

July-August 2016

Meetings

Thursday 14 July – 8.00 pm

Speaker: Ian Hundley

Topic: North Balwyn Post WW2

Ian Hundley will speak about changes in the built and natural environment of North Balwyn post WW2

Thursday 11 August – 8.00 pm

Speaker: Robin Grow

Topic: Murder of a Messenger: Melbourne's Violent 1930s.

Robin Grow is president of the Art Deco and Modernist Society

Thursday 8 September – 8.00 pm

Jim Beggs - Proud to be a Wharfie

Jim Beggs spent 41 years as a Melbourne wharfie and has a wonderful tale to tell about people he met and the changes that took place on the wharves during that time.

All meetings are held at the Balwyn Evergreen Centre 45 Talbot Avenue, Balwyn

Email: balwynhistory@gmail.com website: www.vicnet.net.au/~balwynhs

Recent Speaker-Judith Scurfield

Judith Scurfield began her fascinating talk on the State Library map collection by showing us a few of the early general maps held by the library – a world map of 1851, early maps of India and South Africa and some of the trench maps and battle maps of WW1.

She then moved closer to home with Victorian parish and council or shire maps including a number which showed the development of Boroondara and Camberwell when it became a city in its own right.

Sub-division maps of the 1880s and 1920s showed the development of many streets as we know them today – although in some cases street names have changed over the years.

It was also interesting to see some of the colourful maps produced by early real estate agents and to read how they tried to convince prospective buyers of Balwyn's most desirable location and access to transport. The Outer Circle Railway featured prominently – often nowhere near its actual location.

Far more accurate depictions of the area are to be found on the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works maps. These give specific locations of blocks of land and houses.

Judith explained that the State Library has digitized many of the maps in its collection and that these can be found by searching the library's catalogue. Finally Judith noted the usefulness of the Sands & McDougal directories.

BHS Membership 2016-2017

Thanks to those members who have already paid their 2016-17 membership.

Membership fees were due on July 1.

The fee remains the same for the 2016-2017 financial year.

\$25 - single membership

\$35 - joint membership i.e. 2 adults at the same address.

For those who still wish to re-join a renewal form accompanies this newsletter.

You may renew your membership at the next meeting. Payment may be made by cash or cheque (payable to *Balwyn Historical Society*). It would be helpful if you could place your payment in an envelope marked with your name(s). Otherwise please send the completed renewal form together with a cheque to **The BHS Treasurer**, **Balwyn Evergreen Centre**, **45 Talbot Ave**, **Balwyn 3103**.

For membership enquires contact Barbara Russell – 9857-6416

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Fromelles- Balwyn Remembers

jhAround 6pm on Wednesday 19 July 1916, in full daylight on a clear sunny day, the 5th Australian Division answered the call to attack and was thrown against the German front line as a diversion to help support the massive British offensive then in the balance at the Somme.

The Australians charged into the teeth of German machine guns, which survived the Allied artillery bombardment in their purpose built concrete bunkers. Our casualities were devastating – 5533 out of around 7000 attackers, with almost 2000 killed – the greatest loss of life in Australian History. Amazingly, despite those losses and against all odds, hundreds of attackers managed to break through the German - front line trenches and force the defenders to retire. But without support they were trapped by German counter attacks and were eventually either killed or captured.

Five of those soldiers who took part (and died) in this battle are commemorated on the Balwyn War Memorial at Beckett Park.

CAHILL Richard Nicholas

Richard was born in 1896 in Stawell, the 8th of 9 children born to William Cahill and Mary Ann Mulcahy. He went to Christian Brothers College in Melbourne and later worked as a tobacconist. He enlisted in the AIF as No.2812 on 28 June 1915 and was allocated to the 8th Battalion, 9th reinforcements with the rank of Private. At the time of enlistment he was described as 5'-8" tall, weighing 143 lbs, chest 33-36", fresh complexion, blue eyes and light brown hair. His religion was Roman Catholic and his next kin was his mother who lived at 5 Austin St. Hawthorn. He was not married. He embarked on 15 September 1915 from Melbourne on the SS Makarini. He served for a short time at Gallipoli then transferred on 26 February 1916 to the 60th Battalion. He was wounded at Fromelles on 19 July 1916 with multiple gunshot wounds to his chest and arms and was taken to the No.13 General Hospital France, where he died on 24 July 1916 and was buried in Bologne Eastern Cemetery (Plot 8, Row A, Grave 141) His name is on the AWM Panel 169 and is also on the Balwyn (Beckett Park) memorial. He was awarded the 1914/15 star, British War and Victory medals. Pte Cahill was one of four brothers who enlisted in the AIF. 730 Pte Francis Cahill died of illness in Melbourne on 22 October 1915. 717 Lieutenant (Lt) Thomas Cahill was killed in action in France on 30 August 1918. 3324 Lt Martin Cahill was awarded a Military Cross (MC) and returned to Australia in December 1918.



CANT Charles Rutherford

Charles was born in 1893 in Windsor, the eldest of eight children of Charles Cant and Jessie Mathewson. He went to Toorak state school and later worked as a traveller and clerk. He enlisted in the AIF as No.2590 on 2 August 1915 and was allocated to 23rd Battalion, 6th Reinforcements with the rank of Private. At the time of his enlistment he was described as 5'-8 ³/₄" tall, weighing 154 lbs, chest 33-36 ¹/₂", ruddy complexion, brown eyes and dark brown hair. His religion was Presbyterian and his next of kin was his father who lived at Pretoria Street Deepdene. He was not married. He embarked from Melbourne on 27 October 1915 on HMAT A38 Ulysses. He transferred to the 58th Battalion on 23 February 1916 then to the 59th Battalion on 15 March 1916 leaving Egypt and disembarking at Marseilles on 29 June 1916. He was killed at Fromelles on 19 July 1916 and has no known grave.

His name is inscribed on the Australian War Memorial at VC corner France and the AWM memorial (Panel 167) also on local memorials

- Balwyn (Beckett Park)
- Surrey Gardens Memorial Cross
- Soldiers Memorial (Camberwell RSL)

He was awarded 1914/15 star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

CORIN Edward Arthur

Edward was born in 1892 in Richmond, the second of six children of Charles Henry Corin and Henrietta Mason. He went to Surrey Hills State School with his older brother. His occupation was a driver. He enlisted in the AIF as No.3715 on 9 July 1915 and was allocated to the 8th Battalion 12 Reinforcement with the rank of Private. At the time of enlistment he was described as 5'-2" tall, weighing 133lbs, chest 33"-35", ruddy complexion and brown eyes and hair. His religion was Methodist and his next of kin his father who lived at 409 Canterbury Rd Surrey Hills. He was not married. He embarked with his brother (Walter Ovens Corin No.7174) from Adelaide on 23rd November 1915 on HMAT A40 Ceramic. He and his brother both transferred to the 58th Battalion on 26 June 1916. He was killed at Fromelles on 19 July 1916 and has no known grave.

His name is inscribed on the Australian Memorial at VC Corner France, and the AWM memorial (Panel 160), also on local memorials

- Balwyn (Beckett Park)
- St. Barnabas Church, Balwyn
- Surrey Gardens, Memorial Cross
- Soldiers memorial (Camberwell RSL)

He was awarded the 1914/15 star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

His brother Walter Ovens who was wounded twice returned to Australia on 24 October 1917 and died at Warrandyte in 1968.

STRANGMAN John Gerald

John was born in Auckland, NZ on 1 April 1886 to August Fitzgerald Strangman and Annie May Sheldon. He went to State Schools in Hawthorn and Glenferrie and then to Hawthorn Grammar from 1899-1902. His occupation was Estate Agent and accountant. He enlisted in the AIF on 13 September 1915 and was allocated to the 4th Battalion, 16th Reinforcements with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. At the time of his enlistment he was described as 5'-10" tall, weight 164lbs and chest 33"-35". He gave his religion as Church of England and his next of kin his wife Emily Marion Strangman. He embarked from Sydney on 9th April 1916 on HMAT A71 Nestor. He was

transferred to the 54th Battalion on 24 May 1916 with rank of 2nd Lieutenant. He was killed in action at Fromelles on 19th July 1916 and was last seen lying dead in No-mans land. There is no record of his burial. His name is on the VC Corner Memorial in France. He is also listed on the AWM memorial (Panel 160) and local memorials:

- Balwyn (Beckett Park)
- St. Barnabas Church Balwyn
- Surrey Gardens Memorial Cross

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medals.

WELLER Frederick Nicholas

Frederick was born in 1890 at Coburg. He was the eldest of 5 children of George Alfred Weller and Emily Parker. He was educated at boarding school in London. His occupation was a clerk. He enlisted on 13 July 1915 as No.4669 and was allocated to the 7th Battalion, 14th Reinforcements with the rank of Private. He was described as 6' 0" tall, weight 162lbs, chest 35-37", fresh complexion, blue eyes and dark brown hair. His religion was Baptist and he was unmarried. His next of kin was his mother of "Boronia Ville" 16 Boronia St Canterbury.

He embarked on 28 January 1916 from Melbourne on HMAT A32 Themistocles.

He transferred to the 59th Battalion on 4 April 1916 and was promoted to a corporal on 10 May 1916. He was wounded at Fromelles on 19 July 1916 with shrapnel wounds to his back, legs and feet and admitted to the 8th Field Ambulance where he died at 2am on 21 July 1916. He was buried at Croix-du-Bac British Cemetery at Steen wreck France.

For his service he was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal

His name is inscribed on: -Australian War memorial (Panel 169)

-Balwyn (Becket Park) memorial

-Soldiers Memorial at Camberwell RSL

-Canterbury Baptist Church Honour roll

His brother Harold Stanley (No.4666) returned to Australia.



Sources:

Births Deaths and Marriages records
Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au/peopleP10279503
Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au/peopleP10856.001
Victorian Electoral Rolls

The Remarkable Dr J W Günst - Family Matters - Part 3.

This article does not deal directly with the life of Johannes Werner Günst, but with three members of his family - his wife Jane King Günst, his son Charles Werner Günst and the unnamed son referred to in the previous article who travelled with his father to Honolulu. I will explore some of the problems and dilemmas encountered while undertaking biographical research. Those readers involved in family history will be familiar with the proverbial 'brick wall' when all research efforts produce a blank. This has occurred a number of times while researching Günst and family.

Jane King Günst

One person about whom we know little is Günst's wife Jane Mary King (1838-1922). She arrived in Melbourne from Sydney on 6 January 1866 on the 'Wonga Wonga' (Bendigo Advertiser Wednesday 10 January 1866 p. 2) a few months after her husband's arrival in Melbourne from London. We know from newspaper advertisements that she supervised the ladies at some of Günst's hydropathic establishments; we also know that she was involved as a committee member for many years at the Melbourne Homeopathic Hospital. She did not seem to accompany her husband on his many travels.

Domestic service was the single largest employer of women in the 19th century and it was common for single women to live in the house of their employer. Domestic service involved long hours of hard (sometimes back-breaking) work. Young women living in the homes of other people often felt isolated and resented the supervision of their employers. Towards the end of the century as more employment options became available to women many preferred factory work rather than working as 'domestics'. These options tended to make those remaining in domestic service more demanding of their employers, which sometimes led to tensions and conflict.

An example of one such conflict occurred in 1869 when Jane Günst was summoned to the District Court for an assault on a servant, Annie Lander. Apparently, Annie Lander was given notice by Mrs Günst and refused to leave the premises. Whereupon it was alleged Mrs Günst knocked her down three times and then turned her out of the house at 10pm. The court found the assault proven and awarded damages and costs to the plaintiff (*Advocate* Saturday 28 August 1869 p 12).

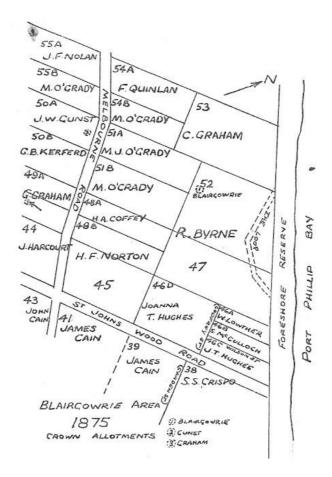
On another occasion in 1877 a newspaper report on a case in the District Court discussed a seamstress, Ann Keogh, who was charged with stealing a large amount of clothing and household goods belonging to the Günsts. Keogh had been employed by Mrs Günst frequently over the previous six or seven years and whilst employed had slept and boarded at their house. Mrs Günst had been missing spoons, forks, articles of linen and clothing over this period of time. She reported the theft and a detective came to the house and found some stolen items in a bag belonging to Keogh. Then, accompanied by Mrs Günst, he went to the house of the Keogh's sister in Yarraville where goods identified by Mrs Günst as belonging to her were found. These consisted of 'a lady's dress, a petticoat, two linen sheets, a small crumb cloth, a piece of brown wincey, several shirts, collars, pairs of stockings and two pearl and gold studs'. They had a total estimated worth of 100 pounds. (*Kilmore Free Press* Thursday 20 Sept 1877 p. 4 and *The Argus* Wed 12 Sept 1877 p. 10).

In 1890 the Günsts were living at Barwon Grange, Chilwell. A newspaper report on a murder trial in the Geelong Supreme Court regarding the death of a newborn infant states that the accused was arrested on Dr Günst's premises at Chilwell as she was a servant in the household of Dr and Mrs Günst. (*The Geelong Advertiser*, Friday 9 May 1890 p 3). Mrs Jane Günst, a witness at the trial, had noticed the young woman was pregnant when she employed her the previous November and had suggested that she go to the Melbourne Maternity hospital to give birth. She had assured the

young woman that she would continue to employ her when her troubles were over and had given her some clothing.

It is unclear from information in the Sands & McDougall Directories whether Jane and her husband were living together in the 1880s or whether Jane was registered at the home address and her husband at his work premises. In 1887 according to Sands & McDougall Mrs Günst was living at 18 Muir St Richmond, a substantial house with stables while in 1887-8 her husband is listed at Normanby Rd, Kew. In 1888 Jane K Günst was living at Well St, Brighton. On the other hand, *Table Talk* reported that Dr & Mrs, J W Günst and Miss Brodie (Jane Günst's niece) attended an 'At Home' at Government House, Melbourne for the celebration of Her Majesty's birthday (Friday 30 May 1890 p. 14).

Following Günst's death in 1894 Jane resided at 21 Long Street, Elsternwick, between 1894-1898. The property at Blairgowrie (now Longford Cottage, Brooke Crescent, Blairgowrie) was owned by Günst from the 1870s onwards and after his death Jack Richie in his blog recalls "my grandmother, and one of her daughters, who had previously spent holidays in Sorrento, stayed with Mrs Günst – this would have been around 1900" (http://rosevilleblairgowrie.blogspot.com.au/). This daughter, Mrs J H Irving remembered being driven from out from the boat by 'Old black Joe' in a two wheeled cart. Richie continued that 'from the Günst's house it was necessary to walk into Sorrento for stores. Mrs Günst was apparently satisfied with a diet of potatoes and onions' and Richie commented that his grandmother had something of a difference of opinion on the adequacy of this diet.



Map of Blairgowie showing Günst property. Crown allotment 50A Source: http://rosevilleblairgowrie.blogspot.com.au/2012/05/blairgowire-jack-ritchie-1970.html

Jane probably fell on hard times. She was left no money by her husband although it seems that she may have owned the Blairgowrie property after his death. In 1919 and 1920 she resided at No. 4, Haines Memorial Cottages, High Street Prahran. Captain Haines of Colac established these cottages, as an endowment through his will for 12 aged gentlewomen. In 1921 she moved to the Little Sisters of the Poor, St Georges Rd, Northcote where she died intestate and with no living relatives in 1922.

Charles Werner Günst

The second person I would like to discuss is Charles Werner Günst (1858-1914). Charles was adopted, a fact confirmed by his funeral notice in *The Australasian* (Saturday 11 July 1914 p 60). He was the youngest son of the late Charles and Mrs Brothers of Clarence River, NSW.

Charles matriculated from Scotch College in 1876 (*The Argus*, 25 December 1876 p 6), became a medical student at the University of Melbourne where he played football for the Medical team (*The Argus* Thursday 15 August 1878 p 7) passed third year medicine in 1880 (*Australian Medical Journal* December 15 1880 p 564). He gained qualifications from the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh in 1883 and returned to Australia on the *SS Chimborazo* on 8 March 1884 (*The Argus* Tuesday 11 March 1884 p. 6). He was registered as a medical practitioner in the colony of Victoria on April 4, 1884.

A tragic event occurred a few months after his registration. Charles was arraigned in the Central Criminal Court for the manslaughter of Helen Toombs a barmaid at the Waterloo Hotel, Chancery Lane. According to *The Argus* a disturbance occurred at the hotel and Helen Toombs received a blow to her ear. Charles' father Dr J.W. Günst was sent for and attended her at the hotel and prescribed a liniment for her ear. The following evening Charles went to the hotel where the young lady complained of sleeplessness and he gave her a prescription written at the bar on a sheet of paper that was spoilt by becoming wet and he then wrote another on the back of an envelope. The prescription was made up at Martin & Pleasance's homeopathic pharmacy. Both Dr Günst senior and his son were sent for in the early hours of the next morning as the woman was unconscious. They rubbed her body with brandy, called for coffee to be made up and Dr Günst senior sent his son for a stomach pump. By the time he returned Helen Toombs was dead. The prosecution alleged Charles made an error and gave an incorrect prescription for a powdercontaining morphia, which resulted in her death. (The Argus Monday 21 July 1884 p. 3). The trial was reported widely. Charles was acquitted (Camperdown Chronicle Wednesday 23 July 1884 p. 3) and practised for a while with his father at 185 Flinders Street East in 1885 and in Ferguson St North, Williamstown in 1887. He then moved to Euroa where he stayed for the next 20 years.

Charles married Frances Ada Hay daughter of James Hay of Morven, Balaclava on 29 December 1888 (*The Argus* Tuesday 11 December 1888 p 1). They had three children all born in Euroa: Valerie in 1891, Clive in 1894 and Noel in 1896 (who died aged one year and three months in April 1897 and is buried in Euroa cemetery). Both Valerie and Clive attended Euroa College (*Euroa Advertiser* Friday 18 December 1903 p. 3.)

The Günsts led a busy public and social life in Euroa. Charles was a Justice of the Peace; health officer for the Shire of Euroa (*Ovens and Murray Advertiser* Saturday 14 January 1893 p 5); elected Commissioner of the Euroa Waterworks Trust in 1901 (*Euroa Advertiser* Friday 13 December 1901 p. 2) and public vaccinator for the Euroa and Strathbogie districts in 1905 (*Euroa Advertiser* Friday 29 September 1905 p. 2). He was also president of the Bowling Club in Euroa (*The Age* Friday 20 October 1905 p. 8). His wife was known for her musical accomplishments.

Charles and his wife departed Euroa in 1907 after being there 20 years. A large social event was held to farewell them they were held in high esteem by the community and both had participated in the social activities of the town (*Euroa Advertiser* Friday 22 November 1907 p. 2). Charles purchased a medical practice in Camperdown, New South Wales (*Camperdown Chronicle* Thursday 9 January 1908 p. 3). He died on 13 June 1914. His funeral took place in Sydney and he was interred at Waverley cemetery on 16 June 1914 (*The Maitland Daily Mercury* Saturday June 20 1914 p. 4). Frances Ada, his wife, died in August 1922.

Johann Werner François Günst aka J. Vern Günst, Vern Günst or John Vern Günst

A number of mysteries surround the family life of Dr Günst. Perhaps the most puzzling is the existence of this second son. The first intimation of the boy's existence came when Günst and his son (and an unnamed person in steerage) travelled to Honolulu in August 1892. Günst returned alone to Australia in March 1893 the son returning from San Francisco in May 1893.

Günst's will written in November 1893 a few months before he died confirms the existence of this other son. He left his entire estate to Johann Werner François "by me born on the body of the late Sarah Ann Kate Walker' who presumably was Günst's mistress. Günst appointed William Duncan Walker of Flinders St, a warehouseman, as guardian of this boy and one of the two executors of his will. He left nothing to his wife Jane and nothing to his other son Charles. Even more surprising was the fact Günst left no property in the colony of Victoria and only 160 pounds (http://prov.vic.gov.au/index_search?searchid=54).

So who was Johann Werner François? No birth records have been found for him either in Victoria or in England. No records have been found for Sarah Ann Kate Walker his mother in either Victoria or England with the exception of a hint from the Sands & McDougall Directory of a Mrs Kate Gunst living at 309 Punt Rd, Richmond in 1885. So here we have a mystery, a dead mistress and her under-age son requiring a guardian in 1893 when his father's will was drawn up. To date we have found no information on William Duncan Walker the appointed guardian or his relationship with Günst's son.

What else do we know about this young man? We have a record of him travelling to Durban from Australia on the 'Lincolnshire' in July 1900 in which he states his age as 24. There is also a marriage record of the 14 April 1903 of a Johannes François Werner Günst aged 23; bachelor of Pretoria, born in Richmond, Surrey to Maria Helena Claudina Erasmus aged 18 also of Pretoria (Pretoria Wesleyan Methodist Transvaal Marriages). There is also another much later marriage of Johann Vern Günst, bachelor, born Richmond, Surrey to Ethel Alice Jones born Kyneton, Victoria in St Luke's Church, South Melbourne on 19 January 1916. In both marriages Vern states he was born in Richmond, Surrey, England and is a bachelor.

Some items of information have come to light, which help a little. There is a website for the Electrical Trade Union (ETU) 'Solving the Mystery' which discusses the early history of the union and some of the key players. The third national secretary of the ETU was a Johann Vern Günst. Vern Günst, as he was known, became the ETU's third branch secretary in 1910. Apparently he secured a prestige address for the union in Collins St, opposite the Mitre Tavern (https://www.etuvic.com.au/content/solving-mystery) In 1916 when Vern was 38 years and six months old he applied for military service and was declared unfit to serve. This piece of information leads one to believe Vern was born around 1878-9. Ill health forced Vern to resign from his union position in 1916 and from then on he undertook a variety of jobs. A report in *The Age* stated that John Vern Günst of Reservoir a furniture manufacturer trading as Vernola

Manufacturing Co and real estate agent had his estate sequestrated in 1926 (*The Age* Friday 10 June 1927 p. 13). A further newspaper account of the Insolvency Court reported on the sequestration of the estate and that his whereabouts in 1927 were unknown. (*The Argus* Friday 10 June 1927 p 19).

The ETU web site states that Dr J W Günst was Vern's grandfather and comments how much he resembled him. I would disagree; it seems highly likely that Vern was the son of Sarah Ann Kate Walker and Dr J W Günst. At this point, it is probably better that family historians undertake any further delving into Vern Günst's life.

Sources

Advocate Saturday 28 August 1869 p 12

Australian Medical Journal December 15 1880 p 564

Bendigo Advertiser Wednesday 10 January 1866 p. 2)

Camperdown Chronicle Wednesday 23 July 1884 p. 3

ETU 'Solving the Mystery https://www.etuvic.com.au/content/solving-mystery

Euroa Advertiser Friday 18 December 1903 p. 3; Friday 13 December 1901 p. 2; 29 September 1905 p. 2; 22

November 1907 p. 2

Kilmore Free Press Thursday 20 Sept 1877 p. 4

Ovens and Murray Advertiser Saturday 14 January 1893 p 5

Public Record office of Victoria, Index to Wills, Probate and Administration Records 1841-2013

http://prov.vic.gov.au/index search?searchid=54

Richie, J. 'Blairgowrie: Some Blairgowrie History' http://rosevilleblairgowrie.blogspot.com.au/

Table Talk Friday 30 May 1890 p. 14

The Age Friday 20 October 1905 p. 8

The Argus Wed 12 Sept 1877 p. 10; Thursday 15 August 1878 p 7; Tuesday 11 March 1884 p. 6; Monday 21 July 1884

p. 3; Tuesday 11 December 1888 p 1; Friday 10 June 1927 p 19

The Australasian Saturday 11 July 1914 p 60

The Geelong Advertiser, Friday 9 May 1890 p 3

The Maitland Daily Mercury Saturday June 20 1914 p. 4

The Victoria Gazette (September 20 1894 p. 3083

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Marilyn Poole 14/6/2016