

LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

Malvern Historical Society Inc.

Keeping Stonnington's History Alive!

April - May 2013

Newsletter No. 42

Saturday 11 May National Trust Heritage Walk 2pm

Take a National Trust walk through the streets surrounding Sacre Coeur, Korowa Anglican Girls' School and the Malvern Campus of Caulfield Grammar School, Glen Iris, lined with Californian style bungalows, and learn about the people, history and architecture of the area.

Meet at Sacre Coeur, 172 Burke Road, Glen Iris

MHS members \$15, includes walk book.

Bookings: Steve 0418 546 103



Valentines, Malvern Grammar School c1930s Reg No 289

Wednesday 15 May Malvern Historical Society Inc Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 15 May 7.30 p.m AGM Guest Speaker: Richard Balsillie

Wesley Hall - St. Andrew's Uniting Church, Gardiner (the Hall is on the south side of the Church). Corner of Burke Road and Malvern Road, Glen Iris.

RSVP: President Lorraine Sage 9885 9082 Email: ljsage@comcen.com.au

Bookings would be appreciated so that sufficient seating is provided.

Following the AGM, Richard Balsillie, a film-maker with a special interest in social history, will share his memories of Armadale in the 1950s and 1960s. He will also show videos of Armadale.



Armadale Hotel, High Street Armadale c1950 Reg No 2236

Saturday 18 May History of Victoria Police

Saturday 18 May 2pm. Prahran Historical & Arts Society

The Speaker Mr. Ralph Stavely, was a Victorian policeman for many years, a founding member of the Victoria Police Historical Society and co-author of *Policeman's Paradise*, a publication that focussed on the History of Prahran Policing. A presentation not to be missed! Light refreshment will be served.

No charge. All welcome. RSVP Gabriel (03) 9529 7442

Grattan Gardens Community Centre
40 Grattan Street, Prahran.



Old Prahran Police Station, Greville St. Prahran c1985 Reg No 13906

Saturday 18 May National Trust Heritage Walk 2pm

Take a National Trust walk through the streets surrounding Union Street, Armadale, lined with workers' cottages, Victorian and Edwardian houses, and learn about the people, history and architecture of the area.

Meet at the Union Street Gardens, Union Street, Armadale

MHS members \$15, includes walk book.

Bookings: Steve 0418 546 103



Llaneast, north corner Glenferrie Road and Llaneast Street Malvern 1903 Reg No 2626

Wednesday 5 June Glenferrie Road Malvern: a pictorial

Wednesday 5 June 10am-11am at the Stonnington History Centre.

Trace the development of this iconic shopping strip using photographs held by the Stonnington History Centre. Book online at www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history or phone 8290 1360

Arthur Bailey, Chemist, Glenferrie Road Malvern 1898 Reg No 7809



Stonnington Research Enquiries

An enquiry was received relating to John and Maria Collinson who lived at 42 Edgar Street Glen Iris. In 1913 soon after the first sale of the Tooronga Estate, John purchased land and built a house. The Collinsons occupied *Hanley*, 42 Edgar Street, until 1964. John's occupation was at various times described as motorman and tram driver. John was a keen pigeon fancier and kept a large flock of pigeons in lofts at the rear of his home in Edgar Street. He was a member of the Malvern Homing Pigeon Club. The Club had its rooms in Dandenong Road just south of Malvern Station.



St. George's Toorak (Undated) Reg No 2417.1

During the past couple of months enquiries have been received relating to the bluestone in Reed Lane, East Malvern; a diary written by Winifred Davies in 1896; Public Housing Estates; Douglas and Kerferd Streets, Malvern East; William Jasper Rose who resided in Malvern with his children Victor Henry Rose, Allison Grace Rose, Sidney and Jack Rose; the history of the former Armadale Hotel; Cromwell Road South Yarra, house dating; Kooyong, LTAV; Andrew Arthur Furniture Store in Chapel Street; the origin of a house name in Emo Road Malvern East; and a request for a photo of *St George's*, the mansion built on the north east corner of Orrong and Malvern Roads by Alfred Watson. This building was later extensively extended and it is now the home of Loreto, Mandeville Hall.



Interior of the Waverley Theatre, Waverley Road, Malvern East c1950 Reg No 6593

One family researcher requested information on one of her relatives, Edith Micklethwait, who lived at 630 Toorak Road, Malvern, in 1954. She was employed in 'home duties' there. An enquiry was received relating to Margaret Anderson, who listed her occupation as 'cook' in Lambert Road, Toorak. In 1904 Margaret married Lawrence Barnett, a fruiterer of 531 Malvern Road, Toorak. One local resident asked whether anyone famous held their rehearsals in the Waverley Theatre in Waverley Road, Malvern East, when it was used by the ABC Symphony Orchestra! Jeffreys Books, 140 Glenferrie Road Malvern, let us know that local Toorak resident, Laila Embelton, has written a book relating to her mother and aunt, *Dancing On A Volcano - The Michelet*

Sisters From 1914 – 1945. One sister married a German and the other a British Diplomat. A request was received from the Denmark Historical Society in WA who are looking for a photo of John Coughlan who died in Malvern in 1931.

Graham contacted the Society after an old cricket photo was found underneath the floorboards of 52 Oban Street, South Yarra. The age of the photo is not known but we know that the occupants of the property between c1925-c1935 included John Wilson, John Meehan and W. B. Hustler. The best clue we have available is the badge on the cap. Please contact us if you can identify the cricket club.

Someone recently approached us after discovering an old Malvern City Council sign on eBay with an asking price of \$200! Luckily we already have one in the Collection.



Stonnington History Committee

The Stonnington History Committee met on 17 April in the Stonnington History Centre. Those present represented The Stonnington Library and Information Service and the Stonnington History Centre, Prahran Historical Society, Malvern Historical Society, Prahran Mechanics Institute and Stonnington Reconciliation Group. All were very passionate about History in the local area and talked about what is being undertaken in their special particular area of interest. There was much informal conversation and sharing of ideas and projects. Everyone present spent a very worthwhile time hearing about what is happening in Stonnington in regard to Local History. It was agreed that the Stonnington History Committee would meet again in six months time.

Lorraine Sage and Jane Brewster

Community milestone: a chronology for Stonnington

A chronology is more than just a list of dates. The theme for this year's Heritage Festival is Community Milestones, and this has provided an impetus to revisit and integrate the timelines that have been prepared some years ago for Prahran and Malvern respectively. A recent seminar at the History Centre explored this in some detail, and the revised document will be loaded to our website shortly.

Selecting details to include in a timeline is an act of historical interpretation, as it forces us to pass judgement on the factors we consider to be significant in understanding why things are the way they are. The items selected are not right or wrong, just endlessly debateable, and everyone's list will be different. What do we include, what do we leave out?

What makes an event noteworthy? Why, for example, would I decide to note the opening in 1914 of Charles Read's second store (today, Pran Central), but not his first in the 1880s? For my part, the opening of his second store should be seen in the context of the opening of the other major department stores in Chapel Street in the early years of the twentieth century: Maclellan's Big Store in 1902, Maples in 1904, the Colosseum in 1905, Love & Lewis in 1913. Chapel Street was hailed as 'a shopper's paradise', a status that was unchallenged until the development of shopping centres such as Chadstone half a century later, linked to the rising importance of the automobile.

Why note the closure of various state and high schools in the early 1990s, but not that of numerous private schools in the municipality at other times? Once again, it's because I can see a pattern with wide ramifications – a decision made by the government of the day to severely cut government spending. The pendulum is now swinging the other way; it's not impossible that an extended Stonnington chronology twenty years from now could be noting the reopening of a Prahran High School on the old Swinburne site.

Some important developments start with a whimper rather than a bang, and are difficult to associate with a specific date on a timeline; the factors may be at risk of being overlooked. For every clearly-defined breakthrough, such as the first telephone connection or first telegram sent, there are others that defy pinpointing but have nevertheless had a powerful effect in shaping our community.

Consider, for example, developments in information technology. Think about the ramifications of the introduction of the internet, and of broadband speeds: people working from home, people buying online precipitating the closure of many small retail shops, to name but two.

And what about the mobile phone? To be connected in this way costs quite a bit – the hardware devices as well as the internet service. Would students be so active in the workplace without these pressures? How single-focused was your own university experience – did you have part-time employment? Did you live with your parents? To what extent are the financial pressures experienced by students due to IT 'needs', and what impact does this have on domestic architecture (ie: students staying longer in the family home)?

What key dates could I identify to allude to these trends? Perhaps the laying of Optus cables to introduce competition and lower prices in the provision of telecommunication services? But was this before or after the introduction of the (non-military) internet? Or perhaps we should point to the availability of broadband connections. But if we distinguish between dialup and broadband speeds, maybe we should also distinguish between smart phones and those without internet connections?

As you can see, a chronology is only part of the story – it's a useful tool for understanding the past, and the questions raised can then be explored in essay or debate. And some things just defy inclusion.



Students at Chadstone High School
(under construction), 1962 Reg No. 5298



Prahran Hotel and Charles Read's first store 1905 Reg No. 12160

David Tuck
Stonnington History Centre

Taking Local History To The Community

Roxanne, Francesca, David H, Denis, Jane N, Lorraine and Pat enthusiastically shared local history with the public at the very successful Pets in the Park event at Central Park. Jane N attended the RHSV Seminar at Euroa in March. Over 40 local history groups from around Victoria were represented. Members have enjoyed joining Steve Stefanopoulos on his National Trust, Heritage Festival series of walks within Stonnington. Thanks Steve for publicising our four Walk into History books. Lorraine and Jane N represented the MHS at the South Metro History group meeting hosted recently by the Sandringham & District Historical Society.

MHS members joined members of the Brighton Cemeterians for their ANZAC walk in the Brighton Cemetery. David T, Steve and Jane N have been contributing ideas for the update of a local history timeline. It has been interesting considering what may be of importance to the next generation during the discussions. Books, puzzles and laminated pictures have been passed on to the girls in Grade 1 at Merton Hall who are studying their local history.

The Swedish Church were so impressed with our new *Toorak House* brochure that they have ordered 500 copies. Thanks Marianne! Jane B and Jane N continue to work on our new project, a puzzle book for children, thanks to generous grants from both Stonnington Council and the East Malvern Community Bank. Thanks Francesca for alerting us to Stonnington homes and shops facing demolition. Photographers have to move very quickly these days! Recently we're moved with the times and we will now make sure all future order and membership forms include the new direct debit bank details.



Di's granddaughter Charlotte, in London enjoying our picture book *Back When!*

William Ward Osborne



Ward Osborne lived at 1A Johnstone Street, Malvern, then 30 Jordan Street, Malvern and attended Spring Road Primary. News was received in 1944 that Ward had been killed when his plane crashed over the township of Aalst, Belgium. Between 1944 and 1984 the communal cemetery in Aalst was visited by one of the village men, who placed flowers on the grave in honour of the young Australian pilot. In 1991 the Mayor of Malvern received a letter from Mr Cynrik De Decker of Aalst, Belgium, who wrote requesting information on the former Malvern resident. Following is part of the transcript from Mr De Decker's letter to the Mayor of Malvern:

"At approx 13.15 on 9 November 1944, a Typhoon fighter, being piloted by AUS/430047, F/O William Ward OSBORNE, suffered an engine cut out. The pilot endeavoured to lengthen the distance of the glide to avoid a town, but the aircraft stalled and killed F/O Osborne, outside the town of Nieuwerkerken-Aalst. With this act William Osborne spared this town of possible disaster. He rests at the Communal Cemetery of Aalst. His grave is cared for by a local organisation, 'Erkentelijkheid'."

William Ward Osborne 28 April 1944 Reg No 60640
Reverse notes: "My 2nd embarkation all set to go"

The Stonnington History Centre catalogue entry (Reg No 60640) includes a fellow 247 Squadron Pilot's report on the incident in his personal diary.

Malvern Harriers Athletic Club



Opening of run - Malvern Harriers c1915 Reg No 1198

The Malvern Harriers Athletic Club was established in 1892. The history of the club has been recorded by Trevor Robbins in *Running Into History: A Centenary Profile of the Malvern Harriers Athletic Club 1892-1992*. Two Malvern Harriers Athletic Club - Sports programmes have recently been added to the collection. (Reg No 60805) They include Malvern Harriers, Fourth Annual Sports Meeting, 1913. Referee: H. Abbott, esq. President: Cr R. De Wilks and Malvern Harriers Fifth Annual Sports Meeting, 1914. Referee: H. Abbott, esq. President: Cr R. De Wilks. Both programmes includes the names of all participants in all events on the day and advertisements for local businesses.

Hidden letters from WWII revealed!

From the early days of the Second World War, in an extraordinary demonstration of solidarity, the Malvern City Council sent birthday greeting cards and canteen orders, together with an embossed leather wallet and other 'comforts' to every individual resident from Malvern serving in the armed forces. In return, the Council received hundreds of hand-written letters of thanks from men and women on every fighting front as well as some written to the Council by wives, parents or other relatives. All these letters of thanks were retained by the Council but have never been seen by either relatives of the writers or indeed, by the writers themselves. The letters have now been indexed and are available to the public for the very first time.

What makes these letters uniquely valuable is the fact that they are not official war histories, nor reminiscences written after the conflict, but on-the-spot, as-it-was happening first-hand accounts, mostly from young men in their twenties, away from home for the first time in their lives, experiencing the horrors - and the tedium - of war. Some are from prisoners of war and some from those who never returned. All of them express a tremendous appreciation for the efforts of the Council, mostly couched in formulaic, conventionalized terms but often including other material that can be funny, exciting or moving, and always expressing a wish that the War might be over so that they can come home!

The letters highlight the truly world-wide scope of the conflict as well as the extent of the contemporary British Empire coming as they do from places as far apart as Egypt and Syria, the Mediterranean, Rhodesia, Ceylon, Canada and the UK, as well as Malaya and Singapore, the Pacific islands and of course, New Guinea. The content of the letters reflects the unfolding course of the conflict, starting with expressions of patriotic enthusiasm in the early months, moving to concern at Japan's entry into the War and initial confidence that it will easily be contained, then turning to dismay at the collapse of Malaya and Singapore and revealing the desperate desire of those marooned in the Middle East to be allowed to return to Australia to defend homes and families. Despair gradually turns to relief once the United States entered the War and less is heard about the struggle in Europe.

Is there anyone out there who wrote one of these letters? I can hardly imagine the emotions you would feel, holding in your hands the actual letter you wrote almost seventy years ago, in very different circumstances!

To find a letter, use the Stonnington History Centre on-line catalogue: Google search 'stonnington council history centre', click on Search the History Centre catalogue, select Advanced Search and enter a name, surname first, followed by second name or initials then hit the Submit Query button. This will locate the letter in the archive under 'Malvern Council letters from those serving in World War II' and, if you come into the Stonnington History Centre, a staff member will access the letter for you. If necessary, Centre staff can search the Catalogue on your behalf.

Geoff Currey 2013



**Photo of the children of Leonard and Ethel Righetti.
(From left: Ivo, Lloyd, Sid, Yvonne and Alan) 1939
Reg No 2268**

During the Second World War, Ivo Righetti was a pilot in the RAAF, based in North Australia and flew Catalinas. Lloyd joined the Navy and was lost when the HMAS Perth went down in 1942. Sid was in the Cadet Corps at Melbourne Grammar School before joining the Navy. Yvonne was a voluntary helper at Navy House before being employed as Air Traffic Controller at Essendon Airport. Alan joined the Air Force and became a fighter pilot flying Kittyhawks. He was shot down over North Africa and was a prisoner for three years in Stalag Luft 3 in Germany.

Marjorie Cameron's Memories

"My mother Marion Aitkin Palin (nee Holmes) was born in Winter Street and unfortunately there is now a Coles car park where she was actually born. I will not be there with you on ANZAC Day but I will be thinking of my uncle, Oliver Aitkin Holmes, the son of Louis William Holmes who was a Malvern Councillor at the time. I have a copy of the telegram sent to Grandpa from the War Office informing his family of his death caused by an explosion on the ship 'The Southland' that was heading for Gallipoli. The ship limped to port but sadly Oliver (known as Bob) didn't survive and he was buried in the war cemetery at Lemnos. His name is on the memorial that was once located on the Town Hall corner but I think it has been moved to Central Park. As a child I would often, on my way home from Spring Road School, mount the few steps up and say hello to Bob".



War Memorial from 'A Grateful Englishman' c1935 Reg No 144. The granite memorial, donated by Charles Wood, was first erected in the Malvern Cricket Ground in 1922, then relocated to the Malvern Town Hall in 1932 and then to Central Park in 1992.

Hindered Tram's Passage

The Argus, 11 August 1910.

The first prosecution on the part of the Prahran-Malvern Tramway Trust took place on Monday, at the Malvern Court, before Messrs. Cohen, P.M., and Holmes, Moran, and Dunlop, J.P.'s. John Bailey, a motor chauffeur, was charged with having on June 30 persisted in driving a motor-car in front of one of the trust's cars, and thereby wilfully obstructing it. Defendant admitted the offence. Mr. Skinner appeared for the trust. Andrew Crowle, tram-driver, said that, although he rang the bell, defendant kept in front of the tram for more than 100 yards, causing two minutes to be lost on the run. In mitigation, defendant stated that the road was narrow, and he found it difficult to get out of the way. The telegraph posts necessitated keeping out a certain distance. The minimum penalty of 10/- with 20/- costs, in default distress, was imposed.



Glenferrie Road Malvern, looking south c1910
Reg No 5076

Additions to the Stonnington History Centre Collection

- *Great Australian World Firsts* by Chrystopher Spicer (includes a chapter on former Armadale resident Henry Sutton).
- *Visionary Lives: five hundred biographies from the Brighton General* by Jane Mao Carolan.
- An A.R.Bailey, Chemist, Glenferrie Road Malvern, medicine glass donated by Geraldine Fortuin.
- Photo of H.Lehner, Prahran Rifle Club, donated by Ian Lee.
- Photos of *Caloola*, 1 The Grange, Malvern East. *Caloola* was home to the McFarland family in the 1920s. It was on a large corner block with a tennis court. It was demolished in the 1930s.
- Set of photos taken during 2012 MHS visit to the Duldig Studio donated to the Stonnington History Centre and to the Duldig Studio.
- Material relating to the municipal amalgamation and to the Hedgeley Dene Overlay donated by Nicki Hanslow.



H. Lehner, Prahran Rifle Club, c1950s-1970s.
Reg No 60858

Caloola, 1 The Grange, Malvern East c1920
Reg No 60795



New Members

We would like to welcome our latest new members Nikki Cooper, Dianne Vale and John Stenning.

Have you enjoyed viewing the photos in this issue?

Material for the articles has been researched from the **Stonnington 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

East Malvern
Community Bank Branch **Bendigo Bank**

300 Waverley Road, East Malvern. Phone 9563 6044



Malvern Historical Society Inc. (A7682)

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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

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