

## Whitburn - a forgotten location

The Whitburn Post Office was located on the NE corner of Clayton and Dandenong Rds. The name derives from the Whitb(o)urn family. William Henry (Will) Whitburn purchased land on Clayton Rd between Ferntree Gully and Dandenong Rds from James Bagge in 1906. Will was an old time vaudeville minstrel and adopted the shortened name; he was also a trainer of trotting horses. His daughter Willetta (who married George Hourigan) was a Mulgrave Shire Councillor. The names Whitburn and Hourigan are recognised with these two streets created to the east of Clayton Rd, south of North Rd.



Philip Johnstone Jan 2015

## The origin of "Brentwood"

Did you know the origin of the name Brentwood (as used in Brentwood School, Brentwood Preschool and Brentwood Drive) in Glen Waverley? English Builder, Bert Swift was visiting his brother in Victoria in 1962/63 and noted the need for more housing.

Bert Swift's company Swift Properties had built some 700-800 properties in Brentwood, Essex UK but bad weather was hampering construction. He purchased some 125 acres at the NE corner of Watsons and Ferntree Gully Roads by consolidating a number of properties. Plans were for some 525 houses and 4-6 shops plus 10 acres for a reserve. In the *Waverley Gazette* of 22 April 1964 he is pictured alongside a large sign proclaiming the *Brentwood* development.

Some of the street names in the estate relate to the Swift family and the original owners of the land: Cooper and Viggers. Other street names are towns in England. The land had cost £250,00 or about £2,000 per acre!

So how many houses did Swift Properties eventually build on this estate?

Vale

Alice May Keeley 12.10.1925 - 8.2.2015

## Coming Events

**Wed 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2 – 4 pm** at the rooms. Speaker: Local author Roland Johnson - who has written a history of *Norwood* a historic house once located in Brighton Beach. This is the story of a house, its history and its people. It is also the story of the settlement of Victoria and the background to the early development of Melbourne.

**Wed 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1 – 2.30 pm.** A historical walk in Mt Waverley. MarJo Angelico will lead a historical walk around the Valley Reserve Lawrence Rd area in Mt Waverley. This is a repeat of the popular walk conducted by MarJo almost 3 years ago. The numbers will be limited and bookings will be required. For more information contact: Margaret Boyes - 9807 3408 or boyesm@ozemail.com.au

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April, 10.15 am.** On the Sunday before ANZAC Day, the Waverley Historical Society will again lay a wreath at the ceremony to be conducted at the Waverley Cenotaph (next to the Glen Waverley Library) by the Waverley RSL. All members are invited to attend.

Margaret Boyes

## Can you help?

We are still looking for old pictures of **Valley Reserve**, and of **Pinewood cinema** and restaurant. If you can help, please email the Society at [whs@kepl.com.au](mailto:whs@kepl.com.au), or bring your photos into the rooms on any Wednesday afternoon between 1 and 5pm.



## Established 1970

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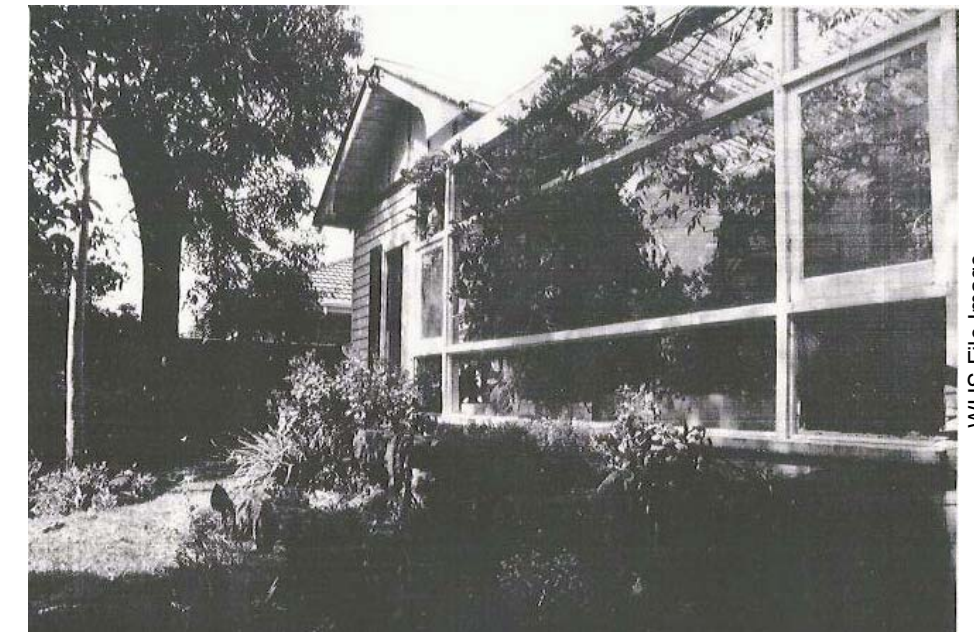
With thanks to the Office  
of Anna Burke MHR for the  
printing of our newsletters.

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Journal of the Waverley Historical Society February 2015



WHS File Image

## THE WEST HOUSE

When James Christopher West was born in 1900, he was from a long line of James Wests, so within the family he was generally called Christy. His father J G West had brought his family to Mulgrave Shire and purchased land on both sides of Blackburn Rd. When he died in 1949, JG's land was added to Christy's, who continued farming it, including (eventually) the area where Pinewood Shopping Centre now stands. This extant house, with its beautiful coral tree, was part of the area called Barkers Hill after an earlier owner. It was subdivided in 1958.

This is how the house looked in 1980s. Can you add to our knowledge of this house? Please share your memories with us..

## Coming Events

2015

**Wed Feb 25** First General Meeting for the year. Local author, Roland Johnson will speak on the history of *Norwood House*.

MORE DETAILS ON PAGE 8

Please note that General Meetings are now held every two months and are afternoon meetings starting at 2.00 pm. Special activities will be held in most alternate months. We are located above the Mt Waverley Library 41 Miller Crescent, Mt Waverley.



## WHS Australia Day Display - 26 January 2015

As is now a tradition for the Waverley Historical Society, we opened our rooms to the public on 26<sup>th</sup> January to celebrate Australia Day. Although the Public Library was



Some items from our History Mystery collection

closed on the day we had over 60 people attend. These included many members plus some visitors who had heard of the event through the Monash Council's Australia Day Events publications and the promotional board in the Library.

The Visitors were very interested in the displays: particularly "Waverley Remembers"



Vice President Philip Johnstone showing visitors a plan from the WHS collection.

(photos of Waverley's young soldiers and nurses), maps and photos giving details of the opening of the Darling – Glen Waverley railway line in 1930, and information about the forthcoming 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the old

St Stephens church which was built in 1865.

The 'History Mystery quiz', land subdivision brochures and aerial photographs were again popular features. There were a few items of information provided to some (relatively) newcomers to the district who were enquiring about the origin of their street and housing estate subdivision.

If you missed out on the Australia Day opening, make sure you and your friends visit the rooms for the next Open Day - in History Week on the fourth Wednesday in October.

Visitors and members alike joined in our Oral History project on Australia Day. Sitting in the former Mayoral chair in front of the video camera, interviewees talked about the days of market gardens, crossing stiles, billy-carting, the State Savings Bank, shopping at variety stores and eating Downyflake doughnuts. Schools were a favourite topic. Schools discussed included Mt Waverley Primary, Jordanville South Primary and Bayview Primary.



President MarJo Angelico pointing out features in a subdivision plan from our collection

### Welcome to New Members

Eleanor U'Ren Kevin Ryland  
Catherine Michel Geoff Armstrong

### Correction

Robin Hill HH208 P.1, the reference that Lewis Milne was associated with *Skipping Girl Vinegar* is incorrect. A chemist named - Oscar Emil NYCANDER appears to be the founder.

### WHERE IS THE WHS?

Our rooms, which are located above the Mt Waverley library in Miller Crescent, are open each Wed (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 afternoon tea to general meetings which for 2014/15 are every second month.

The paintings, which relate to Glen Waverley are: Painting 1: 'Charles and Bert ride to the Mountain View Hotel, Burwood Road (sic) to shelter from the rain - 1889'

Painting 1. This clearly shows the Mountain View Hotel and the two riders trying to beat the rain. The scene seems to have them approaching Springvale Road from the west along the wet and muddy High Street Road. It is dated 1889, but may have been painted in 1890. It is an extraordinary painting, not so much for its technique but for its historical value; the sign on the hotel clearly showing Thomas Moylan as licensee at the time, thus marking it unmistakably *The Mountain View*, despite Hammond's incorrect placement of the hotel in Burwood Road.

Painting 2: Given the date of 1890, it may or may not have been painted from the same journey as the one depicted in Painting 1. It is however quite a remarkable piece of historical evidence and its worth is substantial to the historical understanding of the district. It unmistakably shows the intersection of High Street Road



2 The Blue Dandenongs from Glen Waverley 1890

and Springvale Road looking east towards the Dandenong Ranges. The detail would seem to indicate that either he painted this on location or as he was likely to do, sketch, or photograph the location and complete the painting at a later date. *Note that the district of "Glen Waverley" was not recognized until the early 1900s and so the current title of the work must have been applied after this.*

The scene can be easily placed in today's context even a century and a quarter later. If we take that rise in the right foreground of Charlie's painting as the rise where the service road now is (Blair Street near Snedden Drive), currently,

The Glen Shopping Centre would be to the right. The post and rail fence on the right hand side protruding on to the road may be about where Snedden Drive is today and McDonalds today fills the treed southeast corner as it was then. The apple orchards which would have commenced going east from behind the *Mountain View Hotel*, seem to show them lining High Street Road and heading over Dandenong Creek, towards Nortons Lane and into present-day Wantirna South.



High Street Rd looking East 18.2.14

Given that Charlie Hammond used a little artistic licence in some of his paintings, this one seems to be quite historically correct; the terrain seems to be quite accurately portrayed. For historians, wouldn't it be great to have a Time Machine handy when it is needed! I'd love to go back to 1890 and lean on that wooden fence, look down the hill and think that sometime in the future, a huge shopping centre would be built there. Then I'd walk down the hill, probably in the middle of the dusty road, cross Springvale Road without looking or waiting for any traffic lights and head to the bar of the Mountain View to chat with the locals. I'd even glance across the road at the stand of gum trees on the opposite corner and not see a McDonalds Restaurant.

Such paintings when they come to light, add further to our understanding of the past in a particular area: Glen Waverley in this case. This particular view of the landscape is not covered by any known photographs of the era, so Charlie's paintings stand as testament to what the area actually looked like. Although artist, photographer and adventurer Charles Hammond may have only passed through our district, he has left a lasting impression for us.

References:

[www.charliehammond.org](http://www.charliehammond.org).

State Library of Victoria – Photographic collection.



## The Charles Hammond Connection

So who was Charles Hammond, you may well ask? He doesn't feature in the early, pioneer history of the Shire of Mulgrave, yet he has left his mark on our district with two paintings he created c.1890. These paintings are a fascinating look into the eastern reaches of our shire around the current High Street Road and Springvale Road corner and as such remain as the only depictions we have of this part of the shire at this time. The two water colour paintings have long been hidden and are practically unknown to local historians, yet can be clearly attributed to this particular location, despite the sketchy provenance Hammond provided for the artworks.

Charles Hammond was a longtime resident of Tecoma in the Dandenong Ranges and was well known as a photographer and painter who left behind a series of scrapbooks, mostly depicting views of his beloved Dandenongs. However, he also painted rural landscapes (now suburban districts), including Malvern and Glen Waverley on his journeys to and from Tecoma.



1. *Charles & Bert ride to the Mountain View Hotel, Burwood Road (sic) to shelter from the rain - 1889'*

On one such journey he travelled east to Tecoma on horseback on High Street Road via the Mountain View Hotel, which was and still is, on the northeast corner of this busy intersection. Yet in his time, it was far from the busy crossroad it is today and High Street Road was simply a dusty, country track on the way to the hills.

Charlie was born in London in 1870 and at the age of fifteen, an aunt arranged for him to go to Australia. However, he went first to New Zealand. Soon he was in Melbourne disembarking from his ship in 1887. His brother Bert had already arrived here and they caught up immediately. Charlie then worked his passage back to England but

just as quickly, was back in Melbourne after being enticed to return by Bert. He arrived here for a second time in 1889.

The Hammond brothers started a photography and art studio in Melbourne whilst working on farms to supplement their income. The brothers seem to have had many adventures together and a fair share of mishaps from time to time. A little later, a third brother, Hal, joined them in Melbourne from Canada where he had been with the Canadian Mounted Police for a time.

Charlie and his brothers journeyed throughout the rural districts surrounding Melbourne and travelled by horse to the Dandenong Ranges a number of times. He bought land in the Dandenongs at Tecoma in 1912 and built a house by himself there. Four years later, he met and married Gussie Cecil and they lived in the house Charlie built, now named 'Winscombe'. Both died there: Gussie in 1935 and Charlie in 1953.

Having no children, Charlie's art works went to family and friends. By chance, a nephew in England was able to buy a number of Charlie's pictorial diaries containing much of his artwork. 'Diary Number 8' contains two paintings, which relate directly to Glen Waverley. The surviving diaries have since been donated to the State Library and now are safely stored there.

A relatively unappreciated talent, Charlie was quite eccentric in some ways. He was known to photograph and then paint from his photos. He also sketched in the field and overpainted his photos particularly those with figures, for a little comic or dramatic impact. In terms of accuracy, some of his artwork may have stretched reality a little, but they do seem to capture the essential feel of life and landscape in late 19th century Melbourne and its environs.



The Mountain View Hotel circa 1878. It is probably the Licensee, Thomas Moylan and family standing in front.

Courtesy of Know Historical Society

## Edith Seller Remembers Mt Waverley & Eileen Dillon in the 1920s

Mount Waverley was a small rural community in those days, full of market gardens, orchards, dairy and chicken farms.

Services were sparse. The nearest doctor was at Burwood. Most churches and shops were several miles down the road – and few people owned a car. Hoskins the baker delivered bread in his horse and cart several times a week; the butcher, likewise, and the supplies were placed in a *Coolgardie* safe. Mr Brown delivered the groceries weekly. There were no mail deliveries, and we had no telephone. In spite of the seeming lack of comforts, life was still good, and there was time to be involved in community activities.



Eileen Dillon 1919–20.10.2014

Outside, the tank, stable, dog, chooks and lots of cats featured. The garden was always neat, but two trees made it special: the locquat tree, from which we ate freely in the summer, and the glorious mulberry tree, which fed our silk worms. Eily was a wonderful gardener – her cottage garden was always blooming with special plants.

She painted beautifully too. For some years, she tinted black and white photos for a photographer, prior to the age of colour photos. She was a first-class dressmaker, and made my sister's beautiful satin wedding dress, with the a row of tiny looped buttons. What patience!



WHS File Image

Sid Brown's Store, S. side of High Street Rd (near Charles St) MW

We, the Alf Seller family, lived opposite the Dillons and saw a lot of them. Eileen Dillon minded us, entertained us and was a great mentor to us. We expected Eily to know everything. She really could answer just about anything we asked. I think she only stumbled slightly when we asked the more difficult questions of our youth. And she was always amiable!

I remember that the Dillon homestead had no electricity or water laid on. I loved the beautiful decorative lamps that were lit each evening, showing the glow and warmth of the kitchen, the centre of the house. All the beautiful crockery and pieces of decorative china shone in the light.

Poppa (Mr Joe Dillon) had a good patch of land, and he let Mum and Dad grow poppies, cabbages and maize for market to supplement their income. Gradually though, the land was cut back until only the home and surrounds were left. Over the years, Eily and Mary extended the house to make it very comfortable and quaint.

Mt Waverley in those early days holds great memories for me, and especially because of my relationship with Eily Dillon. She really was one very special lady.

Extracted from the Tribute by Edith Seller at the funeral of Eileen Dillon



The Dillon House c.1980s

WHS File Image



## Parcel of Land, a Fluke and a Projectionist - 40 years of Waverley Cinema

Gayle Nicholas

Was the location of an independent cinema in Monash a "fluke"? Waverley Cinema, a local family business, has been successful in a market where few like businesses survived.

Forty years ago Mt Waverley resident, Brian Jean, opened the Waverley Cinema in Pinewood. Initially a theatre and restaurant complex, the cinema has become part of social life in Waverley. Children's birthday parties, weddings, singles evenings<sup>1</sup>, seniors afternoons<sup>2</sup> and combined movie and meal deals have lured groups to the cinema.

Brian's cinema experience began with cleaning up after very messy Saturday matinees at the *Civic* Theatre in Ashburton<sup>3</sup>. On his leaving school the *Civic* employed him as projectionist. This was the beginning of a career spanning city and suburban cinemas, including the Murrumbidgee *Argosy*<sup>4</sup> and Syndal Progress Hall (now Scope Syndal).

The land, on which the cinema is built, formerly part of Crown Portion 28, was owned by Christopher West from the 1930s to 1950s.

Market gardens and cattle gave way to dairy and Chris West became well known as a specialist in breeding Illawarra cattle. Chris's son Frank remembers living on the farm. He speaks of watching ships coming up the bay from the back of the property. The homestead was on the hill near May Road (now Blackburn Rd). The wind from the bay was so strong that pine trees were planted to protect the dairy behind the house. If Frank's family went to the



Waverley Cinema with Nicole's Restaurant sign about 1998

Monash Public Library Picture Collection

cinema when he was growing up they travelled to Oakleigh<sup>5</sup>.

Brian says the location of the Waverley cinema was "just a fluke"<sup>6</sup>. Part of the West property was sold to A V Jennings in 1957. It was named Pinewood after windbreak on the West farm. Dickens Investment Pty. Ltd. and Mr Chris Bedelis bought parcels of the land in 1963. A few years later Brian introduced himself to Chris and proposed a theatre. Chris agreed. Brian's chance meeting with former employers Graham Burke<sup>7</sup> and Rob Kirby, led to Village Theatres buying into the project. Rob instructed Brian to "Do it your way."

Chris Bedelis undertook the construction of the building<sup>8</sup>. Not everything went according to plan as the cinema was built and fitted. Like the *Civic*<sup>9</sup> and other cinemas at the time second hand materials and equipment were used. Brian was on the roof to see seating arrive – in a cattle truck! "That lot should go to the tip!" The chairs were successfully re-upholstered.

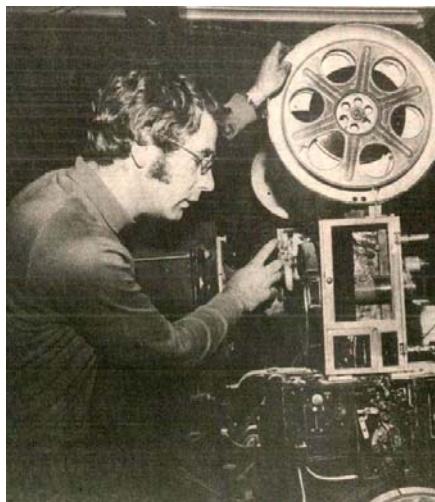
Local residents were beginning to look forward to having a local cinema. Luke Whelan aged 12, wrote:

*Recently I was going to the Forest Hill theatre but all the sessions were booked out. This made me wonder why Waverley doesn't have one. Surely such a big place could!*

Waverley Gazette 13 June 1973

Waverley Council agreed, reporting "...this type of facility would fulfil a need in the community..."<sup>10</sup>

The cinema's opening night, as depicted in the Waverley Gazette, was a happy '70s affair. Little did the audience know the carpet was still being laid as guests arrived. Men donned longish hair sometimes with fashionable sideburns, and spectacle frames which were thick and dark.



Brian Jean operating the carbon arc

Waverley Gazette 7 Aug 1974



Waverley Cinema with rendered brickwork now nestled up against a large building to the south

Philip Johnstone Feb 2015

Young women wore their long hair loose and ankle length frocks were to be seen. A fur or two could be spotted on more mature women<sup>11</sup>.

As cowboys rode across the screen in *Blazing Saddles*, Brian Jean operated a 35 mm carbon arc two reel projector, while watching for the flash of light in the top right hand corner of the screen for the warning to change to the second reel. In later years the carbon arc was replaced by xenon lamps enabling the projector to run all day. In 1998 a 35 mm single reel platter system was introduced.

*Maysys*, the first restaurant to open upstairs, was run by local identities Doug Mayson and John Sylva. In the early 1980s Brian took over in an effort to control noise during film showing. The restaurant was renamed *Nicole's Restaurant* after Brian Jean's daughter. Mt Waverley residents Erich and Ella Kapust chose the restaurant for their daughter Gisela's wedding reception in 1982. In 1983 Lance Kerr took over, followed by a Thai restaurant. The noise problem continued.

Renovations in 1998 divided the 300 seat theatre into a 187 seat and an 80 seat theatre. In 1999 the restaurant upstairs was converted into two additional theatres. The change to small multiplex theatres saw the end of the partnership with Village Theatres and the Jean family became sole owners.

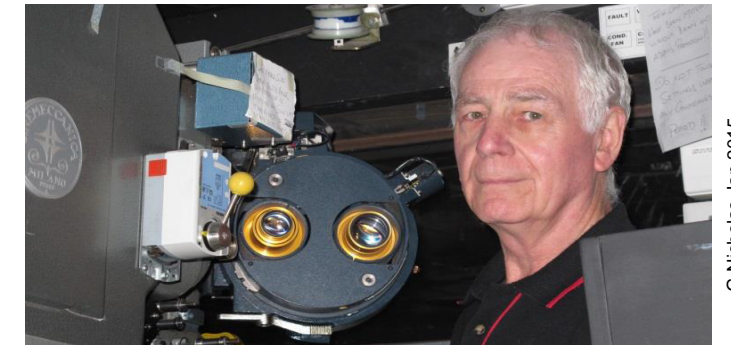
The family has preserved the history of cinema.



G Nicholas Feb 2015

Film reel platter system used up to 2000. Note period *True Grit* poster

The Jean family continues to carve out a unique history in Monash. In 2014 the cinema was the setting for *Holding the Man*<sup>12</sup>. Perhaps the cinema's location was a fluke but the family's community centred business approach has been well located in the Monash Community.



Brian Jean reminiscing 40 years on.

Waverley Historical Society member, Mr. Clive Haddock, has carried out detailed research into Crown Portion 28. For more information contact the Waverley Historical Society Inc.

Can you help the Waverley Historical Society preserve the history of this theatre? Were you at the opening in 1974? Did you take photographs at a birthday party or other celebration?

A special thank you to Nicole Harvey, Manager of Waverley Cinema, for her help and support with this article.

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G Nicholas Jan 2015