

HISTORY HERE 203

Journal of the Waverley Historical Society April 2013

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PATRON
Dr Morna Sturrock AM

PRESIDENT
Ed Hore 5233 1056

SECRETARY
Norma Schultz 9802 9332

EDITOR
Laurie Burchell 9807 1287

EMAIL
whs@kepl.com.au

WEB SITE
www.vicnet.net.au/~whsvic

POSTAL ADDRESS
PO Box 2322,
Mount Waverley Vic. 3149

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WADHAM SHOPPING CENTRE



As a retail centre it's oddly wide with all nine shops on one side facing a two-storey building, but you can always get a short-time angle park there! You can also get a loan for a house, even buy one three shops down – then fill it up with cheap goods!

You can check out a home theatre, purchase a new lawnmower or get an old one repaired. If you need it you can get financial advice, then get help with passing VCE Maths exams. But since the Asian grocery left, you can't buy anything to eat!

When it was first designed in early 1950s there were to be shops on both sides, and one that did clothing repairs was actually built on the eastern side. But this didn't last long. When the Council acquired the land on the eastern side, this shop was demolished so the existing library could be built in 1968.

The drawing on the next page shows that, as originally proposed, the block of nine shop allotments on the east side, were to be 30.5 m wide, before it was reduced to 25 m, thus making the road 5 m wider. When the library was constructed in 1968, all eight allotments, including the one shop on that side, were removed and the west wall of

Street Number	Occupier as at April 2013	Year built
47	Sheldons	1960
49	Madira Study Centre: VCE Maths	1972
51	Vacant (was Sri Lankan Grocery)	1956
53	Mowerpower (repairs and storage)	1956
55	Lions Club Opportunity Shop	1956
57	Leaders Real Estate Agency	1956
59	Mowerpower (retail store)	1958
61	Sony Video Store	1980
63	RESI Home Loans	1982

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the library located, so the whole road reserve from building line to building line was then 35 m wide.

This type of work had been done before by Council to widen Kingsway, Glen Waverley. Further modification was needed when Franklins decided to build a supermarket in the main Mt Waverley shopping centre which would prevent buses from taking passen-

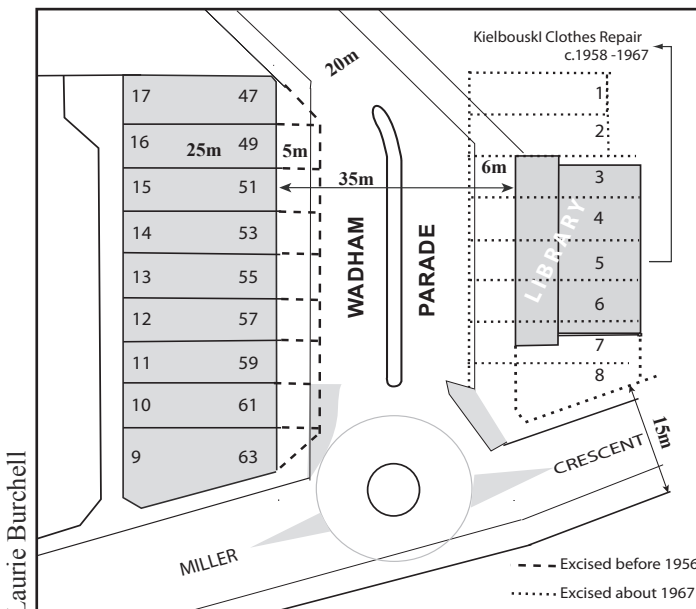
Coming Events

- Sunday 26 May:** Take a journey through the Immigration Museum (the historic Old Customs House) and uncover stories of migration to Australia. A feature of our visit will be a guided 'highlights' tour of the Museum. Admission: \$10 adults, concession free. We will meet at Mount Waverley railway station and travel to the city in the second-last carriage of the 1.09 pm train, or you could make your own way there and meet the group at the Museum, 400 Flinders Street [Melway 1A 9F] at 2 pm. Sunday train and tram travel is free for Seniors. Bookings are necessary: contact Margaret Boyes on 9807 3408 or e-mail: boyesm@ozemail.com.au
- Thursday 27 June:** General meeting commencing at 7.30 pm. Dr Richard Broome will speak about 'Aboriginal Activism and the Creation of the Aborigines Advancement League in 1957'. Dr Broome, who taught Australian history for thirty years at La Trobe University, is now an honorary associate of that university and is currently writing a history of the Aborigines Advancement League. He is the author of eight books, the most notable being *Arriving* (1984) *Aboriginal Victorians* (2005) and *Aboriginal Australians 4th edition* (2010) He is also the author of *Coburg: Between Two Creeks* (1987, 2nd ed, 2001).
- Wednesday 17 July:** Afternoon tea at the rooms, at 2.30 pm – for members only. Come and hear about the Society's current research and activities.



Aerial photo taken 1972 before roundabout built.

gers to the railway station on that side. Consequently Council installed a roundabout at the intersection of Wadham Pde and Miller Cr so that buses taking passengers to the Station on that side could safely U-turn.



Sources:

- Monash Council Rate Department
- Land Department of Victoria
- Sands & McDougall Directories*
- James Paterson, Manager Engineering, City of Monash

Please note that General Meetings are now every two months and are evening meetings starting at 7.30 pm. Special activities will be held in most alternate months.

See also back page.

How odd is your Street, Road, Avenue, Grove, Crescent, Court, Parade ?

Continued from HH 202

In our last issue we described the origin of an exceptional street: **Alvie Rd.**

Now it is time to attempt some explanation of adjacent streets including **Avondale Gv** and **Wadham Pd**. Most of us will know that these were laid out on a diagonal in response to requirement by the Railways Department of all subdividers that walking distance to each Station be made as short as possible (see map on next two pages).

Both Avondale Gv and Wadham Pd fit this description as also do The Highway and Bruce St which are their counterparts on the opposite side of the Station. It is true that the two first-mentioned streets do not go directly to Miller Cr but after crossing Holskamp St turn due south. The reason for this is apparently the convenience of having almost rectangular allotments in Lodge Plan No. LP23915, dated 1952, rather than skewed ones. (At this stage it is worth pointing out that 'due south' is magnetic 'due south'. In a *Melway Directory* nearly all pages with north/south streets show them running at an angle to the edge of the page. True north-south is the edge of the page).

Clearly as was indicated in a pre-1930 document entitled "Plan of subdivision of Glen Alvie Estate", where we see sketched in possible extensions of streets across the borders of adjacent subdivisions, there was close co-operation between those who subdivided land previously owned by Lechte and Cornell.

As Clive Haddock has observed:

"The history of Lot 7 is far removed from that of Lot 8 (see map last issue, p.3). Hardy mortgaged the fifty acres until 1861 when his Bankers sold the allotment to John Orlebar

(brother of Arthur B. Orlebar) who sold to John Cornell in July 1862. In January 1869, Cornell purchased the original Lot 5 on Stephensons Rd from the estate of Martin Kirk. Then in June 1882 out of - 'natural love and affection for his son' - Cornell gave all of Lot 5 (c. 5 acres) and about 9 acres adjoining it in Lot 7, to his eldest son Herbert John Cornell.

Also in 1882 and out of - 'natural love and affection for his son' - John Cornell snr gave about 9 acres, the southernmost portion of Lot 7, to his son, John Thomas Cornell.

In June 1890, Herbert sold about 14 (received in 1882) to his brother John, who later sold the same land to Francis J. O'Halloran and others in November 1926." (See aerial photo overleaf and maps on pp. 3-5 in *History Here 202*.)

Both Avondale Gv and Wadham Pd connect to High Street Rd using the existing Alvie Rd crossing over Damper Creek. But Wadham Pd was made 4.6m wider, probably because it was anticipated that its more direct connection would encourage additional traffic.

A higher priority for both subdividers would have been the creation of an entirely new street between the southern parts of Alvie and Avondale to provide spaces for appropriate allotments. This could have been an extended Glendowan but Cheviot as chosen was the better solution probably because it could also allow of a third cross street matching Wirth and Holskamp.

For over three years, from April 1942 until half way through 1945, war-time regulations had virtually prevented any houses from being built in Melbourne. By the time the war ended there was a huge backlog of unsatisfied demand for accommodation.

Although there were many housing allotments available, few houses were built in the late forties in Waverley which was still all farmland. The first building in Avondale Gv, for instance, was in 1955. However by the early 1970s, as the adjacent 1972 aerial photograph shows, hardly any vacant blocks remained.

Most of these houses were what is called vernacular building – houses designed by owners or builders, not by professional architects. Three styles can be distinguished in this twenty year period; but it is sufficient here to refer to these as ‘first phase buildings’. Fortunately there is one very simple style test: they all had slab chimneys! **By 1970 everybody had available Bass Strait gas so, with ducted heating, no houses needed chimneys!**

Therefore, from this time onwards, anyone who wished to have open-plan houses in a more fashionable style, would almost certainly have to buy an existing



first-phase house and either demolish it or extensively renovate the older building. If you want to see which houses are likely to disappear, look for those with chimneys, as virtually all of these are pre-1970. You will then have taken the first step to predicting the future appearance of our streets!

The easiest renovation in the case of cream brick buildings is to paint the bricks white or apply cement render. However, Bob Lansdowne, who bought 18 Glendowan Rd at the corner of Avondale Gv in 2006, decided to do much more. He rotated the garage so that it now faced Avondale Gv and therefore allowed for more space within the house. A main entrance was created in the side of the house wall, but the slab chimney was left to provide a contrasting vertical feature. The lintels on both the new central entrance and the garage door were veneered with Castlemaine shale, an old favourite in the area, but here used edge-on. Inside the building, selected parts of internal walls were removed to create a sense of flowing space.

Another person might have demolished it and built two two-storey houses, with a view to either living in one and selling the other, or selling both. Council would then have insisted



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



that the setbacks from the boundary be one metre, plus 0.3 metres for every metre of h

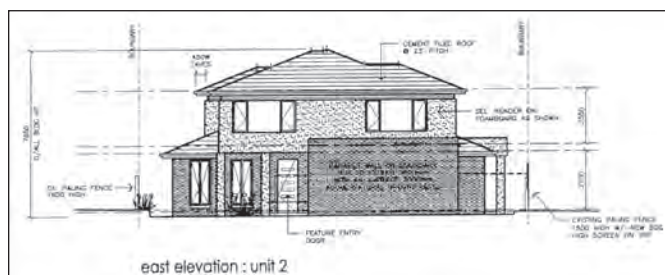


PHOTOGRAPH OF CROWN PORTION 59A NORTH OF RAILWAY LINE 1972

Photograph: Monash Council



'one on the right for one of two houses which are to
eight replace the existing 1958 one at 22 Avondale Gv.



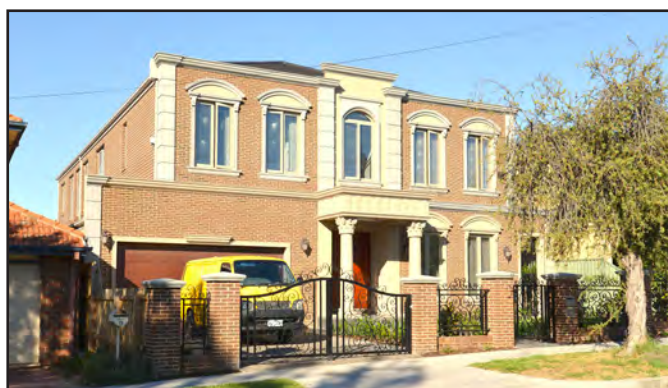
Elevation of one of the two Units that will replace the 1958 cream-brick house at 22 Avondale Grove

@296design

Meanwhile, further down the road this 1961 house had already been sold at auction for circa \$1 m. Clearly it was the land that had been



sold as shortly afterwards the house was demolished and work was begun on building the two-storey house seen below as completed.



It is also apparent that the Building Commission's setback rules for a single building on a lot are less demanding than those for two or more. However a large building of this kind fits well into a standard rectangular lot, but unlike our two earlier examples it depends very much on the facade for public presentation.

The sites of all three of the examples discussed above have been shown in white outline on the 1972 aerial photo where it will be seen that they are all about the same area.

We will now conclude with some personal memories from the past:

Ian Smith resides at 2 Holskamp Street which is opposite the site of the original dwell-

ing at 23 Avondale Grove. He purchased his allotment in 1954 when wild blackberries up to five feet high were growing there. To assist in their removal, a neighbour set fire to them. Ian's house was built in 1961 by John Beatson who lived next door at 25 Avondale Grove.

Until Holskamp St was made in the mid sixties, the road between Smiths' and Phelans' was just grass which was mown and became a place for their children to play.

Council had used a grader to scoop a drain all the way from Miller Cr down the east side of Avondale Grove. Before Holskamp St was sealed, car drivers sometimes tried to cross it to access Avondale Gv only to get bogged in this drain. Neighbours would then help to push them out.

When Joan and Jim Robertson bought a lot to build on, they first considered buying on the south side of the railway but decided it was better to be in Avondale Grove as the sloping land there would provide better drainage.

They recalled that children in the street every year enjoyed a bonfire on Guy Fawkes Day on the land now occupied by three flats at No. 20.

The adjacent allotment, the biggest one in the street (1369m²) was owned by Kevin and Marje Poulton, who had lived in the garage at the back of this land while casting 3500 concrete bricks for the house they were building. Because an old farm dam occupied the whole front half of the block, their house had to be built well back.

I hope this article might inspire other members to encourage residents of long-standing in their street to share their memories and help to record these for our archives.

And at the same time to be alert with cameras ready to photograph buildings which are about to be demolished.

Laurie Burchell

Sources:

- Survey Map of Parish of Mulgrave 1853 [State Library]
- Clive Haddock: A Land History Of Crown Portion 59A* [Deposited In Archive of Waverley Historical Society]
- Graham Keeshan, Title Researcher
- Metropolitan Town Planning Commission map, p.11
- *Sands & McDougall Directories*
- Monash Council Rate Department
- James Paterson, Manager Engineering, City of Monash
- Graham Kerven
- Ray Proudley, *Circle of Influence: A History of the Gas Industry in Victoria*, Hargreen 1987, P.169
- Land Information Centre, 570 Bourke St. Melbourne
- Aerial maps of Melbourne 1945 and 1972
- Kevin and Marj Poulton, 'Building the House, 18 Avondale Grove, Mt. Waverley; One of a Kind!' *

*Deposited In Archive of Waverley Historical Society

Historical Walk around Black Flat

The walk began at the iconic schoolhouse, built in 1880, where we were shown the original tiered schoolroom where classes from one to eight were taught, particularly coperplate writing.



MarJo points out some of the places to be visited
(Part of Black Flat School is seen in background right)

The corner of Springvale and Waverley Roads was the centre of the community by the 1880s when there was a blacksmith, hall, general store, baker and butcher. We saw plaques on the sites of some of these, such as the one remembering David Scammell on the 7/11 corner.

After we set out north along Springvale Road we were shown shops built in the 1940s to replace earlier ones. We also saw St Leonards Catholic

Did you know – Streets History : Motor Cars

Triumph Close Glen Waverley 71A3

Riley Court Glen Waverley 71A3 (also in Oakleigh but named after Cr Stan Riley)

Rolls Court Glen Waverley 71E2 (after C.S. Rolls Co. later to become Rolls Royce)

Wolseley Avenue Glen Waverley 71E2 (Wolseley spent time in Australia and later designed some sheep shearing equipment)

Austin Street Hughesdale (Oakleigh) 69D9

Morris Street Ashwood 60G10

Ford Avenue Oakleigh 69H9

Leyland Road Mt Waverley 61B8

Jaguar Drive Oakleigh 79F3

Bentley Court Mulgrave 80E2

Morgan Close Glen Waverley 62H11

Note that not all these are necessarily named after cars.

Phillip Johnstone

Church, both past and present sites. In Wilson Road we found out that Wilson's Transformers factory was built on the area that was once farming land. The Allen Family, for instance, grew celery, the Chivers grew potatoes, and within the area were small orchards, flower farms, grazing and mixed market gardens.

On our way back to Springvale Road we passed through the grounds of the Lifegate Baptist Church which was formerly St Pauls Anglican Church and later became part of St. Barnabas. We are particularly grateful to the Kamp family because they frequently took photos of the surrounding area from their roof.

In the south-west corner of Springvale Road, we saw plaques, memorials, the memorial gates (removed from their original site), the cenotaph, a tree grown from seeds of the original Lone Pine memorial palm tree. Interesting to note that many names remembered there are also names of local streets and roads.

Stories of the Mechanics Institute and the Wesleyan Church and the activities always happening in that park land over the years make us realise that so much life was centred on that busy corner.

Afternoon tea awaited us on our return!

Bev Anderson

William Andrew (Bill) Irving

25 May 1929 – 9 March 2013

Waverley Historical Society is saddened by the passing of Bill, a Life Member of the Society. Bill was a respected, long-time serving member, a former president, photographer (developer and printer) and a dedicated and diligent conserver of Waverley's past who brought the records of the Society into the digital age. Always remembered.

Gwenda Mary May Mills

27 February 1923 – 20 February 2013

It is with sadness that WHS notifies members of the death of Gwenda - a long time member of the Society.

St Luke's Fair Display



On 16 March the WHS mounted a display at St Luke's Annual Fair. There was much interest in the display which comprised a selection of maps and photographs of the Waverley district plus aerial photographs from 1945 (and later) of the local area then surrounding the church. Many passers-by spent some time inspecting the aerial views locating their house and Damper Creek Reserve. Some long-term residents related their early days in the district. We sold a number of *Then and Now* picture books and maybe gained some possible new members.

WHERE TO FIND US

Our rooms, which are located above the Mt Waverley library in Miller Crescent, are open each Wednesday (except over the Christmas break), from 1pm to 5pm, or by appointment, for individual research and working discussion groups.

When the library entrance door is locked at meetings, use the doorbell at the far left to gain entry.

Members are asked to bring a plate of supper to general meetings which this year are every second month.

Speaker at February Meeting

After graduating from Melbourne University with a Science degree in 1949, John Spencer began working with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation in Highett. Early in his 45-year career he produced tables for Australia's capital cities showing the position of the sun and giving estimates of solar radiation intensity on clear days. This involved the use of the first digital computer in Australia, known as CSIRAC.

In the late 1940s, Australian scientists embarked on an ambitious project to design and build, from the ground up, a programmable digital computer. They succeeded. CSIRAC, the computer they created, was not only the first computer in Australia, it was one of the very first in the world and launched the nation into the digital age. John Spencer told forty members of the Society and guests the story of this remarkable machine and of the innovative pioneers who built and used it.

We have more interesting speakers lined up for our meetings in 2013. Don't miss out - put these dates in your diary as well:

- Wednesday 7 August, noon to 4pm: Family History week Open Day in our rooms.
- Thursday 22 August AGM, 7.30pm: We will show 1930s Movietone News

Margaret Boyes