

Waverley Historical Society

Inc Newsletter

July 2011

Issue No 196

WAVERLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Incorporated in Victoria
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We are grateful for the continued support of the City of Monash, without which we could not operate as we do.

CONTENTS

Page 2 Editorial: Forty Years Back; 41st Birthday Celebration

Page 3 Stewart Bradley speaks with Frank Norgate, 1998 [Taped interview series]; W.H.S Speakers

Page 4 Events Report: Steam Train; Anzac Meeting; Jack Walker

Page 5 Betty Lechte's visit; In Memorium; Xmas Meeting

Page 6 Steam Rail Day; New IKON Building; Street names

Page 7 Cancellation of the Bus Trip; Marianne Way Development

Extant Pre-Suburban Buildings: Reminders of Waverley's rural days

Built on the fertile Notting Hill plateau, the Cowley home still stands among much newer houses, where once it was surrounded by a variety of vegetables. Daniel Robert Cowley sold his market garden to the Education Department in 1957 for Amstel Primary School (1958). (His father had built the house and established the garden in 1924.) He had a solid-tired truck for market, but on picnic days it took the entire Cof E Sunday school to Mordialloc for the day! It was the only such vehicle in the district. When Daniel's son Danny was one of the first students at the new school, there were still cauliflowers growing in the yard!



EDITORIAL

Forty years back W.H.S. was in its first year. Mrs. S.W. Westaway was Newsletter editor, with Miss M.F. Smyth and Mr. S.A. Brown sub editors. A poem by Mrs. Westaway in the July Newsletter of 1971, titled The Days Before Yesterday, celebrated the infant W.H.S and Waverley's history in verse. It begins:

In Waverley, and through the twilight warm
We gather, a society to form.
To write the history of the local scene
The pioneers and all the years between.
They speak of Waverley, who only know
The present with the houses row on row.
To some their words recall old days long gone...
To scenes and faces time has swept away
The house, now vanished, that was once their home
The rows of cabbages, the wet grey loam,
The well kept orchards with their fruitful trees
The scent of apples on the evening breeze.
Farms with green grass, sleek cows and autumn hay,
Shimmer of sunlight out across the bay.

[The last lines of the stanza rang a bell with me: for when we moved into our newly built house at Xmas, 1962, we had a fine view of Port Phillip Bay – until built out behind.]

Miss Smyth had also collected a history: "Eddy Flynn, recalling his grandfather Jean's house, thatched with reeds under the shingle, to keep it cool" – and Joe Dillon's "The creeks were all good water then. You could drink it". Mrs. Alex Bailey (Alice Dunscombe) spoke of the depression in the soil running through her father's land, made in the early days by the bullock wagons making a detour to avoid climbing Foster's Hill. There were other stories, including the well known one of the two little lost Heriot boys – the younger one never found. Mrs. Jim Watson (Ursula Clohesy) spoke cheerfully of the dances in Frank Closter's barn, "Where Maples is now in Stephenson's Rd. People rode on horseback and

came in horse drawn vehicles from miles around, to dance to accordion and violin music played by old Mr. Myer and the Closter brothers, Frank and Albert".

Miss Smyth concluded with a delightful paragraph: "One evening recently I walked from Gallagher's back to Glen Waverley along Wilson's Road. White fog was lying in all the hollows between Foster's Hill and the Dandenongs just as it had done on winter evenings right through the lives of two generations of Cornells, Gallaghers and Closters, since the first settlers came from England, Ireland and Germany, down to the present day when the fourth and fifth generations are living here beside us in Waverley" [And sixth and seventh perhaps? Ed. Note there is a Gallagher branding iron and photo of young Peter Gallagher jnr. and his wife on display in the rooms.]

This 1971 Newsletter also included a detailed account of "The First General Store, Mt. Waverley", by sub editor Mr. S.A. Brown, son of the proprietor. His father had left his city job and started the business as a travelling salesman in the clean country air for health reasons. The business prospered and a general store was built on High Street Rd. beside the reservoir. Petrol was sold there too. [An interesting account of the business and times can be found in a tape recording by Stewart Bradley: speaking with third generation Marjorie Brown talking with the Dillon sisters.]

41st Birthday Celebration

This year's annual get together of members and friends to celebrate the Society's longevity is to be held at St Philip's Church Hall on the corner of Catherine Avenue and Stephenson's Road, Mount Waverley on Sunday, 23rd October 2011 at 2p.m. This year we will be combining both the monthly meeting for October and the birthday celebration in the one event, so we hope to see as many of you as possible on that afternoon.

Please bring some special memento that relates to your family's lives in the Waverley area. It will need to be something small, and preferably not too fragile, and our hope is that different people will be prepared to deliver a short (no more than two minutes) talk on the article and why it is important to them.

So please turn your mind to what you can bring and we look forward to hearing all about it in October.

Ed Hore, President

A New Series from Taped Interviews:

1. Frank Norgate speaks to Stewart Bradley, 1998

Frank had a chicken farm on the NW corner of Blackburn and Waverley Roads, on land owned by Mr. Blogg, dentist, from 1954 to c.'58, when it was subdivided and Frank's house moved to 35 Dunscombe Av,' Syndal. Side one deals with Frank's early life in Norfolk and wartime service in the Royal Marines. About halfway it switches to Frank's arrival in Australia in 1950) and four years "slating": roofing slates on large buildings throughout Victoria and at Government House, Adelaide.

In 1954 Frank leased land from Mr. Blogg, dentist: 20 acres, consisting of a square 10 acres on Macdonald's cnr. plus a strip two chains by five along Scotchmans Creek. There was a house down a "pretty" little path 150 ft. from Waverley Rd. corner – where the mail and bread was left, and collected by Mrs.Norgate. Joking, Frank called Mr. Blogg the "dearest dentist in all Australia, but he did their teeth for nothing"! With neighbours, there was a system of barter: Mr. Jack Stocks "on the high side" SE corner [later Robbs] who grew cauliflowers and Fred Campbell, who had an orchard. Frank also did some work on the golf course on the SW corner, working on the fairways and greens. As well he worked in the small repair shop.

Frank bought day old chicks from Springvale: 400 each month for five months and so 2000 hens at various stages of development, sold at 9 weeks. They had a board outside: his wife sold "Day old chicks, daffodils...anything at all!"

In c.1958 they had to leave because Mr. Blogg decided to sub-divide. He gave them the house for "One

hundred dollars or one hundred pounds" and it was shifted in three pieces to 35 Dunscombe Avenue, Syndal. The red painted iron roof was also removed in one piece – on poles, to lift it above electric wires. [All was done, with a permit, by a Mr. Griffiths in a "big wood's truck". The latter had to negotiate the small wooden bridge on Blackburn Rd. over Scotchmans Creek and then up the steep hill and the run down to muddy Coleman Pde. "That was just nothing". There were only three or four houses in Dunscombe Avenue. Others lived in a garage while they built their house. Frank said "No one had ever heard of Syndal: "Syndal? Ya don't mean Sydney, do you?" He added that at the weekends "All the 'boys'" would be out with shovels, spades and rakes to make the semblance of a road", but there was no tar. This was "the low point in his career", Frank said: "No water, no electric, no food – mud up to the neck in winter", but then "a chap connected them to a two inch water main for two pounds".

With a mate, Frank got the roof back on and when "a bit more financial" [he'd been working at the golf course where Bill Powell was curator] new battens on, 'sisalation' on". Frank recalled his work mates at the golf course: Joe Dillon and "Fred Gunter's brother Stan, who lived at Pinewood – where the chap used to grow all the flowers". Then after a couple of years, Frank returned to his trade.

Judy Borg

W.H.S Speakers: arranged Geoff Brown:

July Meeting: Sunday 24, 2pm in the rooms.

Michael Howes is to speak on The Education Department Grade Readers. [Beware the Hobbyas!]

August Meeting: Sunday 28, 2pm in the rooms.

A.G.M., followed by "An afternoon at the flicks".

September Meeting: Thursday September 22 at 8pm.

Judy Price is to speak on Tracing Your Family History.

October Meeting: Sunday 23, 2pm St. Philip's (cf.p.2)

Members are asked to bring something of historical interest in your own family. Most families have some memento of the past. Please let the committee know before the day, so we can organize the display.

November Meeting: Thursday 24 at 8pm. Your old committee reports to you and you elect a new committee. Maybe **you** would like to stand? You would be most welcome.

WHS Events – Report

Steam Train Shuttle: Darling, Mt.Waverley, Glen Waverley, on Sunday 26th June, 2011

Though the event was not in school holidays this year, Beverley Delaney ensured a good turn up by putting out a brochure. We had our usual willing helpers and train enthusiasts to ensure that everyone had a good day. There was a board display of historical photos on the platform at Mt. Waverley, to catch the interest of those waiting or disembarking – some new ones displayed on coloured boards made by Jeff Turnbull. More details on p.8

At the Centennial Centre, Oakleigh: Margery Walker, W.H.S.and Naidoc member, helped organize the Waradgerie Windows Exhibition, “An exhibition of Waradgerie Culture through the eyes of a Mother and her Daughters”. Several W.H.S. members attended the opening of the exhibition, that ran from 17 April to 17 July.

The next exhibition at the Centennial Centre will be by W.H.S., with Beverley Delaney to organize.

Anzac Meeting: Jack Walker (speaker) “Lest we forget”

Nearly a century ago, Australian and New Zealand troops fought and died on the other side of the globe in defence of King and Country. The horrific loss of life touched a large proportion of Australian and New Zealand families who still pass on mementos and stories to younger generations. Many Waverley Historical Society members including this writer have ancestors who fought in these or subsequent conflicts. Each year around Anzac Day, we show our respect to these men and women by learning a little more of how the Australian military have played their part in world history.

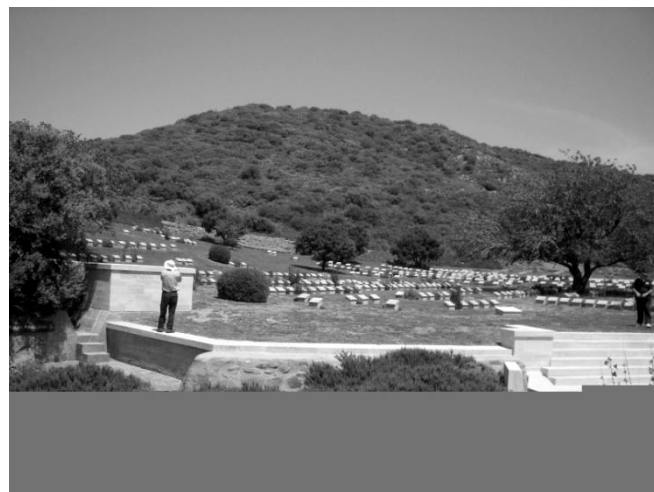
At this year’s April meeting, local resident and retired major, Jack Walker, spoke about his recent visits to

the battlefields of Gallipoli and the Somme. His overhead display of maps and modern day photographs provided us with details of the terrain and deadly battle conditions facing both sides.

Jack followed his father and uncle into the military, entering Duntroon in 1971 and serving as a mechanical engineer with Army aircraft for 20 years. In recent years he has joined fellow Duntroon classmates on trips to various Australian fields of battle in Europe and South East Asia.

One striking reminder of these terrible events is the war cemeteries and monuments that bear so many Australian names. We heard that that the Commonwealth War Graves Commission is responsible for 1.7 million graves of men and women from the British Commonwealth who died in both world wars. These are spread across 2,500 cemeteries in 150 countries. Jack’s photos displayed some of the headstones and memorials.

With the recent telecast of the Anzac Cove dawn service fresh in our minds, our speaker showed us daytime photographs of the location and its surrounds [see below] and identified the memorial that carries the famous conciliatory words of Kemal Ataturk, the Turkish army officer who became the first President of Turkey.



ANZAC COVE

On concluding, Jack mentioned that the Society’s website and other resources are used by students applying for Waverley RSL scholarships – part of their application requires research into the history and people of the local area. It was pleasing to hear of

yet another way the Society is making a contribution to local residents. We presented Jack with a copy of the Society's recent "Then And Now" publication as an expression of thanks for his address.

Geoff Brown

An Unexpected Visitor: Betty Lechte

There was much excitement in the rooms when a Mrs. S. Westaway from Christ Church, New Zealand: Betty Lechte, walked in about tea time. One minute later Muriel Hore walked in also: it appeared they had a pre-arranged rendezvous. Betty, who lived down the coast, said our Newsletter was the first mail she'd had in three weeks, because normal mail delivery was suspended after the earthquake. [Perhaps it was the Lechte house on the front of the February issue - or more likely the story of her great uncle's travail at Anzac /Dardanelles and in France in the May issue, that had brought her. At any rate it seemed a cause for celebration when, after their private chat, we all sat down to afternoon tea.

Later, Norma showed me a letter Betty had sent her dated 4 March, relating to her grandfather Albert Lechte, who had built the first Methodist Church in Mt. Waverley. Most people will know that the building had to be moved because of the High Street Road cutting. She added "My grandfather, who had been working as a farrier in what is now the Ashburton area, begged owners for the loan of some of the strongest horses he had worked on. In the end he had the promise of 22 horses. Many of these were used to transport the original building to its permanent site".

Betty ended with an anecdote you may have heard before: "At one stage during the first world war Albert had to do some fast talking to save himself from being transported to a camp for aliens. Only the fact that he had three sons serving in the AIF saved him"!

She adds "So much for reminiscences....thank you again for your kindness".

Betty (Lechte) Adamthwaite

In Memorium

Ronald Bradley Howarth June 3, 1952 - May 24, 2011

Ron was devoted to his family and was a cheerful and helpful member of W.H.S. He readily joined in preparing for exhibitions. I recall, too, how impressed I was with the poster he put up in the rooms with photos he had taken at Holmesglen of a two storey Housing Commission home at the precise moment of demolition. Only later I learnt that he had been The Herald photographer for the Melbourne Cup!

Ron's funeral was held at St.Mark's and attended by a number of members of W.H.S. We shall all miss him.

Vale, Ron

A note from Norma: The Society has in its collection a **stained glass window** featuring the letter "B". Does anyone know the provenance? If you do, please let a Committee member know.

While Beverley Delaney asks you to please keep this date for your diary: **Thursday Nov. 24, 2011**

Meeting with a Christmas Theme. She also wishes to remind you that the books **Then and Now**, \$20, and **Once There Was Jordanville**, \$30, are on sale in the rooms on Wednesdays 2-5 pm.

Moving Statues in Monash?

Talking of the debate on the most appropriate place for the historic Burke and Wills statue (now opposite the Town Hall), MarJo Angelico wondered if there were any "moving statues" in Monash - or any statues, come to that. She could only think of one: "The Original Children" at Ashwood College, just south of the auditorium: a statue of aboriginal children in motion. [Have you seen it?] It seems very right in its setting near to Gardiner's creek, with the Wetlands close by - actually in the school ground. [While I wonder if those stories from old former Ashwood Tech. boys about swimming to school in flood times might be true? **Ed.**]

The Annual Steam Rail Train

Sunday June 26

Much thought went into preparing for the W.H.S. annual train ride, this year. The first job was to find the posters with photos of early Waverley - especially the construction of the railway - that were still in storage. Beverley Delaney then designed an A4 flier for the Library front door and various shop windows, and we hoped to attract our usual crowd of parents and happy children, despite it was not yet school holidays. The weather was wonderfully kind to us and a large number of happy travelers turned up, including a party in period costume. As usual, the whole of Mt. Waverley thrilled to the sound of the big engine's whistle echoing around its hills. The locomotive this year was a large K190, pulling five W-type wooden carriages and with a K153 engine behind. Philip Johnstone took this and p.8 photos:



A display of twelve veteran and vintage cars by the Dandenong Valley Historic Car Club was a feature of Steam Rail Day. These were lined along both sides of Hamilton Place leading to the station, adding a bright sense of history for those waiting for the train's arrival. Two Cadillacs, a Ford Model T, Hupmobile...

Travelers who alighted at Glen Waverley may have noticed preparations for a changing landscape east of the station. For W.H.S. member Jeff Turnbull has sent the following account:

NEW IKON FOR GLEN WAVERLEY

Members may be aware of a large new development to take place soon at the Glen Waverley railway station, on the site of the existing two-storey buildings facing Kingsway. To be known as The Ikon Apartments it is to be a 10-storey building (yes, that's 10 storeys!!) - the tallest building in the eastern suburbs.

When officially released onto the market in late April, the development had already sold out - 100% - from plan, mainly to Chinese buyers. I believe this is a significant development for the City of Monash and perhaps the blueprint for what we have in store for the future.

I have undertaken, on behalf of WHS, to document the development from start to finish, having already photographed the existing buildings prior to demolition which is scheduled for these buildings in July. By the completion of the project, (scheduled for Christmas, 2012), I'm hoping to have a complete picture of the project to place in our files.

I believe it is vitally important that we keep these records now, rather than regret in future that we did not take the time to do so - something I call 'future history' which may not be important for decades to come, but should be recorded. I'll keep members updated, but I'm sure that over the next year you won't be able to miss it if you are in Kingsway!

Street Names - starting with "The"

The Grove, Glen Waverley, part of the Avendon Estate created out of the old CRB depot.

The Boulevard, Glen Waverley, part of the Mountain View Estate.

The Close, Mt Waverley, part of the Pickwick Estate. Created in 1967

The Glade, Wheelers Hill.

The Highway, Mt Waverley, part of the Hillcrest Estate. Created in 1949

The Quadrangle, Glen Waverley, on the site of the former Coinda Primary School. Created 1993.

The Deviation, Wheelers Hill. Originally the route used by horse and bullock teams to avoid the steep slope of Ferntree Gully Rd.

The Outlook, Glen Waverley, part of the Towers View Estate. Created 1969.

The Ridge, Glen Waverley, part of the Mountain View estate. Created about 1929.

Cancellation of the Bus Trip

Our committee member Bev Anderson tried very hard to get our bus trip to historic Williamstown off the ground. Perhaps there was not enough advance notice, or members feared it might be too cold in mid-winter. The seventeen members who enrolled proved too few to be viable. Let us hope there **will be** another bus trip in the future.

Marianne Way Development

Much change has taken place in Marianne Way since I moved into our newly built house at Christmas, 1962. Development had taken place in three stages to that point: first the east/west section [above present Waverley High School], then a right angle turn to meet Jaqueline Rd. , with a Milk Bar on the NW corner. It continued just past Norray Av., but did not join Marsham Rd. There was a considerable clay hump, with gum trees and sparse grasses, between the new section of Marianne Way – and I remember wearing gum boots in wet weather, to get to the milk bar! But the development of the Marianne Way shops and the two block medical centre opposite is the focus of this article.

In the 1960's housewives were glad of shops with basic provisions close by, two car families being a rarity. Soon the milk bar was joined by a hairdresser next door [basic essential!] then a greengrocer's with open hessian bags of root vegetables in front of a crude counter, and apples and pears that Alex would choose for you, behind. I'd had to walk up to Highbury Rd. to a butcher, but by the late 60's in Marianne Way there was also [in order] a chemist, butcher, grocer's in the form of a mini super-market, a haberdashery and a second milk bar that also sold fish and chips! [And a phone box on the corner, too.]

Across the road, a modernist-style building on two blocks was constructed in 1967-8 for Dr. Alan Bentley, who began his practice there in 1968. As I understand it, he left the architect designed building to the National Trust or similar institution. It was certainly a unique design – and from the front, looked like a giant butterfly. Now the two front doors open into two storey apartments, with another two behind, all

looking attractively uncluttered on the double block. While there is one heritage white trunked gum tree near the corner of Jaqueline Rd. and Marianne Way to set off the whites and warm browns of the new buildings. [Perhaps there should be also a plaque to Dr. Bentley, a kind and very generous man.]



The view of the shop fronts across the road on the west side is also radically different – and not merely because most shops became offices: the original milk bar now an accountants, the greengrocer's now sporting a large TAXNET sign, the chemist's now a Holistic Balance Centre, the Self Service now a printer's and the haberdashery an accountant's too. Only the Hair Stylist's, Taunt's: the Printers, and the "New" Milk bar have survived, the latter now with a two storey dwelling behind.

The streetscape is also radically different, for following the severe rain storm of December 23, 2007, when several shops were badly flooded, Melbourne Water constructed rain gardens along the pavement. [These are attractive triangles, the long side beside the shallow gutter, each planted with a small tree – while in front of the original milk bar (and slightly down hill) a rain garden projects out past the parked cars and consists of several levels and a large grate.] Taunts, the printers, was the last to return to business. Ironically Kim Taunt and his retired father had a fine sense of history and had always filled the shop window with front pages of old newspapers and a collection of obsolete printing machines etc. And so it was today, when I went to interview him: an old newspaper of Nov. 23, 1963 after the Kennedy shooting, caught my eye. And of the same date a Myers Christmas Sale: "Reconditioned motor mowers from 15 pounds" and "Famous Australian bath towels" 15 shillings each!



Just arrived from Darling.



Travellers in period costume.



Veteran and vintage cars

Waverley Historical Society Inc.

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Please find enclosed both

Subscription Renewal Forms

And also

Nominations for the Committee