

The Mt Waverley Community Centre Sundial Saga

MarJo Angelico

The Mt Waverley Library, MW Youth Centre and MW Community Centre are all located on what was the Closter family site. Long time Waverley residents will remember the old house of Albert and Maria Closter (Kloester) at the corner of Miller Cres and Stephensons Rd.



Closter House looking SW just prior to demolition

In the early 1970s the future of the house was subject to much debate in Waverley Council and the community. The WHS supported its retention as a heritage building and possible home of the Society. Our own Morna Sturrock (dec.) was a member of the Save Closter House Committee.



Some of the Save Closter House Committee in 1977. Morna Sturrock in tartan skirt standing in the doorway.

Alas, the building was demolished in 1978 and the site became a carpark while the land to the west became the site of the Community centre.

In recognition of Closter family house some of the bricks were used in the entrance pathway while a pedestal was erected to accommodate a sun dial. According to the plaque on the pedestal, the monument was intended *..to provide a tangible link with the history of the area and is dedicated to the memory of the early settlers of the district.*

Unfortunately the sundial was stolen and recov-

ered and stored in the MW local history room only to be lost again.



Entrance to the Community Centre showing the pedestal awaiting the mounting of the sundial.

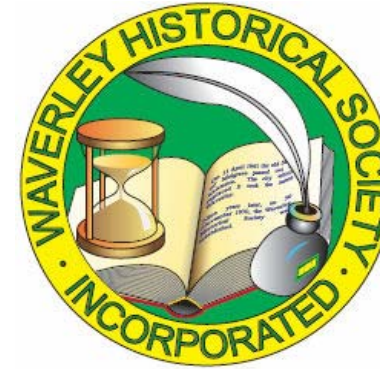
Finally in early 2019, the Monash Council acceded to the WHS requests and a new sundial was installed on the pedestal. The new sundial was a simpler design but less likely to attract Vandals or metal thieves.



Original Sundial in position



New sundial of 2019



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Annual subscriptions 2019/20 are
due on 1 July. \$25 per household



THE BUILDING

In an area that has been named variously Oakleigh, East Oakleigh, Oakleigh East, Amstel, Mt Waverley, and Notting Hill, this house is a stayer amongst its neighbours as well as in the midst of the locality name changes. On slightly larger blocks than in Oakleigh township, yet close enough for walking or cycling to the shops to be still viable, this area attracted a variety of families who worked or went to school in Oakleigh or somewhere along the railway towards the city. This one clearly still holds its original charm, unlike its neighbours which have all been redeveloped.

Coming Events

Sun 25 Aug 2pm WHS 49th Birthday and AGM. Guest Speaker Joy Olney
Early Memories of Glen Waverley

Sun 27 Oct 1pm *Black Flat Historic Walk.*

Wed 27 Nov 2pm Carina Leitch: *WW1 Centenary.*

Wed 4 Dec Last day that the WHS Rooms are Open *more details P.3*

Unless otherwise stated,
General Meetings are held
at 2pm on the fourth
Wednesday or Sunday in
our rooms above Mt Waver-
ley Library (Lift Available) 41
Miller Cres., Mt Waverley.
For excursions and outings
please carefully note time
and location details.

2018/19 in review

As the end of the financial year has again passed by, WHS is approaching the end of its 2018-19 activities and getting ready to embark on its Jubilee year. Yes, Waverley Historical Society turns 50 in 2020, and we are already planning some celebrations.

However, first comes this year's birthday and AGM. We have an entertaining speaker lined up, and formalities will proceed promptly. In preparation for our August AGM, we invite all members to re-join the Society and enjoy its activities and research facilities free of charge. We also urge you to make good use of the nomination form enclosed. You could nominate yourself, a fellow member (with their approval of course) or an existing committee member. Mail the forms to our PO box or visit us any Wednesday afternoon.

Best wishes to all members from your current WHS Committee

MarJo Angelico
President

WHS in the Digital Age

As printing and postage costs continue to rise, WHS has decided to go digital. We will be Emailing newsletters to those members whose Email addresses we have on file.

In future, members will have a choice - either continue receiving the newsletter as a paper copy via AustPost, or change to Email. If your choice is paper, please let the WHS know. Remember, you can print out the Email copy if you wish. Anyone who wishes to opt in and save the trees, just needs to supply their Email address.

Please advise the Secretary via:

waverleyhsvic@gmail.com of your preference: wither Email or paper copy.

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 2019 are every second month.

Waverley Historical Society Annual General Meeting

2pm
Sunday 25 August 2019

Purpose
To Accept the Financial Accounts
&
To Elect Office Bearers

WHS Education Sessions

Over the last few months MarJo Angelico has given presentations on the history of the Waverley district to:

Monash Rotary Club,
Glen Waverley Combined Probud,
Mount Waverley Rotary Club

With more sessions set for coming months.

Plus our WHS June meeting (see P. 6).

From feedback received, these sessions are greatly appreciated by the audience many of whom have grown up and raised a family in the district. Sometimes we receive some useful gems of information on events and dates.

Can you help?

Our request made in HH227 for more information on Lady Baden Powell's visit to Australia has since revealed that she had made two visits to the Waverley - Tally Ho area. A report of these will be provided in the next issue of *History Here*.

Did You Know?

That a copy of the WHS Quarterly Newsletter *History Here* is provided to and stored for posterity at the National Library of Australia in Canberra.

Welcome to New Members
John & Winnie Mak, Bruce Beatson
Carina Leitch

Taking us further north, towards Mt Waverley shops, we saw the beginnings of the ahead-of-its-time Glen Alvie Estate. Sherwood Road was an excellent example of the kind of thinking at the time; parklands adjoining housing, no front or side fences, in order to achieve the country estate effect. Street trees were planted even before the houses were started. An aerial shot showed us the extent of the Glen Alvie Estate.

A classic photo of early days in Virginia Street made us all realize that this was largely untenanted land, rolling downs and copses of tea-tree. Soon, shops and service stations and supermarkets would emerge. The original *Vereena Auto Port* was to be replaced by the Waverley Masonic Centre. The Progress Hall that was in Virginia St, has since been re-located behind the Youth Club near the MW library. 'Sterling Paints' stood on the southern corner of the strip of shops in Stephenson's Road; we even saw a photo of a customer having paint mixed, to her request, when paint mixing arrived in the 1960's. A *Maples* store was near the southern end of these shops too.

Then, over the road, to the very old *Tait's Store*, run by early businesswoman, Jessie Tait, and her daughters. We saw a photo of *Waimarie House*, taken in 1907, when it stood at the west end of Waimarie Drive, set in ten acres of farming and orchard land. The shop was 100 m from the house. The stables with feed loft still stand although the house has long gone.

There was a Service Station across the road from Amber Grove, and later, *Tom the Cheap Grocer* stood close to this site. Just north of what was to become the railway, was the old Closter family homestead; sadly, this was demolished many years ago. Aerial shots again, this time showing the parking configurations of the Hamilton Place shops, and the roads running off at angles, such as The Highway and Wadham Parade, providing easier access to the future rail station. The car-park has undergone a couple of reconfigurations and yet another is in the offing.

Old photos of *Frank's Toy Shop* and *Appleton's Menswear*, taken in 1968, according to one in the audience, who recognised the old Holden.

Mt Waverley Railway Station was said to be the prettiest in Melbourne, and the semi-rural shot showed lemon trees, geraniums, and an attractive station building.

A picture of the newly placed sundial, outside the Community Centre, alongside the original sundial which, sadly, was stolen and never returned. The new sundial sits on a raised platform of old bricks sourced from the original Closter home.

Heading north again, we could see where the dangerous bend in Stephenson's Road, called *Devil's Elbow*, renowned for many vehicle accidents, and thankfully now replaced by the straight road as we know it. The deeply gullied land to the east was given to the Education Department, and the Mt Waverley High School was built in 1963. This became the MW Secondary College. Roads back then were far steeper and barrel-draining has solved the creek problem. Thank heavens for Damper Creek! The steep climb north took us to the old Mt Waverley North Primary, now the junior campus of Mt Waverley Secondary College.

On the Highbury Road corner stood Maryann Dempsey's Hotel; the start of Middleborough Road. (This is outside of our Mulgrave Shire but surely it slaked the thirst of Waverley residents).

An old sepia shot showed the large staff standing out the front of the once multi-purpose hotel.



Dempsey's Hotel

So, along the rolling hills, so-named in memory of Sir Walter Scott's Waverley novels, MarJo's excellent and informative talk came to an end.

What happened 100 years ago?

MULGRAVE, Tuesday. - The Mulgrave State School has been closed for a fortnight, owing to the influenza epidemic.

Did you know that a century ago, so many people in this area were dying of the 'flu, that the government banned meetings of any kind? Even the school (now Clayton North Primary School), was closed.

The *Argus*, 30/7/1919:

The establishment of what was to become Caulfield Institute of Technology was delayed by this epidemic:

A Virtual Tour of Stephensons and Clayton Roads (Route 23)

Virginia Barnett

The sunny day of 26 June must have drawn the crowd to hear MarJo's descriptive and picturesque talk of days of yore and the long road upon which we have all travelled, but give scarcely a thought to yesteryear.

MarJo's familiarity with maps of the area enabled her to describe the 1868 map of the Parish of Mulgrave. All east-west and north-south divisions are precisely one mile square, or 640 acres, said a voice from the audience. However, those blocks between High Street Road and Highbury Road are reduced in the north-south lengths, thanks to the apparently stubborn local farming family named Bennett, who must have had a lot to do with the planning back then. Hence Bennettswood.

We started our tour on Clayton Road, where we saw an excellent colour photo of the grand North Clayton Primary School. This was then known as the 'Common School' or 'Mulgrave Primary' and stood opposite a blacksmith's shop; there were, after all, probably more horses than children.

(Incidentally, Helen Gobbi, of Oakleigh, has written a splendid history of this school). On the northern side of the school is a group of shops, including the Whitburn Post Office, running along the service road of the Princes Highway. This tiny pocket of Whitburn has the postcode 3168, the same as Clayton. On the western corner of this intersection was Kirk Bros. Car Yard. Quiet roads back then.

Heading north along Clayton Road, we encountered the printing press left over from the days John Sands started his successful factory. John Sands immigrated as a nineteen-year-old and set to with his printing business; mainly cards and games. He printed the first Christmas cards in Australia. This company, which started out as a family business, kept going until 1978, then eventually, in 1996, was acquired by American Greetings.

Further north of Ferntree Gully Road, on land that was once used by the Melbourne Riding School became the Amstel Golf Course. On the SW corner Amstel Primary School was built to cater for the expected large population when the area was laid open to developers. We have the Dutch influence here, in that Amstel is named after the river of the same name which flows through Amsterdam. Student numbers never quite reached expectations, and the school did not exceed 500 students, at any given time. But the Mt Waverley Primary School was bursting at the seams, so Grade V students from there were bussed to Am-

stel, according to another audience member.

We saw a photo of the now defunct school; modern for its time, built from cinder bricks (pebble and concrete mix). Amstel School No. 4801, opened in 1958 and closed in 1993. The area developed quickly and we saw a rare photo of the teaspoon mementoes which would have been handed out to the students at the time – a little spade digging into the earth was depicted on each spoon. People liked the idea of living on an old golf course, so the land was considered ideal and sold easily. At that time, Amstel was a recognized district of its own.

Further north, and golf course land again, was the Cole family home, *Rosewarrick* which became the club house for the course, and the oldest house in Waverley was nearby – *Amstel House*. This solid little home was re-located but later was found to be in the way of the new freeway, so it was eventually demolished. MarJo supplied a photo of Morna Sturrock checking out the site of a very old well on the same property. There was a picture of the old well site, concreted over, in front of one of the many pine trees in the district. A line of these trees still exists along Stephensons Road, bordering the backyard fences of the Kingsley Grove houses.

Pictures of more recent times showed the construction of the new bridge of the freeway, taken in 1975. Scotchmans Creek snakes alongside the acres of road in the making. An aerial shot enabled us to see the aforementioned well site on the edge of the roadmaking rubble.

Then we saw scout halls half way up the hill to the Waverley Road corner, another aerial shot enabled us to see Flynn's Smithy, near the corner of Waverley Road and Bruce Street.

Jenning's fine old home stood on the SE corner of Waverley and Stephensons Road. A photo of the old St Philips Church, which is now in Stephensons Road, but was originally just west of the Waverley Road intersection. It is now the Christadelphian Church.

Over the road from there runs a small group of shops that have kept going, despite changes of occupancy over the years. *Colbry Curtains* occupied the shop which juts out from the rest, *Perry's Foodstore*, self-service, stood on the corner. Further west is *McGlades Upholstery*, now into its second generation. It was originally a fruit shop, next-door to a butcher, men's barber, ladies' hairdresser, and then a hobby shop. Once a busy corner, still a busy corner.

Famous People who have lived in Waverley – Scobie Breasley

MarJo Angelico

Arthur Edward "Scobie" Breasley (7 May 1914 – 21 December 2006) was one of Australia's greatest jockeys, and he lived in Mt Waverley after he retired.

He was born in Wagga Wagga to a trotting trainer and grew up with horses, learning to ride by age 4 and earning the nickname "Scobie" after James Scobie, a family friend and champion trainer. (James Scobie trained no less than four Melbourne Cup winners in his time!). At age 12 Breasley was apprenticed to Wagga trainer Stanley Biggins, and the following year to Pat Quinlan in Melbourne. At age 14 he rode his first winner, here in Victoria.

Breasley was an outstanding success both in Australia and overseas. He rode the winning horse an amazing 3251 times. Imagine winning over a hundred races in a season. Well, Scobie Breasley achieved that eleven times!

Possibly the reason for his success was his exquisite balance in the saddle. Another feature of his style was that he seldom used a whip, preferring instead to use hands and heels.

Breasley retired from jockeying in 1968 and continued his equestrian work as a trainer in England, France, USA and Barbados. After winning the most prestigious race in Barbados - the Gold Cup - four times in the early 1990s, he returned to Australia and lived for about 15 years in Mt Waverley. He died aged 92 at Monash Medical Centre twelve years ago.



Wikipedia



Scobie Breasley's home in Waverley

WHS Coming Events

(Note Day, Time & Venue)

Sun 28 July Open House Melbourne. Expressions of interest are sought please for making our arrangements.

Sun 25th Aug 2pm Our 49th birthday and AGM. Guest speaker, long-time GW resident Joy Olney shares: *Early Memories of Glen Waverley*. Many people would know the Olney name from Glen Waverley. Several of the family were in the building trade. Maybe your house is an Olney original? Keith Olney was Waverley's mayor in the early 1960s. In 1964 Peter Olney married Joy Petfield, a member of another old Glen Waverley family.

Sun 27 Oct. 1pm Black Flat Historic Walk. Bookings essential: waverleyhsvic@gmail.com

Wed 27 Nov. 2pm Speaker Carina Leitch: *WW1 Centenary*

Sir John Monash - More than a Military Commander

Virginia Barnett

Bill Brown assumed his professorial persona to entertain the audience with a finely-tuned one-hour chronological outline of the life of John Monash.

Bill has several links with John Monash, and reminded us that the name, Monash, came to prominence when Monash University was built in 1958. Bill taught at this University.

His great-great-grandparents were married in St Stephen's Church, Richmond, in 1853. This church was also John Monash's first school (1871-75). Bill's sons attended Scotch College and were in Monash House and walked through the school's Monash Gates frequently.

Both of Bill's grandfathers were killed in WW1 in France.

John Monash and Bill studied engineering at Melbourne University. Bill is also a Member of Monash Combined Probus, and travels on the Monash Freeway to and from the City of Monash, so the links are many.

After the preamble, including a mention of Geoffrey Serle's biography and definitive version of John Monash, published in 1982, following the death of Monash's one and only daughter, Bertha, Bill described Monash's life.

Monash's parents, Louis and Bertha Monash, were Prussian-Jewish, from modern day Poland. The name was spelt Monasch (with emphasis on the second syllable), and Anglicised to Monash when the family, in search of a better life, came to Australia in 1863. The language spoken at home was German, but throughout his life, John Monash never disclosed this fact.

Two years after Louis and Bertha Monash's arrival in Melbourne, John Monash was born, in 1865, in Dudley Street, West Melbourne. Later, two sisters arrived; Mathilde, in 1869, and Louise, 1873.

John's father worked as a grocer; one can only imagine West Melbourne then, compared with now.

Dissatisfied with the work situation in Melbourne, when better prospects opened up in Jerilderie, NSW, the family moved there in 1875, when John was ten. There, the small country school had a far-sighted teacher, who recognised John's brightness, and set about tutoring him in mathematics.

Three years later, the family returned to Melbourne and John was enrolled at Scotch College. There, he flourished; he matriculated at the age

of fourteen and was dux of the school at seventeen. By 1882, he was enrolled at Melbourne University in the Faculty of Arts. His broad thinking and personality endeared him to many; he found time to read voraciously, became an accomplished pianist, loved bushwalking and even found time for carpentry as his hobby. He might have been called a Renaissance Man – interested in everything.

The study of Latin, on top of other subjects, was a struggle (he was only human), so the degree took several years to complete.

His first signs of military interest came when, in 1884, he joined the university company of the Fourth Battalion Victorian Rifles. Then he joined the North Melbourne Battery and became a Lieutenant.

In 1885, his mother, Bertha, died. John Monash needed to work, so he started his engineering career working on the construction of Princes Bridge – this was before his qualifications came through.

Around 1887, he became involved, as the supervisory civil engineer, in the Outer Circle Railway, a steam era suburban railway line. (Monash was only twenty-two years old at the time).

This Outer Circle was necessary because Flinders Street Station and Spencer Street Station were not connected. But the whole scheme was doomed to fail and the entire railway only operated for two years, from 1891-93. Here, he struck up a friendship with Annie Gabriel, whose husband was foreman of the Outer Circle: said husband was not at all impressed!

In 1891, aged 26, Monash married Hannah Victoria (Vic) Moss and worked at the Harbour Trust in an engineering capacity, studying Law at the same time.

He lost this job and then set up a joint consulting business – Monash and Anderson.

Three years into what became a tumultuous marriage, John and Vic's daughter, Bertha, was born; she was to be their one and only child. Vic left John soon after the birth, but later returned. The marriage remained tempestuous.

In 1895, the Anderson Street (Morell) Bridge was completed; Monash was directly responsible for the design and construction of the bridge piers. By now, he was a Major in the University Victoria Rifles.

Here, Bill showed us pictures displaying how

bridges' strengths were tested – steam-rollers were taken across the bridges before general traffic was allowed. Sadly, there was a collapse of one such bridge and Monash shouldered the blame; his maths formula was wrong. A hard lesson learned.

In 1900, John Monash left the legal company of Monash and Anderson. A few years later, things improved and he formed the Reinforced Concrete and Monier Pipe Construction Co. Pty. Ltd; he had a major role in introducing reinforced concrete to Australian engineering practice. His affluence increased.

About about this time, he formed a liaison with Vic's old friend, Lizette (Elizabeth Bentwich). Monash moved to Toorak, and the reinforced concrete business was thriving. By 1908, he had joined Intelligence in the Army and was promoted to colonel in 1912. By 1914, he was Colonel-in-Charge of the Fourth Brigade.

Although he spoke French and German fluently, there was no doubting his loyalty was to Australia.

By 1916, Monash was in France; Major-General of the Third Division.

In 1918, as Lieutenant General Corps Commander, he was most successful at the Battle of Amiens, after which his knighthood was bestowed by King George V, at Army Headquarters in a French cha-teau.

In 1919, the year before the ailing Vic died, she and Bertha travelled to London, only to find Monash and Lizette ensconced. However, this humane side of John Monash could not detract from his extraordinary achievements in so many fields of endeavour. His main task, at the time, was the demobilization of Australian troops. As well, at this stage he wrote *The Australian Victories in France in 1918*, which was submitted to the University of Melbourne as a thesis, on the subject of engineering applied to modern warfare, and thus he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Engineering.

Monash's wife, Vic, died of cancer in 1920. Monash was excluded from the vice-regal milieu because he insisted on having his partner, Lizette, accompanied him to the various functions: simply not acceptable, in keeping with the social mores of the time.

From 1920-23, back in Melbourne, he became Chairman of the SEC. Three years later, whilst managing the SEC, he was made Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University.

In 1922, there was strong public and private debate around the building of a Shrine of Remembrance. Monash's objective was to see this Shrine built instead of the Anzac Square proposal for the CBD.

Monash was a member of the committee which settled the design of the Shrine of Remembrance; this soldier of war was able to persuade and direct his arguments at the key people – the soldiers who had fought for the country. Thus, the Domain site was chosen and successful fund-raising began, as the mighty construction commenced. The Shrine, as we know it, is only where it is because of the tireless efforts of John Monash. It was completed in 1934 and dedicated as a Memorial on Remembrance Day 11/11/1934.

Bill showed us a photo of Monash leading the parade in London at war's end; he was revered by the soldiers.

After the war, Monash returned to Melbourne to head the SEC. At this point he, with his engineering skill, was responsible for overseeing and correcting costly errors by getting the boilers running properly at the Yallourn plant. The war was behind him.

There is a statue of John Monash in the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, on horseback (despite his failing horsemanship leading up to the war). Another lifelike statue of the great man stands at Monash University, near the eastern wall of the Menzies Building. This was unveiled by Alex Chernov in 2015. Here are Monash's words: *Equip yourself for life; not solely for your own benefit but for the benefit of the whole community.* Lizette was an old friend of the Monash family, from Melbourne's Jewish society, in the 1890's. She inherited enough money to travel to England and settled there independently.

Monash was twice awarded the Croix de Guerre by France, but he wore only one of these with two palms on the ribbon, to indicate both awards. He gave the award to Miss Bentwich to keep 'in loving remembrance of history-making, but anxious days.'

On the 8th October, 1931, after months of failing health, General Sir John Monash died, from coronary vascular disease, at his Toorak home, *Iona*. He was sixty-six.

A crowd of 250,000 attended his funeral, and he was interred at the Brighton Cemetery.

The WHS mourns the passing of:

Doris Logan

&

Jennifer Carra

We extend our condolences to family and friends