

LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

Malvern Historical Society Inc.

Keeping Stonnington's History Alive!

July 2022 - Newsletter No. 95

9 August It Was the Best of Times...

Tuesday 9 August 7pm

PMI Victorian History Library, 39 St Edmonds Road Prahran 3181

The PMI's 2022 Bruce Turner Presentation will be presented by Ross Campbell, a member of the Cinema and Theatre Historical Society of Australia (CATHS). Ross's talk encompasses his childhood and adult years relating to cinemas and films shown in Caulfield, Elsternwick, Gardenvale, Brighton, Glenhuntly, Malvern and St Kilda. As a child, Ross saw nitrate film projected which had a unique quality. It was replaced by non-flammable safety film in 1950.

FREE but bookings essential.

Book using this link: <https://www.trybooking.com/CAXYW> or by calling the PMI 03 9510 3393



The Hoyts New Malvern Theatre,
1 Glenferrie Road Malvern c1930
Stonnington History Collection MP6589

19 August Visit to the Royal South Yarra Lawn Tennis Club

Friday 19 August 10am

Join members of the Malvern Historical Society for our visit to the Royal South Yarra Lawn Tennis Club. The Royal South Yarra Lawn Tennis Club was first established in 1884, with a humble one-room weatherboard pavilion on railway land in Portland Place, South Yarra. The Club was established when tennis was a garden party pastime, enjoyed by genteel members of Melbourne's social set. The Club moved to its present Williams Road, Toorak site in 1923. Famous players associated with the club include Norman Brookes, and Nell and Harry Hopman.

Address: 310 Williams Road North, Toorak

Cost: \$10 (includes coffee/tea & scones) Bookings essential

RSVP: Heather: 0407 865 098,

Lorraine: ljsage123@gmail.com



The Governor opened the new courts, South Yarra Tennis Club, Williams Road, South Yarra 24 February, 1923
Stonnington History Collection PH9624

Snow in Melbourne Thursday 9 August 1951

"Victoria's record snap freeze will continue today with icy gales, hail and rain, and snow may again fall in some Melbourne suburbs. Tens of thousands of people, many of middle-age, for the first time saw snowfall in the city yesterday. It was Melbourne's coldest August day for 79 years. The bleakness of recent weeks has established this winter as the coldest on record, and last summer was the hottest on record! Snow fell at 8.40 am, 10.55 am and 2.55 pm." *The Argus* Friday 10 August 1951. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/23060318#>



Left: Glenys Needham outside her grandmother's home, 27 Serrell Street Malvern East 1951. Glenys' uncle, Howard Hulme, rushed home from work to enjoy the snow with Glenys and her mother Betty McDonnell (née Hulme).

Right: Ernest and Alan Williams in the snow garden at 1576 High Street Glen Iris, August 1951
Stonnington History Collection MP5049



Congratulations Steve Stefanopoulos OAM

Steve Stefanopoulos has received recognition for his service to the community in a range of roles in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List.

The Award recognises Steve's work at the City of Stonnington, including as Mayor.

The Award also recognises Steve's long and ongoing contributions to the Australian Society of Archivists, the Malvern Historical Society, Prahran Historical and Arts Society, Prahran Mechanics' Institute, Association of Catholic Archivists, Loreto Mandeville Hall, Toorak, and Open House Melbourne.



New member

We would like to welcome our latest new member, Margaret Black

Malvern Historical Society Executive Committee 2022

President: Lorraine Sage

Vice President: Jane Nigro

Treasurer: Ann Ahin

Minute Secretary: Pat Brincat

Committee: Marisa Costa

Francesca Di Mattina

Dianne Gardiner

Heather Kasa

Bernadette Wood

Newsletter

Editor: Jane Nigro

Design/Printing: MBE Malvern

St James Anglican Church Glen Iris - Celebrating 100 years in 2022

Thanksgiving Sunday 24 July 10am

Celebration Dinner 29 July 6.30pm

Open House Sunday 31 July 10am

More details:

<https://sites.google.com/a/sj.org.au/st-james-anglican-church-glen-iris/>

<https://openhousemelbourne.org/event/st-james-anglican-church-glen-iris/>

The first Church of England services in Glen Iris were held at Glen Iris Primary School in 1895. In 1907, the Board of Guardians purchased land on the corner of Malvern and York Roads, Glen Iris. Soon after, funds were provided by Mr Connibere, a Toorak churchman, to purchase land in High Street, Glen Iris just east of the railway line. On 12 February 1908, £120 was offered to St John's Church, Finch St, East Malvern for the purchase of their Sunday School building, originally the Church. The timber building, together with the bell, was moved to the newly purchased site in High Street near the railway line and on 7 May 1908, the Parish of St James was constituted.



A sketch of the proposed design of the St James Church and Parish Buildings on High Street, on the north west corner with Burke Road, Glen Iris. Architect Louis R. Williams, c1920
Stonnington History Collection MP420

In 1912, a vicarage was built on land adjacent to the church.

Plans for a new Arts & Crafts style church and hall on the corner of High Street and Burke Road were drawn up by architects North & Williams. In 1920, the foundation stone of the temporary church, now the hall, was laid and the building was officially opened by the Archbishop in February 1922.

During the 1920s, the land and buildings in High Street, east of the railway line, were sold. In 1934, the organ, originally from St Matthews Church, Prahran was dedicated. The current church was dedicated on 8 August 1959.



High Street, Glen Iris. MMBW detail plan. 2612,
Malvern and Camberwell, 1918 <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/136557>

12 Irymple Avenue Malvern East

The Society would like to thank Susie Gamble for sharing some of her family's photos.



Susie's aunt Shirley Austin (Mulhall) c1940s. A Malvern tram pulling into the terminus in Wattleree Road at Burke Road can be seen in the background



Uncle Don Austin being 'bailed up' by the family's cocky, back gates, 12 Irymple Avenue, Malvern East c1940s



Susie's mother, Helene (Billie) Austin (Gamble) with Uncle Don Austin's Packard c1940s

Steyr-Puch 'Haflinger' - a small, lightweight off-road vehicle

Dr Constantin Kiesling (c.kiesling@haflinger-4wd.com) is researching the history of the Steyr-Puch 'Haflinger', a small, lightweight off-road vehicle which was manufactured in Graz, Austria, from 1959 to 1974. In Australia, the Haflinger was imported and sold through a company called AFB (Anti Friction Bearings) Australasia Pty Ltd which was located at 1097 High Street in Armadale. Constantin has an article about Haflingers in Australia on his website at: [http:// tdc.haflinger-4wd.com/countries/australia.php](http://tdc.haflinger-4wd.com/countries/australia.php)

The Stonnington History Centre has researched the site in High Street using the City of Malvern Rate Books. They found the company also listed in Milton Parade, Malvern, and in Wellington Street, Prahran. Unfortunately there are no photos of the building in High Street when AFB (Anti Friction Bearings) was there. They were listed as tenants at 1097-1099 High Street, Armadale from c1964-1970.

The site in High Street became a petrol station and car wash after AFB left. In 1988 the site was redeveloped and converted to a six shop retail precinct.



One of the first Haflingers exported to Australia, January 1963. <http://tdc.haflinger-4wd.com/countries/australia.php>

St Monans Williams Road Toorak

The Simson family were wealthy Scottish pastoralists who used *St Monans* as their town house. The name *St Monans* comes from the birth place of the Simson family in Scotland. In 1871, with his success as a pastoralist and with a growing family, Colin Simson purchased land in Williams Road, South Yarra. While their new house was being built, the family lived in Caroline Street, South Yarra. In 1872, they moved into *St Monans*, a single storey Victorian villa with verandah, extensive gardens and stables. In 1886, the family moved to *Carmyle*, 7 Carmyle Avenue, Toorak. The adults in the photo are Colin Simson and his wife Margaret Madeline (Smith) Simson. The Simsons had nine children.

Albumen photographic print of *St Monans*, a house on Williams Road, Toorak, and the family of Colin Simson.

A handwritten inscription reads: 'St Monans, Colin Simpsons House, Toorak, Melbourne, Victoria. Group of the Family. Milly and Edie are in it. 1873'



Former Dairy Bell ice cream shop site in Malvern East

Our Facebook post about Dairy Bell was a huge hit with our followers. It brought back many fond memories. Over 500 people commented on it and we almost doubled our previous record of likes, with over 800!

We now have 4775 Facebook followers thanks to Nikki Cooper who manages our Facebook page with lots of enthusiasm.

<https://www.facebook.com/malvernhistoricalsocietystonnington/>

The south east corner of Waverley Road and Belgrave Road, Malvern East has had a number of occupants including Nirvana Dairy and the Hills butcher shop.

Dairy Bell Ice Cream Pty Ltd was established by Andre Razums and John Stanford in 1970. The company took over F. Spottiswood's East Malvern business, Nirvana Dairy, in the mid 1970s. After operating in East Malvern for 44 years the Dairy Bell business was forced to close due to high competition from the larger manufacturers. They ceased trading in February 2015 and relocated to 89 Chadstone Rd, Malvern East. A new multi storey apartment block with 117 units has now been built on the site.



Intersection of Belgrave and Waverley Roads, Malvern East c1970

Hills butcher shop can be seen on the corner. The Nirvana Dairy is just south in Belgrave Road.

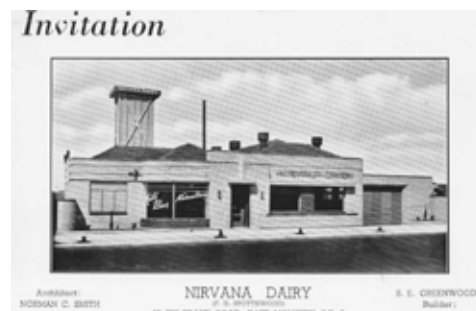
Stonnington History Collection MP6544



Dairy Bell Ice Cream shop 2015

(Image: Robin Brown)

Stonnington History Collection
SHC61596



**Invitation to the opening of the Nirvana Dairy, 60 Belgrave Road Malvern East
25 October 1938**

Stonnington History Collection MP7724

Elgin Hall 21 Elgin Avenue, Armadale

This intact example of a grand Victorian mansion, still located on a large allotment, has state significance for design reasons. It demonstrates the building styles popular among the wealthy in the former Prahran district and is important architecturally for its elaborate decorative treatment and external intactness. The site has local aesthetic significance for its large open space although the early garden features have been removed. This large two-storeyed house with its attractive cast iron verandah trim was built in 1899-1900 by the Victorian Permanent Building Society for Mary Windsor. The residence was let to Thomas Wallace, draper. This building society, which was associated with the construction of a large number of properties throughout Melbourne's suburbs, was founded in 1865 by James Munro, MLA for North Melbourne and Carlton, and Premier of Victoria.

The house appears to be largely intact and demonstrates grand Italianate architectural detail. The broad facade addressing Elgin Street has a pair of ornate bay windows on each storey, each containing narrow, arched double hung windows. The balcony returns on both sides and is infilled on the southern side. Elegant cast iron columns are paired and bracketed with fine lacework with a few segments missing. The roof is hidden behind a continuous parapet wall, complete with balustrade and frieze. The grand residence is situated on raised foundations with most of the area lawned with some established plantings. Later buildings are located to the south east of the house.

A 1902 MMBW drainage plan shows the Elgin Avenue residence at that time, on the east side of Wynnstay Avenue (the street's earlier name). The property had a long drive from stables at the rear and it also has an entrance in Wynnstay Avenue. Later, during the 1940s, the property became known as Elgin Hall Guest House. From the time in 1958 when it was purchased by the Roman Catholic Trust Corporation, it has had other uses. At first, it was a Hungarian Youth Club Hostel and later a Roman Catholic Seminary with offices.



Elgin Hall, 21 Elgin Avenue, Armadale 1993
Stonnington History Collection SHC61892

'Despite it all I call myself an Australian' - Branka Malia

'I was born in Brezice, Slovenia which was part of Yugoslavia after the Second World War. My natural father left my mother just prior to my birth. She had become engaged to him when she was 17 years old. She was 21 when I was born. When I was six years old and was about to start school aged seven, my father wanted to install my mother as his mistress and put me into a government run school. However, as my mother was a devout Catholic, she chose to migrate to Australia when one of her brothers offered to pay for an ocean liner to bring us to Port Melbourne, for the princely sum of £10. We took a rickety old train to Zagreb in Serbia, and from there we made our way to Italy. The ocean liner was doing a final trip to Australia before being scrapped. The boat, called Lloyd Triestino really should not have been used, as we discovered on the journey. Some time after going through the Suez Canal we hit a really bad storm and almost capsized. I remember wearing a life jacket and adults all around me panicking. Odd, but I really did not feel afraid. As we struggled onto the deck, miraculously the wind and storm died down and the ship which was almost on its side righted itself. In those days travel to Australia from Europe took months and I remember the crew organised a cake and party when they discovered it was my birthday. It was held in a huge room where children who were travelling onboard could play. I had never seen such toys before and spent a lot of time there.



Grade 1A Armadale State School 1963. Branka is 'the mite kneeling at the front and furthest right in the dark cardigan'

We arrived in Port Melbourne to a warm welcome from my uncle and his family. They were sharing a magnificent and very large house in Munro Street in Armadale. There were several other migrant families who lived there with us to share the rent. We paid £3 for our share.

Armadale Primary School was around the corner and I walked down a nearby lane to the school for the first time. I couldn't speak any English but they put me into Grade 1 all the same because of my age. That was a difficult time and as I was small, a 'wog' and illegitimate, there were some who tried to bully me. Many were kind, however, so I learnt to speak English quickly. Reading and writing were harder as I wasn't given any extra help with that and set work to do that I couldn't possibly understand. We lived in Armadale for almost three years during which time my mother married and my sister was born when I was nine years old.

Unfortunately, my stepfather was a gambler, irresponsible with money, and an alcoholic. Australia needed factory workers at that time so my parents, who didn't speak English, found work easily. My mother who had been a chef worked in a plastics factory, at a lower pay since she was a woman, and my stepfather who had been a blacksmith turned his hand to welding. Next, because our rent was going to be doubled by the owners our growing family found cheaper accommodation in Spotswood. For a couple of years, I attended Newport Primary School but had the same issues trying to learn by myself. After several years we were finally able to put down a deposit on our own home. This was an old weatherboard house with an outdoor toilet and no hot water. We had to fire up the boiler to heat up our water for a bath. My parents had a double mortgage but at least we had our own home. I spent my final primary school years at Hughesdale Primary School. My education settled down when I started in Form 1 at Chadstone High School. This school and the friends I made were what kept me going, and the school was definitely a sanctuary to me as my home life was rough. My parents also decided to move again as they were offered a good price for our home by a developer. I was 17 and my next sister had just been born. It was also in the middle of my final two years of schooling at Chadstone High School but we moved to Keysborough. To get to school from there I had to walk to the bus stop for a bus which came once an hour only, catch two buses and walk again from the small Chadstone Shopping Centre area that it was at that time. Despite this I was determined to finish my education as I felt that my future prospects depended on it. So when I achieved my HSC I sat for a teacher's scholarship and became a Humanities, English and Literature teacher. I studied for four years at Rusden State College and commenced teaching English and History at Wantirna High School in 1982. Apart from Victoria I have since taught in the western suburbs of Sydney, Western Australia and Queensland so I believe this migrant has added some value to her adopted country and today, despite it all I call myself an Australian'.



'Revisiting our home in Munro Street Armadale' 2020

Memories of Wattletree Road - Doris Thomas

Doris Thomas, a librarian, wrote down her memories for a young school-aged student, the daughter of Gwen, a MHS member. Doris lived in Malvern all her life, including 195 Wattletree Road and then Derril Avenue later in her life. She married Elston, a chemist who had a shop in Carnegie. Doris and Elston were both musical and often attended symphony orchestra concerts.

‘Tooronga Road and Wattletree Road corner remains a small corner shopping centre as I remember it in the 1920s. Of course, the nature of the shops has changed eg; a pizza takeaway where I remember a small Chinese laundry where the children were sent to collect their father’s stiffly starched white collars – all threaded on a string. Wilson’s Removalists (J Wilson Removals and Storage) started on one corner and became a very large business. I also think there was a grain and corn store there too. Alongside Gaynor Court Park (roughly opposite Thanet Street) there was a large paddock which went through to Wheatland Road and was owned by William Padfield who exercised his racehorses there. During the 1930s this land was developed for tennis courts and several clubs played there, myself included. It was a very active centre. In Wattletree Road there was a private junior school called ‘Adwalton’ which was very popular for small children in the neighbourhood as other schools were some distance away and transport then was not easy.

So far, what I have described has been on the left hand side of Wattletree Road. Approaching Glenferrie Road now, we come to the corner of Wattletree Road and Glendearg Grove, certainly the most historical part of Wattletree Road because the low roofed timber house there surrounded by age-old white and purple wisteria creeper was one of the first places built in Malvern. I think it was an inn and a ‘changing’ place for horses. As long as I can remember – I have lived in Malvern since 1917 – the early character of this house has been maintained. Opposite here in Wattletree Road is the now large Cabrini Hospital. The large Hagelthorne Estate which must have been subdivided in the early 1920s included the large Victorian two storey residence which became St Benedict’s Private Hospital, facing Coonil Crescent. It also faced Wattletree Road and it was a gracious English house and garden with a huge oak tree in the middle. It was owned by Dr Lee who set up practice there. Later this house was bought by Mr George R Nicholas who had made a fortune from his discovery and manufacture of Aspro tablets. His family attended the Methodist Church in Glendearg Grove and he was later to make endowments to MLC and Wesley College. His family’s interest in music led to his daughter (Nola Nicholas) and son (Lindsay Nicholas) marrying Yehudi and Hephzibah Menuhin respectively. At the time it seemed a far cry from Wattletree Road in Malvern to the international European scene. Later the Nicholas family moved to Toorak and their property in Wattletree Road was bought by Dr Shannon who had a medical practice on the opposite corner where another doctor, Dr Leon Jona, had formerly practised.

This may have been the beginning of the section of Wattletree Road being selected by doctors to set up practices because on the other corner of Wattletree Road and Coonil Crescent there was the joint practice of Dr Thomas White and Dr Ellen Balaan. This place became a nursing home called Malvern Green. There are still doctors practising in Wattletree Road today. In the 1950s the Francis Xavier Cabrini Order took over the St Benedict Hospital and built the very modern hospital that you see today. Great expansion has occurred and new wings for clinical and diagnostic facilities have been built.

Further up from Cabrini is the Malvern Presbyterian Church which has remained very active all the years I have lived nearby. The church hall was always a polling booth for elections. The next place of change which I remember is where the Super Rita store (quite close to Glenferrie Road) stands. It was the former site of the Victory Cinema Theatre. In fact, I think the theatre was converted into a store. The theatre seemed so modern and exciting when it was first built in the 1920s. Saturday afternoon matinees were very popular as serials were shown which made the audience have to impatiently wait another week to know what happened next. Our ticket cost either sixpence or threepence. The rounded shop front on the corner of Wattletree Road and Glenferrie Road was part of the Bambalina ballroom where parties and wedding receptions took place. Part of the building is I think still used for receptions. The opposite corner has seen little change – the Bank building and Cribbins Furniture Shop (Raymond Cribbin Furniture Art) have both been there for very many years.

All in all, over my nearly 60 years in the locality, there have not been the drastic changes which might have been expected. A very important change occurred when the number 5 tram travelling to the city altered its route. When I used it until the 1930s, the tram would turn into Glenferrie Road as far as the Malvern Town Hall then along High St to St Kilda Road. We would use it to get to Armadale Station and catch the train from there. It was a great boom when the present route began.

Doris Thomas (undated)

Mitford / Metford Toorak Road Toorak

In 1855, Thomas Power sold four allotments on the north side of Toorak Road, each of more than four acres, to Parliamentarian John McCrae, James Kidd, James Brown and stock and station agent, Gideon Rutherford. Brick houses were built on each of the four allotments.

In 1856 James Brown's house included a stone kitchen and stables surrounded by four acres of pasture and cultivated land. From 1880, James Brown's property, on the future site of Kyeamba Grove, was owned by merchant, parliamentarian and Commissioner of Customs William Froggatt Walker (1840-1890). Walker ran a successful general store in Bourke Street, before establishing Walkers' Bonded Stores, which became the Melbourne Storage Company in 1881. W. F. Walker and Co. were general merchants and importers of coal, lime and cement. By 1890, Walker's house had been enlarged to include 16 rooms spread over two storeys with offices, coach house, garden, fernery and tennis lawn. The house was named *Medford / Mitford*.

(Hon.) W. Froggatt Walker, was a politician in colonial Victoria. He was born in England and arrived in Victoria in 1857. He entered the Victorian Legislative Assembly in 1880, but only held the seat until June 1880. He then was elected to the seat of Boroondara in a by-election in April 1882.



William Froggatt Walker

Source: www.parliament.vic.gov.au

In 1886 he accepted the post of Commissioner of Trade and Customs. Walker resigned as Commissioner in February 1889, and proceeded to Europe to act as Executive Commissioner for Victoria. He died in England in 1890. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Froggatt_Walker

Metford was leased to barrister Stewart McArthur around 1900. Later the property was renamed Kyeamba and was sold to Dr William Orr, a prominent eye surgeon. In 1937 the estate was sold and subdivided and Kyeamba Grove was created. The mansion was later demolished.



Metford / Mitford (undated)



Two photos of the McArthur family in the garden at *Mitford*, the family home in Toorak Road c1900
Stonnington History Collection MP14442



150 years: school profiles

This year marks the 150th anniversary of public education in Victoria. The Department of Education's School Record Management Program has been travelling all over Victoria, finding and archiving old school records. Learn about some of Victoria's oldest schools, and explore the records in the collection here: <https://www.vic.gov.au/150-years-public-education-victoria-school-profiles>.

This page has a short history of 150 of Victoria's oldest schools, and the Department of Education will be adding many more throughout the year.

Head Teacher Louis Shepherd ran the Prahran Common School, Chapel Street, South Yarra around 1873. He opened the Hornby Street, Windsor State School in 1877.



Prahran Common School c1875
Stonnington History Collection PH7079

Malvern Historical Society Inc P O Box 184, Malvern Victoria 3144

I would like to

- Join the Malvern Historical Society
Renew Malvern Historical Society

Annual Membership Options

- Individual \$13
Full time student \$9
Family \$20

Date: Donation \$
TOTAL \$

Member information

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Address
Suburb Postcode
Phone Mobile
Email (please print) Signature

Yes I'd prefer to receive the newsletter by email only.

Payment options

Paying by Direct Transfer
Commonwealth Bank BSB No: 063187 Account No: 10104883 Account Name - Malvern Historical Society
*** Please make sure the message/reference box states your name and what the payment is for.
***We would appreciate the return of your completed form by mail or by email.

Paying by Cheque
Please make the cheque payable to the Malvern Historical Society Inc. Kindly forward your cheque and completed form to the Malvern Historical Society.

I would like to assist with:

- Committee and administration
Newsletter
Walks
Talks
Afternoon teas & suppers

*Financial year: 1 Jan - 31 Dec

MHS website: www.vicnet.net.au/~malvern Tel: 0438 515 631 malvernhistorical@yahoo.com

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 and a member of the South Metro History Group.

OTHER STONNINGTON HISTORY CONTACTS

Stonnington History Centre, Email: history@stonnington.vic.gov.au
Tel: 8290 1360 www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Discover/History
Prahran Mechanics Institute Tel: 9510 3393 www.pmi.net.au

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 65,000 records. To view enlargements of photographs and to read more, just go to the website.
www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Discover/History

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