

# LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

Malvern Historical Society Inc. Keeping Stonnington's History Alive! October - November 2012 Newsletter No. 39

## 17 November Unknown Warrior with Mike Rosel

Saturday 17th November 1pm – 2pm.

Journalist and author Mike Rosel, will share stories of the decorated and virtually unknown WWI Royal Navy pilot and former Prahran resident, Captain Alec Little, at a talk during Stonnington Libraries Literary Festival. Phoenix Park Library, 30 Rob Roy Road, Malvern East 3145 Melway Ref: Map 69, D2

Book online on the Library website or call 8290 4000

<http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/explore-stonnington/library-services/library-events/>

## 18 November Who's been sleeping in my house?

Sunday 18 November, 1pm - 2pm

Join the Stonnington History Centre team as they help you uncover the stories of your home with their guide to dating and researching the history of your house.

Stonnington History Centre Tel: 8290 1360

50 Paxton Street, July 1916 Reg No 415



## 21 November Jackson's Paddock Walk

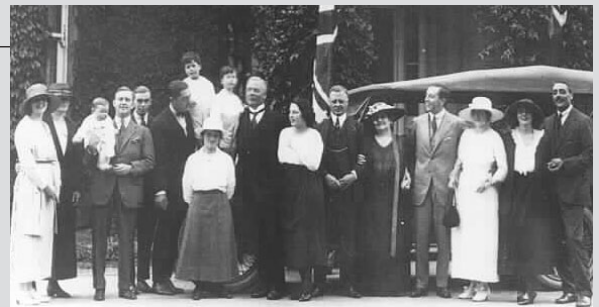
21 November Jackson's Paddock Walk

Wednesday 21 November 7pm

Join the Malvern Historical Society for a walk around Jackson's Paddock Toorak (area bounded by Malvern Rd, Toorak Rd, Linlithgow Rd and Albany Rd)

Cost: Members- Gold Coin Non-members \$5 (+optional \$5 for Walk Book) Numbers strictly limited.

Bookings essential. Bookings: Lorraine 9885 9082



The Baillieu family at Heathfield c1918 Reg no 692

## 6 December Power's Paddock Toorak

Thursday 6 December 7pm

(area bounded by Kooyong Rd, Myrnong Cres, Warra St, Glenferrie Rd and Toorak Rd)

Cost: Members - Gold Coin Non-members \$5 (+ optional \$5 for Walk Book)

Numbers strictly limited. Bookings essential.

Bookings: Lorraine 9885 9082



Brenda Gurner at Glyndebourne, Kooyong Road, Toorak 1908 Reg No. 1607

## City of Stonnington Council Elections

The Society would like to congratulate the new and returning City of Stonnington Councillors - for East Ward Erin Davie, John McMorro and Adrian Stubbs, for North Ward John Chandler, Jami Klisaris and Matthew Koce and for South Ward Sam Hibbins, Melina Sehr and Claude Ullin.

## Malvern Historical Society 40th Birthday Afternoon Tea

Around 70 members of the Society gathered at Malvern Valley Receptions on the 21 October to celebrate the Society's 40th birthday. A special thank you for all the messages received. (More details next newsletter!)

We would like to thank the staff of Malvern Valley Receptions, Golfers Drive Malvern East, for allowing the Society free use of the main reception room for our event and for looking after us so well.

Malvern Valley Receptions. Tel: 9563 1877 [info@malvernvalleyreceptions.com.au](mailto:info@malvernvalleyreceptions.com.au)

[www.malvernvalleyreceptions.com.au](http://www.malvernvalleyreceptions.com.au)

## Sorrett Avenue - Can you help?

Di Foster is looking for information relating to dentist Dr Edgar Adolph Hillyer Byrne and his wife Mary.

The family lived in the house previously on the site of 3 Sorrett Avenue, from the 1920s to the 1970s. Dr Byrne's dental practice was located at 244 Glenferrie Road Malvern.

Di Foster

malvernhistorical@yahoo.com.au

## Memories of Malvern East in the 1960's

Sue Hedley recently decided to spend a long plane flight writing down memories from her childhood in Malvern East!

Sue remembers living at 42 Abbotsford Avenue. Her home phone number was 56-5241 but other digits were added in later years. She remembers visiting her cousin Julie at 3 Ivanhoe Grove where they had chooks and clearly remembers eating the chook pellets and seeds!

The milkman delivering milk in 1 pint bottles with silver foil lids in the early morning. He had a horse drawn cart and the family had a special place near the letter box where the milk was placed. They had a bread box on the verandah, a briquette heater, a washing machine with a ringer and the children were always being told to 'watch your fingers'. White clothes were soaked with Blue Bags to make them whiter. Sue remembers sitting at the kitchen table in the middle of the kitchen, making minced meat from the left over lamb roast by pushing it into mincer, and again having to watch her fingers! Home-made ice cream was made in silver trays in the freezer and the mix master was used every night to make the mashed potato creamy smooth. Sue regarded roast chicken for Sunday lunch as very exotic and they would often have lunch sitting at a card table in front of the T.V. Loy's soft drinks were a feature of visits to her grandparents' home. Her Dad was allowed to smoke his Craven A cigarettes inside and Lines, the dog, was allowed to wander off the lead. Dogs took themselves on their own walks in those days. The night cart man would come and empty the drop box toilet in the back yard. There was only one toilet so the household would have to wait for ages for her Dad to come out!



Aerial view of Chadstone Shopping Centre c1960 Reg No 1077

A strong childhood memory was Guy Fawkes night where there was a bonfire at the creek and lots of fireworks. Sue especially remember the "penny bangers". There was a creek at the end of Rebecca Road around Ivanhoe Grove and all the children were warned to stay away from the bodgees and widgees who hung around the creek.

At the end of Abbotsford Ave in Quentin Rd were the "little shops" as her family called them as opposed to Chaddy Shopping Centre. There was Corsgrill's lolly shop at the one end of the shops and Sue remembers her mother buying her sister and her a milkshake to share – either blue heaven or spearmint and getting into trouble making loud noises at the end sucking the last bit out. There were little silver trays full of lollies (her passion!) and Sue remembers even after all this time the numbers per penny! 3 raspberries : 1 penny, 2 bananas : 1 penny, 4 mint leaves: 1 penny, 4 freckles: 1 penny, 8 bullets : 1 penny, 4 aniseed balls : 1 penny, gobstoppers and small liquorice blocks. Mintz the Grocer, was another favourite shop. Sue remembers sitting on the counter and being given a broken biscuit. Biscuits were chosen from tins and weighed in a paper bag; teddy bears, malted milks and chocolate ripple and the favourite, tic tocs with coloured icing on one side and a clock face on the other side. There was a Chinese restaurant nearby and the family would take their own containers when they collected the food.

School memories include standing in line for vaccinations with the strong smell of methylated spirits, sitting in a row on a long swing at school and singing "In a cottage in a wood". At school there were crates of small milk bottles delivered for morning play time and you had to pierce the lid to put a straw in it. There was a large layer of cream on top and often it was warm so not very palatable. Every Friday Sue and her cousin were allowed to buy lunch at the fish and chips shop near the corner of Chadstone Road and Waverley Road. They would take approx. 1 shilling for a piece of flake and 2 pennies for a potato cake and take it back to the school for lunch.

The Chadstone Shopping Centre was within walking distance. Sue and her sister loved going to the Chaddy shops on a Saturday morning. Her sister would always get Princess magazines and PK chewing gum and a vanilla slice and Sue would get Teddy Bear magazine, juicy fruit and a cream donut. Both enjoyed the Dairy Queen ice cream from Coles and the Downyflake donuts, especially watching donuts coming out of the machine and being cooked.

## Prahran Horse Racing

Racing commenced in Prahran in the early 1850s. The first course was on land adjacent to the Mt Erica Hotel, on the corner of High St and Williams Rd.

In 1865 the races became more professional with the formation of the Prahran Racing Club. The club sought permission from the Prahran Council to use the 'Council reserve' for its course, which was aged to by the Council, although it declined to make a donation to the club's funds, saying it would be a misappropriation of Council funds. The club's first meeting took place on the Council reserve on 29 and 30 December, 1865. The program comprised a Maiden Plate, Publican's Purse, the Prahran Handicap, the Stewards' Purse, a Handicap Trotting Purse, and a Handicap Hurdle.

A similar two day meeting was held in January 1867. Commenting on the first day's racing, the Argus correspondent struck a generally positive note: "The Christmas and New Year holiday fever yet progresses with an intensity scarcely intelligible to the sober-going citizens of older and less favoured lands than ours. There seems yet to be no symptoms of surfeit of pleasure with our colonists. There could not have been less than three thousand determined holiday-making folks on the somewhat rough and unplanned course at Prahran, and they were very sufficiently gratified with a pleasant afternoon's racing for the promised prizes. The handicapping was not of the best in the two races in which the stewards adjusted the weights, but there was some very good sport afforded, and there were no loud complaints of the measures taken by the compilers of the handicaps'. At the conclusion of the second day, the correspondent added: 'The energetic stewards who have taken an active share in the management of turf affairs in this locality must have been very well satisfied with the amount of public patronage realise'".

The Prahran Racing Club's use of the Council reserve appears to have come to an end with that meeting, as there is no further reference to it in the press or the Turf Register. The club was probably denied use of the site which was soon to be transformed into the Fawkner Park which exists today.

The Prahran Racing Club, however, continued in existence, and there are frequent press references in the 1880s and 1890s to it holding meetings at Sherwood Park in Camberwell.

References: John Butler Cooper: The History of Prahran, The Prahran Telegraph , Trove website and the Turf Register.

**Kevin Gates 20120**

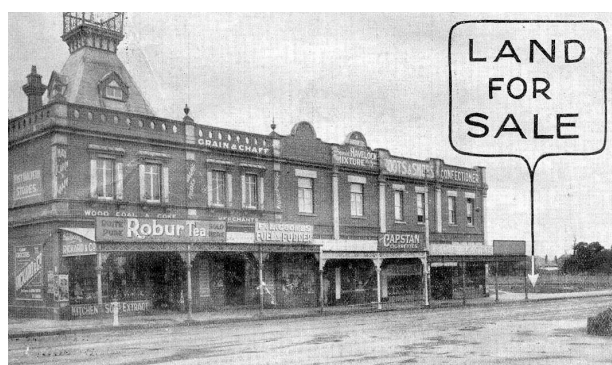
If anyone has any information relating to the Prahran Racing Club please contact the Stonnington History Centre  
Tel: 82901360

## Stonnington Research Enquiries

During the past few months the Society and the Stonnington History Centre have received enquiries relating to an old oak tree in Darling Road Malvern East, Scotsburn Grove in Toorak, Regent Street Prahran, Herbert Cutts and the Rose Stereograph Company, historic buildings now used as retail space, George Self Smith, cricket on the Malvern Cricket Ground around 1940, a boarding house in Wattletree Road Malvern opposite the Sacred Heart Hospital (now Cabrini) and Flying Officer Norman Frederick Robinson 401284 who, according to RAAF archive records, recorded his address as 17 Hopetoun Road Toorak.



**The Pavilion, Malvern Cricket Ground  
c1930 Reg No 109**



**Row of shops on the corner of Waverley Road and  
Turner Street Malvern East 1922 Reg No 12068**

There have also been enquiries relating to St Leonard's Private Hospital in Turner Street, Malvern East (the hospital was in Turner Street from about 1917 until the early 1940's), Mr Rudd, an early gardener at *Stonington* in Glenferrie Road Malvern, the 'spud' factory in Moira Street, Malvern East, the origin of the name Darling and the plane that crash-landed close to the Malvern Cricket Ground in 1937.

These were just some of the requests handled so expertly by the Stonnington History Centre Staff, David Tuck, Ellen Porter and Simone Sharpe.

## The Debutante Ball



**Debutantes, with the Mayoress of Malvern,  
Mrs Ethel Righetti 1935 Reg No 969**

Debutante balls originated in Europe, and were traditionally a formal 'rite of passage' for elite women of marriageable age to be introduced within their society. In Australia, municipal councils, churches, schools and other organisations included debutante balls in their social calendars, and it is a practice that still continues in some quarters to this day.

Malvern and Prahran Councils used to hold debutante balls as part of their annual Mayoral Balls, and professional photographs of these events were often published in Council Annual Reports. Most show the debutantes with the Mayoress – and occasionally the Mayor – at either Malvern or Prahran Town Hall. Sometimes the debutantes' names, and even those

of their partners, were also published. Invitees included local residents and businessmen, mayors of other councils, and Members of Parliament. Parents or guardians, or the young ladies themselves, wrote to the Council to request an invitation.

It was traditional for the debutante to invite a young man to partner her. Always very formal, the ball may also have included flower girls and page boys. The debutantes' gowns were often identical in cut or colour, with slight variations. Gloves were almost always worn.

Participants attended dance classes, often over many months, so as to perform a dance set during the main ball. The Leggetts, who ran a popular dance school in Greville Street in Prahran from 1910 to 1970, taught hundreds if not thousands of debutantes and their partners free of charge over the years. The Leggetts also arranged the programme and dance cards for the Prahran Mayoral Balls. These cards, with silk strings and pencil attached, were given to all who entered the hall.

The current displays in the Stonnington Libraries feature memorabilia from the Stonnington History Centre's collection. If you recognise yourself in one of the photographs but your name is not included in the accompanying caption, please contact the Stonnington History Centre and we will add your name to our catalogue.

**Simone Sharpe, Local History Librarian 8290 1360**

## New 'Exploring the City of Stonnington' Brochures

The latest 'Exploring the City of Stonnington' brochures are now available. The titles of the five most recent brochures are Chapel Street North Area, Malvern Valley Golf Course and the Urban Forest, Princes Gardens, Prahran Mechanics' Institute and Toorak House.

Thanks to David, Ellen, Simone, Jane and MBE Malvern for all their hard work. Thanks also to the City of Stonnington who provided a grant to cover the cost of production and copying. There are now 18 brochures highlighting Stonnington's historic buildings and sites. They are all available from the Stonnington History Centre. Tel: 82901360



**Flood waters in Chapel Street, north of  
Toorak Road 1891 Reg No. 8585**

## Tales From The Courts

Edited reports of proceedings in the Prahran and Malvern courts as published in contemporary issues of the Prahran Telegraph.

### Smoking a public benefit?

The Board of Lands and Works proceeded against Thomas A. Bradshaw for smoking on the platform at the Prahran Railway Station. Dr Fetherston (on the Bench) remarked that he himself smoked on the platform but had not been interfered with. The Bench complimented the stationmaster upon the manner in which he carried out the instructions of the railway but Mr Dixon (on the Bench) remarked that he thought it was rather a public benefit than otherwise to smoke at the station as there was some prospect of the small-pox breaking out. Fined 1 shilling with 5 shillings costs ... . Prahran Telegraph, 14 January 1882

**Geoff Currey 2012**

## Drawing by Oscar Carlson

Some time ago local artist Oscar Carlson visited the Stonnington History Centre to view maps showing the back lanes around the Malvern area in which he lived. He was planning an exhibition of drawings depicting these laneways. Oscar is better known for his 'ironman' achievements; however his intricate drawings provide a glimpse of the quieter side of the athlete.

The exhibition, 'The Laneways of Malvern', was held at the Malvern Artists Society in High Street in August. Oscar visited the History Centre after the exhibition to donate one of the framed limited edition prints and scanned copies of the complete works. The Centre staff were so impressed with this generous donation and the quality of the artwork that they decided to purchase two more framed prints to add to the collection. These will be displayed for public viewing in due course and low resolution copies of all of his works will be placed on the History catalogue.



Laneway behind Wattletree Road Malvern Reg No. 60625

Oscar's script accompanying the exhibition notes that the laneways in the drawings are bounded by Glenferrie, Dandenong, Tooronga and Wattletree Roads. This was the 'Malvern Station & Caulfield Township Estate', a relatively flat area within the Stonnington Precinct historically used as a stock route and holding yards. The area has underground creeks and springs and is considered a flood plain.

Oscar states that during the 1950s and beyond, the laneways' use changed once underground sewage was installed. No longer needed as access to the 'outdoor dunnies' the lanes remained largely unused. However, by the late 1990s as families acquired more than one vehicle but with limited garage space, the laneways began to be utilised to house garages and cars. Gradually the old dilapidated fences are being replaced by roller doors and gates. The laneways have also become more recreational, with people walking their dogs through or just enjoying a stroll down 'history lane'.

According to Oscar the drawings depict the laneways in their 'cusp' and while change seems to take place slowly, Oscar sees changes occurring around the area and felt the need to record the 'wonderful laneways as they were and as they are becoming'.

Ellen Porter, Local History Librarian

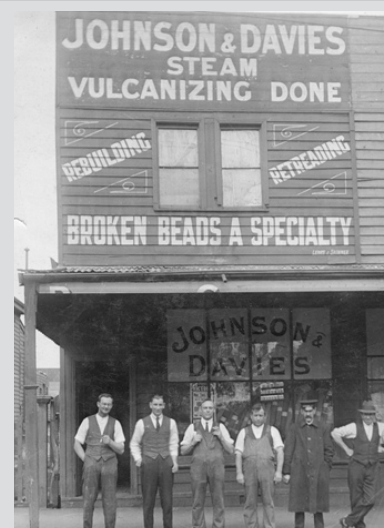
## Johnson & Davies, Motor Tyre Repairers

Johnson & Davies, Motor Tyre Repairers, were at 160 Glenferrie Road, Malvern (re-numbered from 158 in 1920) from 1918-1930. The man third from the left is Thomas William Johnson (known as William Johnson), who had been secretary of the Rubber Workers Union until 1919. For a short time he lived at *Ivyleigh*, Waverley Road, East Malvern. From 1924 he had a tyre business in Elwood. Johnson may have run both this and the Elwood business at the same time, but it is equally possible that he left to go to Elwood and Victor Davies continued the business under its established name.

The signage on the front of the store advertises 'Steam Vulcanising Done', 'Rebuilding', 'Retreading', and 'Broken Beads a Specialty'. It was painted by Lewis & Skinner.

(Family information provided by donor Jan Humphreys)

Johnson & Davies, Motor Tyre Repairers, 160 Glenferrie Road, Malvern (Undated) Reg No 60598



## New Members

We would like to welcome our latest new members Charlie and Graeme Jessop, Frances Miltonov, Nina Zurak, Robyn-Anne Harriott, Janice Brooks, Robert D'Andrea and two new members from England, Wendy and Ian Dear.

## Taking Local History to the Community

Lorraine, Anne and Jane represented the Society at the Victorian Community History Awards Ceremony. Congratulations to local resident Greg Eccleston who received a Commendation for 'The Early Charting of Australia's Coastline' [www.anzmaps.org](http://www.anzmaps.org) Congratulations to Brenda Palmer, a member of the Society, who has been called Victoria's oldest 'checkout chick'! Brenda started work in the Coles store in Glenferrie Road Malvern in 1967 when the Coles stores sold frocks, cardigans and knitting wool and needles.

Thanks to Lorraine, Roxanne, Margaret, Jane B, David, Peter and Jane N for all enthusiastically sharing our local history with visitors attending Spring into Gardening at the Victoria Gardens in Prahran. Lorraine and Pat recently represented the Society at the South Metro meeting, hosted by the Port Melbourne Historical Society.

In August, Archivist Brian Corless spoke in depth about the history of St George's Malvern and its close links to the early Gardiner Road District's history. We then enjoyed a tour viewing the architectural details both inside the Church and in the grounds. The talk on Oliver Gilpin by Muriel Perry and her daughter Wendy Morris attracted members and visitors who shared their fond memories of the Gilpin Stores. Thanks to the East Malvern Community Bank for allowing us to use their meeting room. In September Lorraine and Jane enjoyed a concert at Carmyle and Tivoli Club member Kevin Guinane spoke about the history of the Club during our visit and lunch.

The Society would like to thank Geoff Currey for continuing to provide us with the fascinating snippets of history he discovers as he explores the early editions of the Prahran Telegraph. Thanks also to Ray, Michele and Shaye from MBE, 45 Glenferrie Road, Malvern Victoria 3144, Tel: 9576 2909 [malvern@mbe.com.au](mailto:malvern@mbe.com.au) for all their help with our bi-monthly newsletter and with the table decorations for our 40th Anniversary Afternoon Tea.



Lorraine Sage MHS and Marilyn Moore,  
Coburg Historical Society

## Additions to the Stonnington Local History Collection

- Memorabilia relating to the Davies family including photographs and a hymn book donated by Warren Hicks
- *William Downing Evans* and a CD donated by the author Wendy Dear
- Programme from 100th Anniversary of the Opening of the First St John's Church, East Malvern in 1983 donated by Catherine Wallace
- *Len Pryor, Leading Teacher Educator 1912-1991* donated by the author, Geoff Pryor. In 1959 Len, the father of the author, gained the position of Principal at Toorak Teachers' College, Stonnington, Glenferrie Road Malvern
- CD of photos relating to Oliver Gilpin donated by Muriel Perry and her daughter Wendy Morris.
- *150 Years 1860-2010 German Club Tivoli* donated by Kevin Guinane
- Collection of material relating to St George's Malvern, Mecwa, Malvern Early Planning for Retirement Group 1987 donated by Diane Gretton
- *History of Malvern* JB Cooper - Anon donation
- Collection of material relating to St Mary's Malvern East donated by Maurice Fanning

### Have you enjoyed viewing the photos in this issue?

Material for the articles has been researched from the **Stonnington Local History Centre Collection**. The database contains over 60,000 records. To view enlargements of photographs and to read more, just go to the website. [www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history](http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history)

East Malvern  
**Community Bank** Branch **Bendigo Bank**



300 Waverley Road, East Malvern. Phone 9563 6044



## Malvern Historical Society Inc. (A7682)

**P.O.Box 184, Malvern Vic 3144 Telephone: 0438 515 631 [malvernhistorical@yahoo.com](mailto:malvernhistorical@yahoo.com)  
[www.vicnet.net.au/~malvern](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~malvern)**

The Malvern Historical Society Inc is a member of the Stonnington History Committee, an affiliated member of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, a member of the South Metro History Group and has been appointed by the Public Record Office of Victoria as a Place of Deposit for non-permanent public records.

## OTHER STONNINGTON HISTORY CONTACTS

Stonnington History Centre, Email: [history@stonnington.vic.gov.au](mailto:history@stonnington.vic.gov.au) Tel: 8290 1360 [www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history](http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history)  
Prahran Historical and Arts Society, P.O. Box 8649, Armadale VIC 3143 Tel: 9529 7442 [www.vicnet.net.au/~phas](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~phas)