

The sixty descendants of James and Mary Thorne who gathered in Wheelers Hill recently found a rare treat waiting for them. Hostess Gayle Kerr had created a board game, *In Search of the Six Hundred*, from the Thorne family history: She said, "It was fun to get together a little board game to connect all family branches back to the central Thorne family."

James and Mary Thorne emigrated from Devon, England arriving in Moreton Bay, Queensland on *The Flying Cloud* in 1863. They moved to the goldfields at Blanket Flat (now Eganstown) in Victoria and, 10 years later, to Waratah in Tasmania. Their descendants are now spread across Australia and New Zealand with at least four families based in the Waverley area.

Gayle found the game board and pieces at a local Opportunity Shop. She creatively built the innovative game using pictures from her family history collection, memorabilia and newspaper clippings which were then stuck to the board squares. (The original game board was Poleconomy.) The board Players roll the dice and move around the board on a fun and educational journey. Land on a 'T' and pick up a question card: 'Who did Alice Cloud marry in 1881?', 'What was Waratah called prior to 1882?' or 'Of what religious persuasion were the Thornes?' If correct, move on three spaces, or if incorrect, after using an 'Ask a Friend' card to no avail, move back three spaces. The aim of the game is to reach the central photographs of large groups of Thorne family members, known to the family as 'The Six Hundred' due to their considerable numbers.

The reunion was a planning session for a large reunion of hundreds of Thorne family members in Waratah in Tasmania in 2017. If you think you might be descended from James and Mary please contact Gayle Kerr on 9561 0330.

Thank you to Gayle Kerr and Virginia Barnett for sharing your family game with us.

REFERENCES

Thorne, David (2004). *In search of the six hundred: a history of the Thorne family*. David Thorne, [Bairnsdale, Vic?]



Virginia Barnett and Gayle Kerr enjoying *In Search of the Six Hundred* board game

G. Nicholas



G. Nicholas

Coming Events

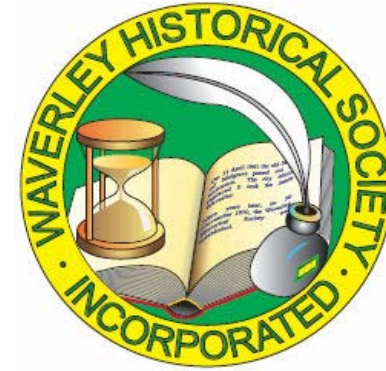
( Note Day and Time )

**Thursday, 23 Feb. 7.30pm**, Guest Speaker, author and researcher, Dr Jim Poulter: *Song-lines*, the aboriginal history of the City of Monash. Jim Poulter's great grandfather, Tom Chivers grew up amongst the local Wurrundjeri people. He learnt their language, lifestyle and folklore, and passed it down. Thus Jim knows a great deal of "lost" history. We expect there will be a lot of interest in this topic, so please let Margaret know that you are coming. Please bring a plate of supper.

**Wednesday, 26 April 2pm**. Speaker, Dr Andrew Kilsby (O&DHS). ANZAC Military theme.

**Wednesday, Wed 28 June 2pm** Guest Speaker Ian Bock - *Early Photography*.

Margaret Boyes



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A. Angelico 2017

THE HOUSE

The *Four Winds*. Built in 1950, this Lilydale rock house once stood alone and proud on the ridge overlooking the Scotchmans Creek valley, but is now quite hard to find among all the other two-storey houses vying for the view. It was apparently hand-built by its first owner, Engineer Ed Allen.

It has been used as a film set (*No Junk Mail 2009*), a bed-and-breakfast, and, of course, a treasured family home.

Coming Events

**Thur 23 Feb. 7.30pm**, Guest Speaker, author and researcher, Dr Jim Poulter: will talk on *Song-lines*, the aboriginal history of the City of Monash. Please bring a plate of supper. **Details P.8**

WANTED

Does anyone have a 1975 International Women's Year Badge? If so, please advise the WHS President.



## October Meeting *Kawarau*

On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> October, we welcomed author and retired teacher, Jenny O'Donnell, to tell us about her latest publication, 'The Story of *Kawarau*'.

*Kawarau* was the home of Fred J. Cato and family. Cato was a co-founder of Moran and Cato stores, which grew from humble beginnings to a highly successful grocery retail chain and we can all remember at least one of the Moran and Cato stores; there was even one in Stephensons Road, Mount Waverley. By 1935, there were about 120 branches in Victoria and Tasmania and 40 in New South Wales.

Jenny's talk was not overly concerned with the business side of the Cato family, rather the lavish home in which they lived, which still stands at 405 Tooronga Road, Hawthorn, and is listed in the Victorian Heritage Register. This magnificent home was not unlike other mansions of the time, built on wealth which was quickly amassed and way beyond the average working family.

Fred Cato was in fact born in a tent at Pleasant Creek (Stawell) to the wife of an English gold miner. Lake Cato in Stawell is named in his honour. Cato's first job was as a teacher in Stawell after which he spent a few years teaching in New Zealand. Cato was also a founder of the Rosella Preserving Company; in later years he became well known for his great philanthropy.

Jenny's book is handsomely illustrated with sketches and photos and we were treated to many anecdotes of a building and family of a time when our imagination has to help fill the gaps. The Italianate mansion was originally known as *Warrington* and was completed in 1893. The original owner was a Robert Robinson. Fred Cato acquired the home in 1904 and re-named it *Kawarau*, which is of New Zealand origin, no doubt in memory of Cato's time spent in that country. The Catos transformed the surrounding acres of gardens and fields into a model of self-sufficiency and doubtless employed a large staff to keep it running smoothly.

Jenny had well researched the architectural details and showed us beautiful stained glass windows and fine plaster and timberwork. Close-ups of the eaves was a glimpse into another era. After Cato's purchase of the property there were

many changes made including addition of a complete wing and a billiard room. Most impressive was the huge inglenook in the main living-room and the arrangement of furniture and bric-a-brac. *Kawarau* is a rare example of the work of architect, Francis Coote, of the architectural practice, Beswick and Coote. Further extensions during Cato's time were brought about by the architectural firm, Usher and Kemp.

The home is magnificent really. It is two-storeyed of stuccoed brick and slate roof. It has a double-storey arcade supported by Corinthian columns. Victorian and Edwardian styles are combined in the interior. The later addition of a billiard room in 1904 contains a deep fibrous plaster frieze of Art Nouveau style with a red pine ceiling divided into an octagonal pattern – stunning!

Victoria is fortunate indeed that this fine edifice is still standing and has been well cared for over the years.

In its early days, *Kawarau* would have afforded magnificent views in all directions. Gradually industry and home ownership changed the landscape completely. The home was bought by Stephanie Alexander in 1979 and this ran successfully until 1997, as '*Stephanie's Restaurant*'.

The next occupant was a company which manufactured small robotic aircraft used in weather forecasting!

The current occupants of the home are the staff and students of Alia College.

So the home has seen much transformation over many years and now stands on a much reduced block of land as other buildings encroach.

At the end of Jenny's talk, Secretary, Norma conveyed thanks from all present and we were able to share supper and ask questions of Jenny as she displayed her books.

This rounded off a very pleasant evening.

*Virginia Barnett*

### Welcome to New Members

Rod Jewell, Jeffrey Young, Tony & Sally Walker

### 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. If the main library entrance door is locked during 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 2017 are every second month.

## The Life of Freddy Finch

*Bevel Yeoman*

Freddy lived with his parents and siblings on the Finch property in May Rd, Notting Hill (now classed as Clayton). This land was on the south east corner of Ferntree Gully Rd and May Rd (Blackburn Rd). He attended the Glen Waverley School and that is where he and Arthur Rhodes came to know each other. Both being around the same age.

Freddy's great grandfather Thomas Worcester was born in England in 1811. The family came to Australia and took up land near Wahgunyah (on the Murray River near Corowa). They moved to Wangaratta. Thomas was killed by a bull at Newmarket (around 1844). His gravestone is in the Old Pioneers Cemetery in Fawkner. Sons Thomas and George were among the first pupils at the Wangaratta school

Freddy's mother was Harriet Louisa Worcester and she was a singer with the Philharmonic Orchestra. Her father, George was a painter and decorator and painted the Exhibition Building including the Gold Leaf that was done as decoration. He had a paint store on the site of the Southern Cross hotel Melbourne, and had another store in King St, Melbourne. He lived at "*Westminster*" Beach Ave, Elwood, Vic. This is Freddy's grandfather. Another son Henry kept a book shop in King St, Melbourne and later in St Georges Rd, North Fitzroy Vic.

All the Worcesters were educated in England. Thomas did his last year at Greenwich Science School and in Mauritius he discovered a shell, now called *Conus Worcesteri*. He became a staircase maker with a business on the corner of Bourke and King Sts, Melbourne and he lived in Frankston.

Freddy, Jim Hatch, ?..Hall and one other, as kids, stoked up the council steam roller and drove it in circles around the council yard over the weekend. The Council Office at this time was on the opposite corner (south/west) to the Finch's house. The police were called from Oakleigh on Monday and they arrived on two beautiful dapple grey horses. These horses were well known around the district. The culprits were questioned but each one blamed another so they were let off with a severe warning that they had better not do it again.

When Freddy left school he went to work for Millidge Brothers in Melbourne and rode their motor bikes at the Motordrome, and at the cinder track at the north side of the Exhibition Building. Their bikes were Triumph, O.E.C, Harley Davidson and Blackburne. These bikes had no brakes and no key to turn it off, just a cut out button on the han-

dlebars. No throttle, just a choke, to stop you had to cut the motor. Freddy was quite a dare devil and one day at the end of a race in the Wall of Death the cut out button wouldn't work Freddy was still going at 72 MPH. (circa 1924) and while trying to pull the wires out of the motor he went above the red safety line and 3 laps later he ran out of petrol. He was rubbed out for dangerous driving. He was also disqualified out for putting a better carburettor on one of the bikes. He was quite good at fixing motors. The Motordrome was later to become Olympic Park (in 1933) and now the Tennis Centre.

He also rode in races for motor bike and side car and in one race the handlebars came off and he yelled to his side car rider to jump for it! He didn't and Freddy did, so the result was the side car rider receiving two broken legs, broken ribs, scratches and bruises.

In the Glen Waverley Mechanics Hall during the week they held boxing matches, complete with a ring. The trainer was Mr Crutz and he offered the local boys the sum of fifteen shillings to fight in the ring. Freddy was always looking to earn money so he and Doug Norton had a bout in which Doug won. Freddy was at this stage going out with Ruby Rhodes and appeared at the Rhodes home with two black eyes, cuts and bruises. Ruby's father, Will, was utterly disgusted and asked "was it worth it?" Freddy thought so as he got 15 shillings in payment. Freddy also fought at the Stadium in West Melbourne where he won a gold medal.

As I've said Freddy was ready to earn money anyway he could and was responsible for salting the mine that someone had begun to dig to no avail on the south/west cnr, Springvale and High Street Rd, Glen Waverley. (*The Glen* corner). This was done by filling a shot gun cartridge with gold dust and tiny nuggets, It was then shot into the walls for the next buyer to see glittering. Highly illegal and I dare say quite dangerous. Pay five pound.

*Author Bevel Yeoman nee Rhodes, is the niece of Freddy and Ruby Finch*

### Street Names

The Freddy Finch Story introduces the Finch family which is now recognised in the name Finch Street which is located on the site of the Finch property and links Blackburn and Ferntree Gully Roads.

**Vale - Ian Boyd Donald**  
19.8.1930 - 23.12.2016

We knew him as just Ian Donald, a regular attendee (until illness prevented that), a contributor of ideas, a quiet, attentive deep-thinking member. However, there was much more to him than even these commendable features. We at WHS were aware of his involvement in the arts, specifically The Highway Gallery and the Arts Council.

He was also a talented flautist and a pianist, and passionate about Percy Grainger and the Grainger family. For a time (in the 1990s?) he was on the board of the Melbourne International Festival of Organ and harpsichord (later of Early Music) and he was a noted player of the baroque flute. He enjoyed entertaining his family with magic tricks and had a mischievous straight-faced sense of humour. A keen gymnast, he was always up for some new learning: at one stage he took up horse-riding out of the blue.



What we were less aware of was his academic prowess. He topped Year 12 Maths for Victoria, and went on to study Engineering, completing his PhD in record time. When Monash University opened in 1961, he was a founding academic

in Civil Engineering, particularly in Geomechanics.

He always taught that the world was very big, that there were some great minds out there, and that a wise person learns from all of them. His son mentioned how he built the most secure and durable aviary of all time when the family had occasion to look after some birds. He was also passionate about emus, and was known to state, "A day without cats is a day without sunshine" - such diverse interests!

After a long illness, he passed quietly just before Christmas and his life was celebrated at Boyd chapel in Springvale Botanical Cemetery on Friday 30th December. Our thoughts are with Marie at this time. He will be missed on so many fronts, this Associate Professor who never said a bad word about anyone but had a constant thirst for knowledge in almost any field, and excelled in so many. He was a gentle genius.

**Australia Day Display**

The WHS held its annual Australia Day Display in the WHS rooms on Thursday 26 Jan. This year's features were picnics and games with members bringing along items likely to be found at a picnic. These items ranged from the classic cane picnic basket and associated plates, mugs, through billy cans and vacuum (Thermos) flasks to cake and biscuit tins — all displayed on the old picnic rug. Also on view were selections of old packages, food and confectionery containers plus cameras from the WHS collection.



M. Boyes

On the games table were the classics of: Snakes & Ladders, Draughts, Totopoly plus other board games all of which brought back the memories of yesteryear to most of us.

Our normal procedure on these show days is to set up the room on the day before but, much to our chagrin we found that the overhead projector (upon which we planned to run a continuous picture show of early picnics in Waverley) had failed. We were thus constrained on the day to a smaller picture display.

Nevertheless there appeared to be much interest in the collection with a number of visitors pleased to learn more about the origin of their street and the development of their area. All in all, it proved to be a most satisfactory showcase of the WHS resources and with about 20 visitors, hopefully will encourage some new members.



M. Boyes

**Off to School to Collect the Eggs**

Virginia Barnett

Who would have thought there was a farm school in Monash?

The Notting Hill Primary School (No.4305) was situated in Howleys Road, Notting Hill. Farms and market gardens surrounded the school when it opened on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1927. The official opening ceremony occurred a few months later, conducted by Mr. Tait, Director of Education. Fresh from a visit to London, he brought greetings from the Notting Hill school there.

The first head teacher, Mr. J. J. Keddie, faced a difficult task in teaching fifty children from Preps to Grade VIII, many of whom would have left school early only to be absorbed back on to the farms as labourers and domestic workers.

Mr. Keddie had been impressed with the idea of 4H Clubs in America's rural schools. The 4H Clubs, at that time, were the beginnings of a global network of youth organisations; its name is a reference to the occurrence of the letter H four times in the organisation's original motto: 'head, heart, hands and health' – the focal point of 4H has been the idea of practical hands-on learning.

So, in 1930, Mr Keddie formed a farmers' advisory council, consisting of a school committee and neighbouring farmers to teach the young children the rudiments of agriculture. The mornings were spent learning formal school subjects and the afternoons were devoted to practical field work. The school grounds closely resembled a farm; small fenced paddocks housing fowl, sheep and calves, the products from which were sold (eggs, milk and wool), and

moneys earned became part of school funds. This school was a prototype of rural schools for Victoria and up to 1937 about three thousand teachers visited the school to observe the programme. In 1937 the school won the 'Sun-News Pictorial Cup' for the best young farmers' club in Victoria.

In 1959-61, English classes were held at the school for migrants, in particular the White Russians who lived nearby. The face of the world was changing, and in 1958 the agricultural side of the school was disbanded. Factories engulfed the surrounds and the little weatherboard school lost its pupils to newer and more conveniently placed schools. The school closed in 1974. Even in

2000, a visit to the old school site revealed sheep grazing behind the original boundaries of cypress, along the east, and Mahogany Gum.

Mr. Keddie, aged 82, attended a reunion of the Notting Hill School on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1974. The reunion was attended by several notaries and past teaching staff. It was a day of reminiscences.

The transfer to the new Monash Primary School was under way, with somewhat mixed feelings and sadness at leaving such a special school. The first principal of the new school, Miss Cunningham had, under her care, 257 enrolments. Miss Cunningham presented Mr Keddie with a permanent reminder and keepsake – a gold banner depicting 'the little mouse that roared', in refer-

ence to the school and recognition of

Mr. Keddie's commitment in the early days, to a school which he held in such high regard.

And so, time has passed and left a much-loved institution in its wake.



Aerial view of School site in 1945. Howleys Rd (NS) and Ferntree Gully Rd (EW)



The Australasian 9 June 1934

# WAVERLEY'S CONCRETE ROADS

## Replacement

## Part 3 Geoff Brown

If you have walked or ridden through the residential streets south of Mt Waverley Railway Station in recent months, you may have noticed a change. The old concrete roads constructed in 1931 have been replaced with modern, smoother concrete pavement.



Excavation and removal of the old roadway

The story of the original concrete roads was published in *History Here* over two issues in 2014. It noted that the concrete roads were a sales promotion tool for the first residential subdivision of the area. The proposed Glen Alvie Estate was promoted as garden city living with recreational facilities located in and around Sherwood Park, 'modern' concrete roads and the new Mt Waverley Railway Station within walking distance. But the 1930s depression and WWII scuttled this development leaving only the railway and two-thirds of the planned concrete roadway sitting in vacant paddocks.



Using a circular saw to cut the roadway from the kerb

The construction method used in 1931 was thought to be modern and economical. It used minimal steel reinforcement, large stone aggregate (probably unused railway ballast) and a concrete grout poured over it, then com-

pacted. No kerbing or drainage was provided so water ran off into the paddocks. No control joints were provided to control cracking so extensive cracks formed in the first few years. However, despite their deteriorating condition most of the original roads remained in use until 2016.

### Reconstruction

For heritage reasons the City of Monash took the decision to rebuild the original roadways with concrete rather than bitumen. City engineers held two community meetings with local residents to inform and seek suggestions. Tenders were advertised in two phases and works undertaken between March and December 2016. The first phase included Virginia St and the concrete roads to its north; the remaining roads to the south of Virginia St formed the second phase. Both tenders were awarded to Earthlink Contractors Pty Ltd.



Piece of the old roadway showing original reinforcing

The 2016 construction method was quite different to the original method and included the added dynamic of minimising disruption to local residents. To this end the reconstruction was undertaken in short sections of about four house frontages, taking about two weeks per section and allowing residents to park their vehicles further along their street. The process brought noise, dust and disruption over a number of weeks.

### Construction Method

First, a high speed rotary blade separated the original road surface from the kerbing that had already been replaced in 1990-91. The old roadway was then excavated and loaded into trucks. The road base was flattened, covered with heavy gauge steel reinforcement and ver-

tical pegs to indicate the height required. Special concrete was then poured from a fleet of trucks and the top surface levelled manually. Expansion joints were added every 10-15 metres where the daily pouring process ceased.

Within hours of pouring the new concrete, workmen used a high pressure hose of water and surface retardant to expose the stone aggregate on the top surface. After three days, a high speed rotary blade cut 40 mm deep grooves into the new road surface at regular intervals to control future cracking.

### Historical Accuracy



Pouring the new surface

The 2016 reconstruction represents the concrete road sections that remained from the 1960s, albeit with 1990-91 kerbing. A large T-shaped section under the Alvie Rd railway bridge and along Windsor Ave was not reinstated. The original concrete roads in this section were partly excavated and partly covered with bitumen in the 1960s due to bridge lengthening, persistent water damage and sewerage construction.

Increased traffic flows have required the addition of four new roundabouts and the narrowing of the Windsor Ave/Pall Mall intersection that were not in the original concrete road system. However one of the above-road shallow drains



End of day's work showing expansion joint and mesh ready for the next day's pour

used on the original roads has been recreated across the Sherwood Rd/Woodstock Rd intersection. New concrete footpaths have also been added in several streets.

To the first time observer, the concrete roads appear to begin and end in unexpected locations. This is explained by a number of factors:

The original Glen Alvie Estate was flanked by farmland and its streets were planned to allow for future extensions into other developments. So the ends of some concrete segments mark the boundary of the original estate.

The tenders that were advertised and awarded in 1929 were not all constructed. As the 1930s depression savaged the economy, only two thirds of the roadways were built leaving incomplete sections.

As mentioned above, the Windsor Ave/Alvie Rd section was removed in the 1960s,

The new pavement is a modern representation of the original. Some locals had requested a bitumen replacement while others had asked to retain the original surface. The positioning of the roundabouts and new footpaths seemed to take into account local views.

Many wanted roundabouts (but more substantial than the final) and different streets appear to have lobbied for or against new footpaths. The first plans had more footpaths, but homeowners who had enjoyed front lawn to the kerb without footpaths didn't want to lose this personal space - and they won. The above-road drain at Sherwood and Woodstock was recreated because of a strong case by one resident, according to the concrete contractors.

This writer is pleased with the replacement surface. It is quieter to drive on and will provide a sustainable long term reminder of what might have been in this first subdivision in the area.

The City of Monash is to be commended for its efforts in recreating this unique road surface. It has said that it will provide a plaque and small sample of the original road surface on the edge of Sherwood Park some time in the future. The WHS has contributed to the text and looks forward to its installation.

G. Brown 2016

G. Brown

G. Brown

G. Brown

G. Brown