

LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

Malvern Historical Society Inc. Keeping Stonnington's History Alive!

February/March 2015 Newsletter No. 53

22 March Pets in the Park

Sunday 22 March 11.00am - 4.00pm

Central Park, Corner of Burke Road and Wattletree Road, Malvern East
City of Stonnington's Pets in the Park is a popular event held every year in Central Park Malvern East. The Malvern Historical Society stall and large display of photographs are always well received by both the adults and the children from the local community. Can you spare an hour or two to help us? This is an opportunity for our members and supporters to become actively involved in Stonnington's local history. All help appreciated.

Please call Lorraine Sage,
President, 9885 9082



Wilmot Fountain and Conservatory, Central Park. East Malvern. c1929 Reg No 1359

29 March 'Big Changes Ahead in Gardiner' Walk!



Gardiner Hall c1910 Reg No 93

Sunday 29 March 4pm

Join members of the Malvern Historical Society for a walk around the area surrounding Gardiner Station. This whole area will be undergoing enormous change with the construction of the Burke Road Glen Iris Level Crossing Removal Project which includes removing the level crossing by lowering the rail line below Burke Road and building a new station. Hear about early land and building use.

Members: Gold Coin Non-members: \$5
Numbers strictly limited Bookings essential
Bookings: Lorraine 9885 9082 All welcome!

Thank you for your subscriptions

Thank you for forwarding your subscriptions and donations and for your ongoing support of the Society and its work. If anyone has any suggestions for activities or memorabilia you may like to donate to the Collection please let us know. If you have received this issue of the newsletter free by email you may like to consider becoming a financial member of the Society! I look forward to the continuing support from Members and Supporters of Stonnington's Local History.

Lorraine Sage, President 9885 9082

Diary Dates

Wednesday 29 April History Matters. Making Burghers: The Prahran Experience.

Diane Nicholas will trace the struggle to establish a municipal council in 1856, and will examine some of its early actions. Led by Stonnington History Centre staff, you'll discover Stonnington's incredible past at this History Matters talk.

10 am - 11am Bookings are required. Book online or call: 8290 1360

The session will be held at the Stonnington History Centre.

Wednesday 20 May Malvern Historical Society Annual General Meeting AGM 7.30 pm

Tales from the Courts

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

Some days its just better to stay at home

Mary Nicholls summoned Thomas Hill for assault. The plaintiff and defendant had previously attended court where Hill's brother had been proceeded against for damaging property. After returning home, the defendant, who resides in Wattle-tree road, climbed on to the fence and commenced to abuse the plaintiff's two sons who live in the next door house. She remonstrated with him whereupon he threw a stone, weighing about 2 lbs at her, which struck her on the breast and knocked her down. He then threw another stone which struck her behind the ear and afterwards a heavy piece of iron. Dr Emoling gave evidence as to the injuries received and stated that they were dangerous. Defence fined £10 with £5 and 5 shillings costs or three months imprisonment. Hill also charged with using insulting language to Richard Nicholls immediately after previously leaving the Police Court. Fined £1 with £1 and 1 shilling costs or one months imprisonment.

Prahran Telegraph, 17 June 1882

Geoff Currey

A Well Earned Retirement!

We were very sad to hear that David Tuck has, after 18 years of service, made the momentous decision to retire from his role at the Stonnington History Centre. The Malvern Historical Society has valued David's enormous contribution to the Stonnington History Centre. Not only has he been able to find, identify records (and if necessary rescue them!), preserve, list, and make them available, but he has also always made the time to listen, encourage and to share, always with his unique sense of humour! He has certainly enriched local history within the City of Stonnington. In a recent note David wished the Malvern Historical Society well, saying "It's been fun working with your group, and certainly productive. Keep doing what you're doing -- and may there be many more heritage markers, newsletters, brochures, web pages, history walks and things to add to the collection".



Jane Nigro, David Tuck,
Di Foster 2015

The Malvern Historical Society has valued David's contribution and we wish him a very happy retirement!

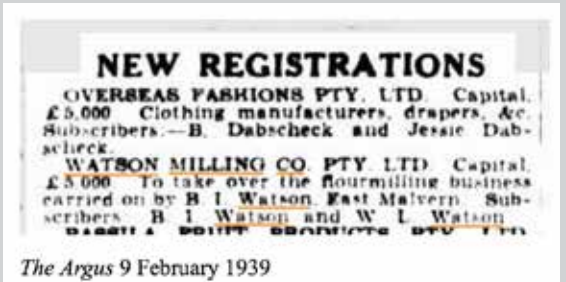
Malvern Historical Society Committee

Watson Milling Company, 1097 Dandenong Road, East Malvern



Amelia Dozzi recently found this flour bag at the bottom of a suitcase belonging to her late parents, Ferdinando and Eleonora Dozzi. The flour bag has 'Watson Milling Company Pty Ltd, 1097 Dandenong Road East Malvern SE5 Phone UL 3131' printed on it.

According to Sands & McDougall Directories and the *Argus*, Watson Milling Co was established in 1939 and in the early 1950s it became Watson McAlpine Flour. The flour mill ceased to exist some time before 1963. G.E.Bert and Co, furniture manufacturers, then occupied the site in Dandenong Road.



Fulton Fallacies

Handwriting can be a trap. I was preparing a history walk around Armadale and East Prahran and went to the obvious Prahran history sources, but I became suspicious when I read in *Discovering Prahran 8* that there were two Fulton brothers with land in Orrong Road – one was J.F.W. or J.F.N.Fulton, a hydropathist in Greville Street, the other was I.F.W. or I.F.N. Fulton, manager of the Orrong pottery. It didn't look right. It was also stated that there was another brother, Thomas Fulton who had an iron foundry. So I borrowed the Prahran rate books from the library, now conveniently on 8 CDs. The scribe of the Prahran ratebooks in the 1870s and 1880s wrote with a clear copperplate hand, but as with anyone who writes a lot, he developed individual variations. Those older readers who learnt to write with a post office pen on paper ruled with four lines will remember that the capital I and J are very similar but the I sits on the line, while the tail of the J dips a little below the line less than half way to the bottom line. Our scribe often sat his Js on the line, as is clear when he writes John or Joseph. Another anomaly of our scribe was that his capital W was rather like an N.

It was time to get genealogical. Thomas was easy – he has a full entry in Australian Dictionary of Biography. He was born in Dundee in 1813, the son of Thomas and Isabella nee Wheelwright and came to Melbourne in 1842. With his partner, Robert Langlands, he set up his iron foundry in Flinders Street. There is no mention of his being associated with Prahran although he did form a land syndicate which invested heavily in Malvern and Gardiner. He died in 1859 when he fell down a mineshaft. The directories tell us that J.F.W. Fulton, was a hydropathist in Greville Street – hydropathists applied water outside and inside the body ostensibly to cure almost everything. However, there is no sign of I.F.W. From the births deaths and marriages it became clear that there was only one James Ferguson Wylie Fulton in Victoria who was born in Scotland and died at South Yarra in 1893. Family Search revealed that James Ferguson Wylie Fulton and his twin, Jane, were christened at Maybole, Ayrshire, 12 August 1811. Their parents were John and Janet McNeish. There were two older sisters, Mary and Margaret. As the first-born son, James was showered with three Christian names, while the two brothers who came later, had to be content with a simple Thomas, born in 1814 and William in 1819. Ergo, although James had a brother Thomas, he cannot be the Melbourne iron master, who was probably no relation – they had different parents and lived on opposites sides of Scotland. The Hope papers held in Stonnington Archives confirm that James Ferguson Wylie Fulton married Jane Ronald at Maybole in 1837 and came to Melbourne in 1856 with their three children, John, James and Isabelle.

When *Discovering Prahran 8* and *Cooper's History of Prahran* were written, genealogical research was long, tedious and difficult. Now with the benefit of so many digitised records, it is easy for us to check the facts. The sad thing is that once misinformation is in print it will continue to be quoted ad infinitum. The Orrong Pottery which was partly on Fulton's land is another story, to be told soon.

Diane Nicholas 2015

Chadstone Park/Malvern Valley Primary School Diamond Jubilee Reunion

Chadstone Park/Malvern Valley Primary School celebrated its Diamond Anniversary with a Jubilee School Reunion in October last year. Chadstone Park Primary School was officially opened on the 11th June 1954, named after the adjacent Chadstone Park. The school was renamed Malvern Valley Primary School in 2001, in reference to its Malvern East location. Over 300 people returned to the school to reminisce with past friends and colleagues and shared in an afternoon tea provided by the current school community.

The preparation of the historical displays was a significant undertaking given most of the school's historical documents and photographs were lost in the 2004 fire which substantially damaged the original school buildings. The Stonnington History Centre provided valuable information on the origins of the school site dating back to 1855 and the establishment of the school, which formed the basis of a display of the school's history in the newly named Sherwood Centre.

Displays of class photographs and memorabilia spanning the school's sixty year history were set up in six classrooms. Past students delighted in identifying themselves in class photographs, with provision made on each photograph for names to be recorded.

Current students were involved in learning about their school's history by taking part in a history trail around the school. They were required to answer questions about significant features and events around the school grounds. A history timeline is now a permanent feature in the school's Studio which they can reference on the way to and from class. What the students particularly enjoyed was preparing questions for past students about what school life was like at Chadstone Park Primary School over the past 60 years. They delighted in reading the responses left for them by the visitors when they came into school on the following Monday morning.

The Principal, Gaylene Fehlberg, welcomed Mayor Cr Stubbs, who officially named The Sherwood Centre. The name Sherwood was chosen in reference to Sherwood Road, which had been closed in 1949 in order for the school to be built on the current site.

Claire Burzacott



Stonnington Research Enquiries

Thank you to Stonnington History Centre staff Ellen, Simone and Peter who handled all enquiries so enthusiastically!

Telephone Exchanges in Malvern



By 15 November 1912 the Malvern Exchange, in the Post Office in Glenferrie Road, had 1652 subscribers both day and night service. The PMG Annual Report in 1919 notes 'The new automatic telephone exchange at Malvern was brought into service on 12th July 1919. 3,129 subscribers' lines are connected to the Malvern Automatic Exchange, including 438 Malvern subscribers previously connected to Windsor. The whole of these subscribers' lines were cut-over to the new system successfully'. **Telecom Museum, Hawthorn.**

Malvern Post Office and Exchange, Llaneast Street Malvern c1930 Reg No 4509

Madam Pietzcker

Jim Allen recently contributed an article to the Eltham District Historical Society newsletter with a link to Toorak. Maria Annunziata Groebner was born in Klagenfurt, Austria c1898. Her father's name was August Groebner and her mother's Agatha Groebner (nee Von Josch). Her family was a medical family and her mother was an accomplished pianist. She also had an older sister, Hanna. Not much is known about her early life, however her death certificate indicates a marriage in Vienna prior to coming to Australia. Around 1929 Maria immigrated to Australia. According to a note she placed in the *Argus* Newspaper dated 19th July 1945, she intended to apply for naturalization.

John Alexander Pietzcker, her future husband, was born in 1870. John came to Australia in 1891 and was the Honorary Swiss Consul in Melbourne from 1932 until 1951. John had an interest in chess and one of the major events in Melbourne at the time was the Pietzcker Chess Tournament.

Shortly after retiring, John's wife Lillie Antoinette (an American) passed away at Toorak. An article in the *Argus* dated 8th April 1953 mentions that John had married Madam Maria Groebner. The occasion was celebrated very quietly and they didn't even let their closest friends know until a couple of days after the ceremony. This article is the first instance found where Maria was being referred to as Madam.

At the time of their marriage John and Madam were living at *Ballara*, 49 Lansell Road, Toorak but they intended to move to the new home they were building on Maria's herb farm at Research. This new house was also known as *Ballara*. In 1958 John passed away. On his death he left a \$40,000 bequest to the University of Melbourne. Madam continued to live on at *Ballara* at Research for a further 28 years. Maria died in 1983 at the age of 85.

Research for this article was provided by Jim Allen ©. The full article was first published in the Eltham District Historical Society newsletter No 291 Nov 2014.



Ballara, 49 Lansell Road Toorak.

At the first Crown Land Sales in June 1840, three large allotments bounded by Orrong Road, Toorak Road, Kooyong Road and the Yarra River, were sold to speculators. Lot 16, consisting of 70 acres, was purchased by Sylvester J. Brown and then with lot 17, by James Jackson. In 1849-50, Jackson built a large mansion with a formal garden on 148 acres, most of which was kept as bush. Jackson named the property *Toorak House*, which gave the area its name, and Kearney's map of 1855 shows the property extending from Orrong Road to the east side of the present-day St. George's Road. From 1854-1873 the Victorian Government leased *Toorak House* and in 1854, Sir Charles Hotham took formal possession. The Governor's occupancy helped attract other wealthy residents to the area. Around 1874, solicitor Edward Klingender sold the property to George Lansell, the Bendigo mining entrepreneur.

Lansell subdivided the vast estate into large allotments facing Orrong and Toorak Roads and created the elegantly winding Lansell and St. George's Roads. George Lansell's 1874 subdivision was aimed 'specially for the gentry



Ballara, 49 Lansell Road Toorak - 2015

of Victoria', and whilst retaining *Toorak House* on a much reduced allotment, the subdivision was to change the rural appearance of this part of Toorak. The sale attracted wealthy pastoralists, merchants and professionals who chose this prestigious area to build their mansions. The cable tram in Toorak Road and the extension of the railway through Heyington in 1890, added to the attraction of this prestigious district for new property owners.

Only a few houses were built in Lansell Road during the 1880s boom years, but one of the more elaborate mansions facing Lansell Road was *The Towers*, built for landboomer Sir Matthew Davies. Following Davies' bankruptcy in the 1890s depression however, *The Towers* proved to be unsaleable, and the mansion remained empty for some time. Most of the estate, including land to the south of the house, was subdivided in 1912 and Towers Road was created. On an allotment facing Lansell Road, on what appears to have been the site of the *The Tower's* tennis court, a two storey brick house was built for Dr. F. Hudson-Eastwood in 1914, to the design of architect Chris Cowper. Around 1922, Hudson-Eastwood sold the property to John Pletzecker. Pletzecker occupied the house known as *Ballara* for more than twenty years.

Remembering the Chook Raffles!

'One of my earliest memories was of Friday mornings when, as a pre-schooler, my mother used to put me in the shopping jeep and I would ride along Greville Street to the front of the Prahran Town Hall in Chapel Street, where a Chook Raffle would be held every week. They also raffled trays of meat and weekend joints, such as a leg of lamb, sirloin of beef, sausages, etc. In those days, a chicken was delicious, juicy and free range and the smell when it was cooking was absolutely magnetic. It was a very special treat and cooked for birthdays, Christmas dinners or when visitors were coming for Sunday lunch, as they were then quite expensive to buy. The Chook Raffles were popular and there were always 40 or 50 people in attendance. I can still remember the huge man with his rotund tum (he even looked like a chook!) who ran the raffles. He had a very loud voice and whipped up the assembled crowd to buy tickets as he spruiked and shouted. I can't quite recall, but I'm pretty sure the proceeds went to a charity for the poor in the area, as it was not long after the Second World War and there were pockets of poverty in Prahran and surrounding suburbs. We were incredibly lucky and more often than not we won something. If not, we would then go back along Greville St to the butcher shop, where Aesop is now located, on the side of the Grattan Gardens. My mother would buy the weekend meat there instead, while I trailed my feet through the sawdust on the floor, making 'streets and lanes'. You can still see the royal blue tiles, commonly used on butcher's shops, under the front window of that Greville Street shop now. The same bank of very old Peppercorn trees, with their gnarled branches, is still on the western side of the shop. There, as a primary school-aged child, I used to collect the leaves from those trees to feed the silkworms and Emperor Gum caterpillars, which I kept at home in a cardboard shoe box and took to school regularly for 'show and tell' when there was action occurring in the caterpillar box.

S.W. 2011

Myrnong

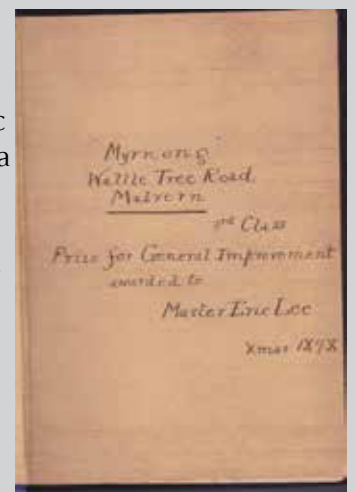
Lyne Hendrix recently contacted the MHS. She has in her possession a copy of 'Sunk at Sea' by R.M. Ballantyne. The book was presented to her grandfather and the inscription in the front reads 'Myrnong, Wattle Tree Road, Malvern, 3rd Class, Prize for General Improvement awarded to Master Eric Lee. Xmas 1898'. Lyne's grandfather, Eric Priestley Lee, was born in North Fitzroy in 1891. He was the only child of Robert Lee, a warehouseman, and Elizabeth Ellen Priestley. Eric became an accountant and married Ula Heather Morrow in 1919.

The Stonnington History Centre staff found that Myrnong was a school at 21 Wattle Tree Road Armadale. The school was run by Constance J. Clarke, proprietor and head teacher. An Education Act in 1905 required schools to be registered. Records show Myrnong was registered by Miss Clarke on 29th June 1906.

There were primary and sub-primary classes and at the time of registration they listed 14 pupils. Subjects taught were: English, French, Mathematics (Arithmetic and Algebra), History, Geography, Physiology, class singing, kindergarten drawing, school drill, kindergarten singing and games, needlework and music. All subjects were taught to the primary school standard.

According to the Sands & McDougall Street Directories, the house at 21 Wattle Tree Road was occupied by the Clarke family. The 1895 Directory notes Edward E. Clarke and by the following year Miss Ethel Clarke is listed. Miss F. Clarke, private school, is noted during the next few years until 1912.

Ellen Porter. Stonnington Local History Officer



New members

We would like to welcome our latest new members Jennifer Date, David and Kaye Fallick and Eugene Verstraeten.

Taking Local History to the Community

Lorraine and Jane attended the recent South Metro History Group meeting at Port Melbourne. Jane spoke about the History of Herring Island and the surrounding area at the Scenes on the Yarra Environmental Art Workshop, organised by Jeminah Reidy. Historian Stella Barber and David Langdon, President of the Richmond & Burnley Historical Society, provided valuable research notes and photos. The Society was represented at a Community Morning Tea held by Kelly O'Dwyer MP, Federal Member for Higgins.

The digitisation of the Malvern Historical Society collection of audio tapes has now been completed. This project was funded by the Public Record Office of Victoria.

Additions to the Stonnington Local History Collection



Copy of a watercolour painting showing the view from the front window of 1946 Malvern Road East Malvern, looking north towards Ashburton c1942.

Donated by Carly Mitchell



Photos of Gardiners Creek East Malvern donated by Linda McKay. They were taken by her grandfather, Geoffrey Beeforth.

Black Bridge, Gardiners Creek, Malvern East c1920

Complete set of St Roch's Church notices for 2014 donated by Rev. Father Ian Waters



Wedding of
Una Watson and Alan Bradley,
Malvern Presbyterian Church
1941 Reg No 61317
(Aherne Collection)



Gardiner School
photos donated
by Elizabeth
Sommerwell.

Gardiner Central
School dancing
group c1955
Reg No 61337

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

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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

Stonnington History Centre, Email: history@stonnington.vic.gov.au Tel: 8290 1360 www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history
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