

# LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

Malvern Historical Society Inc.

Keeping Stonnington's History Alive!

July 2024 - Newsletter No. 103

## Stonnington History Centre and Northbrook Garden open for Open House Melbourne Rediscover our local history and heritage!

Stonnington History Centre, 1257 High Street, Malvern 3144

Saturday 27 July 2024 10 am - 2 pm

This is a free-roaming, open house event, with Stonnington History Centre staff on hand to answer questions as you explore the historic house *Northbrook* and the extensive archive collection. Entry is free and bookings are not required.

Details: <https://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Library/Whats-On/Stonnington-History-Centre-Open-House-Melbourne>



### About *Northbrook*

*Northbrook* is a Victorian Italianate villa built in 1888–1889 to the design of architect Charles D'Ebro. The house was originally set on 2.5 acres of gardens facing High Street and included a 160-square-metre ballroom, timber outbuildings and brick stables.

*Northbrook* features a small portico with pressed-metal ceiling, elaborate mouldings and a balustrade parapet. The black-and-white marble floor of the entrance foyer leads to the main vaulted vestibule, featuring heavily panelled timber walls, a large over mantle with inlet mirrors and detailed encaustic tiles in the fire surround. Two smaller vestibules lead into the Morning and Dining Rooms, and feature ornate stencilled and gilded vaulted ceilings with cherubs, cornices, centre roses and over mantles. The Dining Room features timber panelling, as well as three built-in sideboards and a large over mantle. The building has been owned by Council since the mid-1940s.

The Stonnington History Centre has operated from the building since 2008. A branch of the Library and Information Service, the Centre maintains the extensive Council Archives. You can see select items from this collection, which includes photographs, building plans, maps, subdivision plans, newspapers and general local history information.

The mulberry tree, just outside *Northbrook's* front door, was planted by Cr and Mrs Johnson and Cr Firman in 1960. The cutting was taken from a tree planted in Priory Park Malvern England.



Image from the auction notice for the  
Northbrook Estate 1929

Stonnington History Centre MP357



Image showing details of the fresco on the ceiling at  
the back of the atrium, outside the Dorothy Roxburgh  
room. Image Philip Leahy 1984

Stonnington History Centre MP17345



The Old Band Room Malvern. 1959  
Artist: Kenneth Jack.  
Stonnington History Centre MP15060

## Message from the President

How the time just goes by. Where have the first few months of the year gone?

The Society continues to keep itself busy with various activities. We held our Annual Meeting recently which reported on another very busy and active year with a great variety of activities. We continue to get new members which shows we are getting our message and stories out into the community. One of these is Facebook. Facebook just seems to grow and grow and the interest is amazing!!! The Society says a great big thank you to Nikki Cooper for all her work in updating Facebook every couple of days. It is greatly appreciated.

The Committee is now working hard to provide another year of activities, walks and events for you all. More details to come. We hope that you will all be able to support us by your attendance at these activities. We look forward to seeing you.

Lorraine Sage - President - Email: [ljsage123@gmail.com](mailto:ljsage123@gmail.com)

## New Members

The Malvern Historical Society would like to welcome our new members Diane, Hilary, Brenda, Lindy and Philip, Julian and his family, and the Brigidine Southern Cross Community.

## Taking Local History to the Community

The Society was represented at the recent book signing by Rachel Syer of her book *Sir Bruce Small: From Malvern Star To Mr Gold Coast*. Members of the MHS Committee interacted with the wider Stonnington community at the City of Stonnington Volunteers Day Expo in the Malvern Town Hall. Society Members enjoyed a recent tour of the Malvern Theatre Company led by Andrew Ferguson, MTC Vice President.

Andrew talked about the former Congregational Church and Hall, 29 Burke Road, Malvern East, which has been the home of the MTC since the 1970s. Andrew then led us on a 'behind the scenes' tour of the buildings and shared fascinating stories about the history, the changes and the productions.

Andrew has agreed to take another tour, just remember to book early if you see it publicised, numbers are very limited. Members and friends enjoyed dinner together at the Malvern Vale Hotel.

A new name for the Society was informally discussed with a range of names suggested!



Jane, Rachel and Peter at the *Sir Bruce Small: From Malvern Star To Mr Gold Coast* book signing 2024.



**Malvern Historical... reached 11.5K people in the last 7 days.**

1 m · Malvern Historical Society - Stonnington

Thanks Nikki for keeping Stonnington's history alive on Facebook! We now have over 7000 followers. If you would like to join our Facebook page or just view the hundreds of posts, just click on our website link. <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~malvern/>

**The Members of the Malvern Historical Society are saddened to learn of the death of two long-time members Jill Miller and Alan Gregory, and former City of Prahran and City of Stonnington Mayor and Councillor, John Chandler.**

**Our thoughts are with their families at this sad time.**

### Malvern Historical Society - Executive Committee 2024

President:	Lorraine Sage
Vice President:	Jane Nigro
Treasurer:	Ann Ahin
Committee:	Marisa Costa, Duncan Crockett, Francesca Di Mattina, Jonathan Wolf
Newsletter Editor:	Jane Nigro
Design/Printing:	MBE Malvern

## Chapel Street Prahran

Thank you to Di Foster for organising the purchase of a Chapel Street Prahran postcard on behalf of the Malvern Historical Society.

The postcard shows Chapel Street, looking south past the Big Store. Cable tram services opened in Chapel Street in 1888 and closed in 1923.



Chapel Street Prahran c1908

## Eilyer, Albany Road Toorak

Albert Austin (1834-1916), a Western district pastoralist, named his town house *Eilyer* after his country property. It was designed in 1886 by architects Smith and Johnson. Catherine (née Mack) and Albert married in 1862. They built their bluestone townhouse *Eilyer* on six acres of land in Albany Road in 1886 and by 1894 owned a total of twenty-nine acres. Albert and Catherine spent their last few years at *Eilyer* in Albany Road. In 1919 legal manager, accountant and auditor Edward Herbert Shackell purchased *Eilyer* from the estate of Catherine Austin. The mansion was demolished, the formal gardens sub-divided and in 1922 Linlithgow Road was extended to meet Albany Road.



*Eilyer* c1890 Albany Road Toorak.  
Stonnington History Centre MP5617

## Public Record Office Victoria Photo Wall

The PROV has just made searching for photographs a whole lot easier. Looking for a historic photograph of fashions of the past or your local school? You no longer have to scroll past other online records and documents on the search bar on the PROV's front page. You can now search across just the digitised photographic collections. Enjoy!

<https://prov.vic.gov.au/photowall>

## Origin of the place name Armadale

In 1875, James Munro, a 43 year old businessman and Member of the Legislative Assembly, bought a substantial block of land (almost 16 hectares) on the west side of Kooyong Road, then known as Boundary Road. *Armadale House* was built the following year, the house being named after the village in Scotland where Munro had gone to school. The name of this part of Stonnington is derived from his property.

Munro was responsible for the subdivision of the land, though his original plans were modified by the route of the Gippsland railway line through his property in 1879. Munro rose to become Premier of Victoria in November 1890, but his vigorous land speculation led to his financial and political ruin when the Land Boom of the 1880s finally crashed around 1891. *Armadale House* was then owned by the Murphy and Goldman families respectively. Since 1941, the property has been used for educational purposes; it was first bought by the Melbourne Bible Institute and used as a training school for missionaries. In 1977, the Jewish community bought the building and set up the King David School. It has now returned to private ownership.



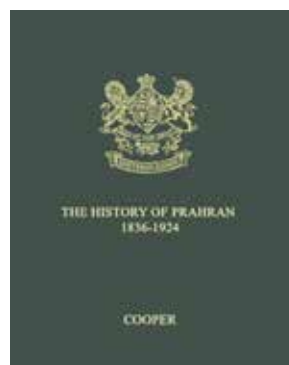
*Armadale House*, Kooyong Road, Armadale.  
Creator: F A Sleaf, Wood engraver c1888  
Stonnington History Centre PH7197

This image was published in *Victoria and its metropolis, past and present, vol.2* by Alexander Sutherland (ed), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1888.

## Local history publications - Keeping Stonnington's History Alive!

There are a wide range of history publications available. Some can be purchased or borrowed from Stonnington's libraries, while others can be downloaded in PDF format.

Just click here: [home.vicnet.net.au/~malvern/publications/](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~malvern/publications/)



William Philpott  
Pioneer Victorian First Class Cricketer

Anne Jackson

## **Sharp downpour. One Inch in 45 Minutes.**

### **Southern suburbs deluged. Train stopped at South Yarra. *The Argus, 26 January 1907***

“One of the sudden downpours of rain which occasionally fall in Melbourne occurred yesterday afternoon, when nearly an inch of rain fell in the course of three-quarters of an hour, and caused a flood for an hour or two in certain localities. During the early part of the day, the sky had been clouded over, but there was nothing to indicate a storm of such intensity as that which followed. At about half-past 1 o'clock residents of South Yarra, South Melbourne, Prahran, and St.Kilda noticed a few drops of rain. Still, it appeared unlikely that there would be anything exceptional, until with startling suddenness at about 10 minutes to 1 o'clock, one of the heaviest downpours within the memory of residents burst upon those suburbs. A strange feature of the storm was that it was practically confined to an area of about three miles square. The city was but little affected, though at a spot as close as the Observatory 86 points of rain were recorded in three-quarters of an hour. Thunder and lightning accompanied the downpour, which was cyclonic in character, the rain driving heavily from all points of the compass as the cyclone passed.

It was in South Yarra and Prahran that the rain fell heaviest. Within a few minutes after it commenced, the low-lying portions of Toorak-road and practically the whole length of Chapel Street were under water. The depression at the intersection of Toorak Road and Darling Street speedily filled to the dimensions of a small lake. Several shops were inundated, while the water from the higher levels rushed down like a mountain torrent, and in several instances swept through the rear of houses and shops, carrying furniture in a floating mass against the further walls. In one case a footbridge was carried bodily away and dashed to pieces. Darling Street itself, Great Davis Street, and other low-lying and flat thoroughfares in the vicinity became flooded from kerb to kerb, while on the other side of the railway-bridge the valley between Kensington Road and River Street became filled for some minutes to a depth of several feet.

Meanwhile the waters from South Yarra hill, seeking a lower level, found it in the railway cutting, and the excavations from South Yarra station to Prahran on the one line, and to the Chapel Street bridge on the other, were converted into a couple of canals. At the platforms at South Yarra the water was two feet deep on the permanent way, and towards Hawksburn, at the sudden depression under Chapel Street bridge, it was at one time deep enough to cover a tall man's head.

Into this swirling mass of water, the 1:50 pm train from Oakleigh plunged on its way to Melbourne. The impact caused a mighty fountain of water to rise to a height of about 20 feet above the level of Chapel Street and send clouds of spray in all directions. Under the belief that a terrible explosion had occurred residents braved the rain and rushed to the spot, only to find that the train had been brought to a stand-still in the middle of what seemed to be a river. The water was so high that it had entered the fire-box from below, extinguishing the fires and cutting off the steam supply.

In the meantime, the officials at the South Yarra station had been preparing for emergencies. Inspectors were on duty at intervals along the line, and the moment the alarm was given an extra engine was backed carefully down and continued on to connect with the stranded train without losing its own power. There was a delay of about ten minutes in the service for an hour or two, but by 5 o'clock all the trains were running on time again, and the water had run off all but the spot beneath the Chapel Street bridge. Here the water remained about four feet deep until nightfall, and throughout the afternoon several hundreds of people including biograph operators and photographers, were gathered around watching each train pass through. Even with the water two feet lower, this was a work attended with considerable difficulty. Each train had to absolutely force its way through the weight of water, almost enveloped by the spray thrown up and it was only just able to negotiate the "ford" by using every ounce of steam.

Chapel Street itself suggested Venice. Within five minutes after the storm commenced there was an unbroken sheet of water from kerb to kerb. In another five minutes the footpaths were submerged, and shopkeepers were leading the strenuous life building dams at their front doors. Happily the water ceased to rise just as it reached a point level with the top of most of the door-steps. In a few instances the flood encroached into the shops, but any damage done in this manner was comparatively insignificant. More serious was that caused by water forcing its way through the roofs. In several of the large drapery establishments, severe losses were sustained by delicate summer fabrics being literally wet through.

In one shop the male employees attired themselves in oilskins taken out of stock, and as they worked like ants to convey their goods to a place of safety they looked like so many storm-bound mariners working in the hold to save their ship. As for the lady attendants, many of them were unable to reach their shops until an hour or more after their statutory dinner-time had elapsed. Chapel Street was in such a condition that the passengers on the tramcars were compelled to stand on the seats to keep dry, and it was only in those places where the female shop assistants were able to prevail upon susceptible drivers of vehicles that they succeeded in crossing the street. In one large shop it is estimated that £300 worth of damage was done, and in a large number of instances in Prahran and South Yarra the contents of shops and houses have suffered water damage.”

*The Argus* also reported that a Carlton-bound cable tram was stranded in flood waters in Chapel Street, South Yarra, leaving passengers to alight and find higher ground. The slot that carried the cable had to be cleaned out after stormwater from overflowing drains carried all sorts of debris across the road. At the time the St Kilda (Brighton Road) to Carlton trams travelled along Chapel Street, Toorak Road, Park Street, Domain Road, St Kilda Road and Madeline (Swanston) Street.



**Above: Train passing through flood waters, South Yarra 26 January 1907 Image: R McGeehan Stonnington History Centre PH491**

**Right: Flood waters in Chapel Street Prahran, just north of the Town Hall 26 January 1907 Stonnington History Centre PH7489**



**Below: Chapel Street Prahran 26 January 1907 Image: Negative - South Yarra, Victoria, 1907 (museums victoria.com.au)**



## The Barton family

Thank you to John Barton for sharing the following memories and photos.

‘My father was a local plumber and lived in St Edmonds Street in Prahran. Mum worked as a seamstress on the corner of Greville Street and Izett Street, Prahran, opposite the newsagency. I did my apprenticeship as a panel beater at A W Hinton in Izett Street from 1960-65. My sister was a hairdresser in Commercial Road, opposite Moores. I am still mates with some of the Carbone boys from St Edmonds Road. I live in Perth now, I’ve been here for 26 years but miss the old St Edmonds Road and all the old people there.’

John Barton 2024



Left: John sitting on the guard of his old FJ panel van in St Edmonds Road around 1965.

Right: Les Scotland in St Edmonds Road on his wedding day. The photo shows Les Scotland, Ray Davis and a friend. Les was a plumber, just like his father. Ray’s tip truck can be seen in the background. (Undated)



Left: The Barton family home 11 St Edmonds Road 1960s

Right: St Edmonds Road Prahran 1960s



Left: John’s grandmother, Bessie Barton, (née Nankervis) St Edmonds Road Prahran around 1960

Right: Family holiday at Portland 1958



Left: A W Hinton's. L to R: Jim (painter), Ernie (blacksmith), Norm (panel beater).

Right: Margaret and John Barton c2019



## Malvern Tramway Band history

Jeremy de Korte has written another interesting blog post on an aspect of the Malvern Tramway Band history. In this post he has researched why the Malvern Tramway Band never travelled to the United Kingdom in the 1920s despite all the hype and expectation to do so.

“Sir. I desire to bring under the notice of our authorities and your readers the splendid status of the Malvern Tramways Band, and that public interest may be awakened with a view to sending the Australia’s champion band to contest against England’s best at the famous Crystal Palace brass band contest in London. Our soldiers and sailors, actors and singers, riflemen, footballers and politicians have won fame for Australia, and I feel confident our bandsmen can add fresh lustre to our laurels, and at the same time advertise our resources. The time is opportune to show the mettle of our pasture on the English contest platform, where the best in the world compete. In Malvern band we have the men, and in Mr. Harry Shugg we have the man. Yours, etc., J. STURT ANDERSON”

This letter by Mr. Anderson was published in the *Prahran Telegraph* newspaper on the 6th of November 1920, two weeks after the aforementioned Malvern Tramways Band won the A Grade Section at the Royal South Street contests. His letter is telling for many reasons, namely, for the high-praise language that he used, and because he advocates for the band to travel to the United Kingdom (U.K.). This is for a band that in 1920 is only nine years old, yet up to this point, had a contesting record which was enviable in the Australian band movement. What Mr. Anderson probably foresaw, but could not have known at the time, was that Malvern Tramways Band was going to get better in the very near future...and they did.

To find out more, visit <https://bandblastsfromthepast.blog>

Jeremy de Korte [dekortej@bigpond.com](mailto:dekortej@bigpond.com)



Malvern Tramways Band 1924 Stonnington History Centre SHC71098



Community singing : St. Kilda Esplanade every Wednesday evening : words of songs & program, 1923 (Source: National Library Australia: [nla.obj-52777212](https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-52777212))

## Cranbourne Dairy, Darling Road Malvern East

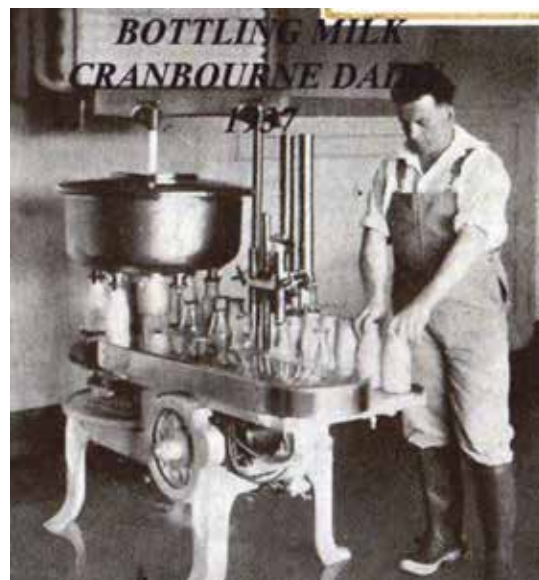
In 1934 William and Mabel Rose purchased land on the west side of Darling Road adjoining Rothesay Avenue and erected a new dairy and home for their Cranbourne Dairy. The business had moved from Preston to Craigmores Street Malvern East in 1930. The business was sold to Richard Dixon in 1939.

The dairy operated until the late 1970s and the site was sold in 1981.

The buildings were demolished in 1988 and a park was established on the site by the City of Malvern. The land and the cost of development came from Arterial Road Link compensation funds.

Dairy Park was opened on the old dairy site on 26 November 1989.

Tom Thomas bottling milk at Cranbourne Dairy,  
Darling Road Malvern East 1937  
Stonnington History Centre MP15113



**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**

Name/s \_\_\_\_\_  
 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](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~malvern) Tel: 0438 515 631 [malvernhistorical@yahoo.com](mailto:malvernhistorical@yahoo.com)**

**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 and a member of the South Metro History Group.

**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 Mechanics Institute Tel: 9510 3393 [www.pmi.net.au](http://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/history](http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history)

**East Malvern  
Community Bank® Branch**  
300 Waverley Road, East Malvern  
Phone 9563 6044

 **Bendigo Bank**  
Bigger than a bank

