*Argus*: 19/1/1934, 7/8/1937, 10/8/1937, 3/9/1938, 10/6/1939 19/7/1939, 11/7/1953



GATHERING fragrant violets on the violet farm of Mr. W. R. Maughan at North Balwyn. The garden will be open to the public on June 17 to aid the Melbourne District Nursing Society.

Photo: *The Argus*, 10 June 1939, page 7

(Patricia O'Dwyer)

(September 2012)

## Lost Pieces of Local History



Photo: P. O'Dwyer 2012

Recently a house on the corner of Glenluss Street and Belmore Road was demolished. Along with the house this wooden mile post disappeared.

It probably marked the 8 mile point from the city and possibly dated back to the 1870s.

Gwen McWilliam in *A Balwyn Survey* (p. 113) notes that “in March 1876, Councillor Dillon proposed that mile posts should be of wood or stone”, and placed in roads including Belmore Road.



Photo: P. O'Dwyer 2008

This advertisement, probably dating back to the 1950s is on the side of a shop at 216 Whitehorse Road. It was uncovered when the Commonwealth Bank was demolished.

In 1951 Mr. J. V. Lear, ran a confectionery business in the shop.

With the construction of a new building on the site of 218 Whitehorse Road, the advertisement has once again been hidden. Perhaps it will be-re-discovered again in 50 years time.

(October 2012)

## **St Barnabas Church – 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Around the late 1850s, settlers were moving to an area in the bushy, gentle hills of Boroondara, later to be called Balwyn. These early settlers cleared the land for dairy herds, market gardens, orchards and vineyards. The “gentlemen” who made their way here and who established their families here recognised the need for worship in their growing community. Although *St Johns* in Camberwell was built in 1863, it was a fair journey along unmade, often muddy, roads.

The first Balwyn service took place in 1868 in the newly built Athenaeum Hall which served not only as a place for worship but also as a school and community meeting place. The Rev. Hayward from Holy Trinity Church, Kew, visited Balwyn to conduct services on Sunday afternoons. A dedicated Lay Reader, Herbert Taylor, took over services in 1870. He set about collecting £200 towards the erection of a church with a shingled roof and seating for about 80 people which opened on 22 December 1872. The Rev. Dr. J E Bromley, Headmaster of Melbourne Grammar School, preached the sermon and dedicated the buildings, officially naming the church, *St Barnabas*. The final cost of the church, which was built by John Butler Maling, was 350 pounds. Mr. J. B. Maling was to be one of three generations of the Maling family to work on the church.

Herbert Taylor moved to NSW for his ordination but he subsequently returned to Victoria to take up pastoral positions. With the establishment of the Parochial District of Balwyn, it was fitting that in 1883 he was appointed to *St Barnabas* as its first resident minister.

As the years went by Balwyn's population increased as did the congregation. The church building expanded to meet this need. In 1884 a porch, belfry and pipe organ were added and the nave was extended along with a wooden chancel. In the late 1880s, the addition of transepts gave the church a true cross plan and seating for 240. A parish hall was built by the Maling family in 1896 and subsequently named *Maling Hall*. In 1901 further renovations included gas lights that replaced the old kerosene burners. Then 12 years later, electricity replaced the gas lights.

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a pulpit was built and carved by William Maling (son of John Butler Maling). A separate kindergarten was erected in 1912. Unfortunately, it later burned down but was replaced by a more substantial brick building. In the early years of the church Sunday school was held at 3 pm in the afternoons. However, in 1936 it was introduced in the morning. Sunday school and parish picnics were originally held in Snowden's paddock - Mr Snowden of *Monomeith* being a great stalwart of *St Barnabas*. When the parishioners ventured further afield to Ferntree Gully National Park, the ladies of the congregation made



loaves of bread into sandwiches which were loaded into baskets for the train trip to the park. The Railways department even printed special tickets for the travellers.

The addition of a chancel in 1930 completed the building of the actual church. In 1960, the present organ (from Carlton Presbyterian church) replaced the pipe organ that had served for 60 years. When a few years later, a spacious porch was added to the building, the church was also enhanced by three stained glass windows from the demolished church of *St Barnabas* in South Melbourne.

It was a worthy new home for them as stained glass windows are a beautiful feature of the *St. Barnabas*. Every window reflects something of its people and the ministry of the church in its community.

One window, which glows with red and golden hues, is dedicated to Andrew Murray, a great supporter of the church and close neighbour, and to his wife, Jessie, who was one of the first Sunday school teachers. Another window is in memory of Charles and Katherine Maling – Charles being another son of Mr. J.B. Maling. He also worked upon the church.

The heroism and tragedies of WW1 are honoured in the Warrior's Chapel where names of those who served as soldiers and nurses are recorded. A stained glass window in the nave is a memorial to those killed in action.

The three windows below are the work of W. H. Mathieson. The central window is dedicated to the memory of George Ernest Wiseman, the one on the left is the gift of Marion Elizabeth Wiseman, and the one on the right is in memory of William and Annie Bice.

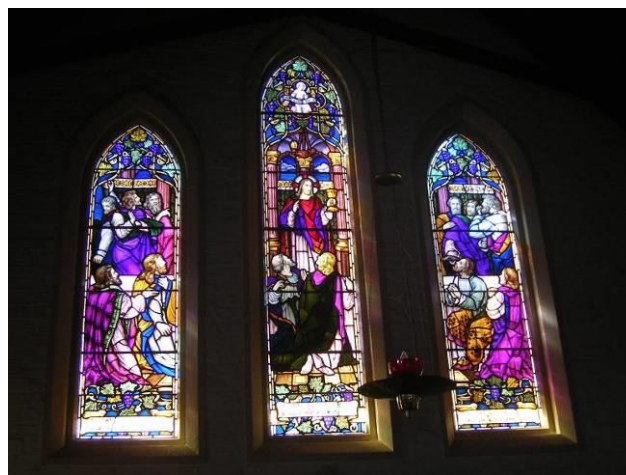


Photo: P.O'Dwyer 2012

December 22<sup>nd</sup> this year marks the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Barnabas Church. We wish the St Barnabas community “A Very Happy 140<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary”.

Sources of Information: Rev T M Thorn, *A History of St Barnabas*, 1972  
Gray, Patricia, *Windows within Worship at St Barnabas: The Stained Glass of St Barnabas Anglican Church*, 1985

(Barbara Russell)



(November 2012)

### Balwyn – Birth Place of Radio Station 3AK

In November 1931 a new radio station was officially opened by the Mayor of Camberwell, Cr. McCamish. The station originally operated from a bedroom at the home of founder George Frederick Thomas Palmer and his wife Mabel Emily Palmer who lived at 8 Yerrin Street, Balwyn. George later described himself as the station's first technician and announcer. He also founded 7UV (Ulverstone in Tasmania)

3AK derived its call sign from its major financial sponsor the Akron Tyre Company. It was the fourth B Class (commercial) radio station to be set up in Melbourne – the others being 3UZ (1925), 3DB (1927) and 3KZ (1930). Its hours of operating were restricted. It was permitted to broadcast from 11.30 pm to 2 am daily; 5.00 to 7.00 am from Monday to Saturday, 1-2 pm on Saturday and 12.30 to 2.30 on Sunday.

The station distinguished itself by mainly broadcasting music - dance, vocal and instrumental music at first, with light operatic music added to later broadcasts. Weather information was also provided as part of each programme. Because of George Palmer's interest in long range transmission, the station also provided re-broadcasts of foreign short wave stations when atmospheric conditions permitted. In 1932, 3AK picked up

and relayed a special Indian Empire broadcast and the following year the station relayed a broadcast of the

Prime Minister, Mr. Joseph Lyon's New Year greeting to the Australian people.

For local Balwyn residents, the signal was very strong. They didn't have to resort to expensive radio cabinets costing between 12 and 42 pounds. Listeners with small crystal sets could even remove their headphones and still hear the transmission from a distance of about 10 feet.

From Balwyn the studio and offices moved to Elizabeth Street in the city and later to Bourke Street. An additional increase in transmission power was approved in 1935 allowing for a far wider audience. Soon reception reached as far as Queensland and New Zealand. By 1937 3AK was pioneering live broadcasts from Melbourne's Apollo Theatre and it was permitted to extend its hours, becoming Melbourne's first all-night broadcaster.

In 1938 Claude Tilley took over the management of the station from George Palmer. Palmer continued pursuing his interest in broadcasting. In 1956 he began a long and distinguished career in pioneering long distance television reception.

(Patricia O'Dwyer)

Sources: *Wireless Tips*, 20 Dec. 1931,

*The Argus*, 22 Dec. 1932,

*The Argus*, 30 Dec. 1933,

*The Argus*, 29 Feb. 1935

Ken Lyall interview with Les Palmer



This photo was taken in the early 1930s looking west from the mast of the 3AK radio station at 8 Yerrin Street. In the foreground is Le Leu's timberyard – now Safeway car park. The road running north/south is Balwyn Road and the building on its own on the west side of Balwyn Road is the Athenaeum Hall.

Photo: Courtesy Ken Lyall

(December 2012)

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