

Waverley Historical Society Inc

NEWSLETTER
May 2009 **Issue No 187**

WAVERLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established in 1970
Incorporated in Victoria
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OPEN HOURS

1pm - 5pm every Wednesday
1pm - 8.30pm third Wednesdays

SUBSCRIPTION

\$15 per person
\$20 per family

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

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Extant Pre-Suburban Buildings

and reminders of Waverley's rural days

This house, "Fairview" on Waverley and Bullarto Rds Chadstone was built in the Edwardian years, the farmhouse for a small plot on the old Collings section. In 1891 a Mr Moore had six acres there. In 1928 Mr Speros Kostos bought it with the next door farm, and leased this part to Arthur and Grace Checkley, who tended the market garden and raised their four children there.

Arthur had been a WWI veteran, and Grace had grown up near Ashburton Forest. She remembered aborigines coming to their door. Arthur used to take his produce to the markets by horse and cart. The property was subdivided in 1962 but the house was retained and is still standing today, but may not be

much longer.



Coming WHS Events

May Meeting

For our May meeting we have planned a speaker who will help us preserve our best memories in a very practical way. Scott Brown will teach us (individuals and the Society) to preserve old photographs. We have all invested - possibly in tight financial times - in film and development, but now how can we be sure the photos will last?

This is the first of our Sunday meetings. Please bring a friend and a plate of afternoon tea.

Steam Train Rides

Note that there will be no June general meeting on the fourth Sunday in June. Instead, please invite your neighbours and family to join WHS and Steamrail Victoria for our FIFTH annual Glen Waverley Steam train rides.

Date - Sunday 28th June

Prices: Adult - \$15; Child u/16 - \$8; Family - \$35 (2A + 2C or 1A + 3C)

Departure times (may change) To Glen Waverley

From Darling 10.15, 11.20, 12.20pm, 2pm, 3pm

From Mt Waverley 10.27, 11.32, 12.32, 2.12, 3.12

To Darling.

From Glen Waverley 10.54, 11.54, 1.34, 2.34, 3.34*

From Mt Waverley 11.01am, 12.01pm, 1.41pm, 2.41pm, 3.41pm*

*the last train from Glen Waverley, departing at 3.34pm, will not return to Glen Waverley. It will terminate at Darling then run empty back to Newport Workshops.

The push-pull steam train featuring locomotives K153 and K190 (one at each end) and W type wooden carriages will operate between Darling and Glen Waverley, picking up passengers at Darling, Mount Waverley and Glen Waverley.

Get your grandchildren to mark their calendars now. Tickets will be available on the train on the day .

July Meeting

In July we will probably be learning about the Burke and Wills expedition, but this will be confirmed closer to the time. Again, please bring a plate and a friend!

Displays at MFC

The display about to open at the Monash Federation Centre, Warrawee Park, Oakleigh, is on "churches" and the one that we are curating July to September will be "Secondary Industry and Commerce - Old and New." If

you have any memorabilia or photographs relevant to the latter theme, please talk to Beverley or Judy. Be sure to visit these lovely historical displays some time in the three months they are open. There are no stairs at MFC!

Annual Meeting

Don't forget our annual general meeting is coming up in August. In your next newsletter you will receive nomination forms. Please consider whether you wish to re-elect current committee members. All need to be re-nominated by WHS members - don't just leave it to someone else.

Also please consider who else you could ask to stand for committee - or whether you could give some time yourself. We do need some more committee members! It is a lot of fun and never boring, and you would be benefiting the future generations as well as the current ones.

WHS Events - Reports

Bus Trip to Queenscliff

Sunday 19 April, 2009

by Jeff Turnbull

Our annual Bus trip for this year was to Queenscliff and as it turned out, a better day could not have been had by all 30 + members and friends who joined us. After waiting somewhat expectantly, we were relieved to see the Rowville Bus Line coach arriving ON TIME with our friendly, smiling driver (or is it Coach Captain!) Brian at the wheel. Most will remember the fiasco of 2007 trip to Sunbury when the bus failed to arrive at all.

After a smooth drive along the Monash Freeway, over the Westgate Bridge and on to the Geelong Road, we stopped off for morning tea and a short break at Foreshore Reserve at Corio. Then after a drive along Eastern Beach, past Cunningham Pier and the famous painted bollards along the shore, it was on to the Bellarine Highway and to Queenscliff itself.

Our next stop was the Queenscliffe Historical Society museum. (Did you know that the town of Queenscliff doesn't have the 'e', but the borough Queenscliffe has?) I think most were impressed with the layout of the museum and with the amount of work put in by the society and its volunteer band of helpers.

President Jocelyn Grant explained that their museum is one of three in the town the others being the Queenscliff Fort military museum and the Maritime museum on the foreshore. Jocelyn outlined their planning in the past to create their museum and explained that their monthly meetings (attended by about 80 interested people) are held in the nearby church hall during the day. She also spoke on the efforts to obtain funding over the years to extend their building and of the generous financial assistance from the



Baillieu family, prominent pioneers in the area.

As the sun began to emerge from behind the clouds, we had lunch in the foreshore park where there was a wonderful view of Point Nepean, The Heads and Port Phillip Bay, with its host of water craft, large and small on its waters. It was almost possible to imagine (with the help of the photographs in the museum) the Weeroona, the Ozone or other steamers from the Bay Steamship Co. approaching the Queenscliff pier in their heyday.

Back to the museum to pick up Jocelyn and on to a short tour of the town. This included a view of the Heads with its three lighthouses, and a drive past the major hotels - the Royal, the Grand Vue and the Ozone; the last is being turned into luxury million-dollar apartments!

We were fortunate to be given a chance to go inside the Anglican Church of St. George The Martyr, built in 1863. Queenscliff must be one of the few towns where the Anglicans got the high ground to build their church and not the Catholics!

A delightful day where everyone enjoyed the easy-paced program, thanks to the expert organization and liaison work done by Marie Cooper. Even our driver/Coach Captain Brian remarked on how we didn't try to pack too much into one day. Thanks to all who made this outing a great success.

WHS Projects

Contributing to Collections

We are always grateful for contributions of photos, papers and ephemera which relate to the history of Waverley. We do not have the facilities to store and/or display general historical ephemera, but without the contributions of local artifacts from local members and friends, we would not have a collection! Particularly

photographs of the Waverley area from 25 years ago or more are most valuable.

Street Names

Did you know? - Waverley Council usually followed the policy of not allowing similar street names in close proximity to avoid confusion. However the name Kennedy seems to be an exception with two streets within 1.8km. Kennedy St (Melway 71D1) appears to be linked with a Patrick Kennedy who was awarded an OBE for services to Taxation, while Kennedy Rd (Melway 71D5) near the Police Academy was named after Policeman Sergeant Kennedy killed by the Kelly gang at Stringy

Bark in 1878.

Another possible confusion arises with Sunhill Rd, Mt Waverley (61E11) and Sunhill Ave, Burwood (61D7). Sunhill Rd Mt Waverley derives its name from the Sunhill Development Corp. who subdivided the area.

Melway Directories Please

Have you recently updated your street directory, or are about to? We are still collecting these and would love donations of pre-loved Melway street directories, especially any of these editions - 1, 3, 6 - 10, 13, 23, 24, and from 26 on. Also any other brand of street directory especially older than 1966, ie with a price in Pounds, shillings and pence. If anyone else is collecting Melway directories, we have some spares we can swap, including numbers 4, 12, 14, 15, 16, and 19, but if you need any others please ask - we may be able to help. Melway are excellent history!

Acquisitions

We are pleased to have received from member Ted Thomasson a framed 1942 print of the clubhouse of Riversdale Gold Course, formerly a homestead called St John's Wood.

Research Enquiries

This month we have enquiries from members of the Tainton, Colwell, Doherty and Armstrong families, and about the site of Corpus Christi in Clayton Road, and the history of Bogong Reserve. If you have insights on these, please talk to MarJo.

Titles Office, Anyone?

Do you love researching? Are you able to go to the city? We need someone to collect information for a few

current projects, especially some old 'Land Sales and Titles' of Mulgrave/Oakleigh district. If you can help, please talk to MarJo.

Handyman needed

Can anyone fix typewriters? We acquired one a while ago for children to play on at our open days, but unfortunately the carriage won't return, so it is of no use. We wondered whether any of you has enough expertise with them to be able to look at it and see whether it can be fixed. Please contact Norma if you can help.

Anniversaries

200 Years of Postal Service

Australia Post commemorated 200 years of postal service in March.

Because mail was going missing in the early 19th century, a proper system was needed. An emancipated thief, Isaac Nichols was selected to be Postmaster and installed in 1809.

By 1838 an overland postal service between Sydney and Melbourne had begun. At the same time a system of prepaid postage by means of a stamped letter was introduced. This was the first such system in the world.

These became adhesive stamps in 1850.

In 1865 the mail trains, or Travelling Post Offices, were operating in Victoria. The mail was sorted in transit, and post offices were placed near railway stations to effect final delivery. This became common practice in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In the 1870s the telegraph went through, making "instant" communication between Australian colonies possible (hours instead of weeks!) and the first Australian postcards were being sold. Henry Lawson's mother was a postmistress and invented the patented post satchel buckle. 1885 saw Black Flat's first post master - the school teacher. Post offices were opened in Glen and Mount Waverley in 1905.

Federation (1901) opened the way for a national system, called the PostMaster General's Department (PMG) which lasted 75 years until Telecom was separated from Australia Post. However postage stamps were still State-based until 1913. The following year, our first airmail was trialled, between Melbourne and Sydney. With seven fuel stops required, the trip took over 48 hours to complete.

1957 saw the first Christmas stamp, making Australia the first nation to introduce annual Christmas stamps. Ten years later we got postcodes, and within a few years nearly all mail complied with the new convention, unlike some other countries. In 1961 Mt Waverley's post office crossed the road from Tait's to its present

location in Hamilton Place.

In the 1980s posties stopped blowing whistles to announce the arrival of letters in your letterbox, and in the 1990s Express Post was introduced, and the first living Australian (Don Bradman) was honoured in a stamp. The Year 2000 brought the first (worldwide) "instant" stamp issues, with each Olympic gold medal won by an Australian being commemorated.

Two hundred years of an imperative service to our local community as well as to the nation and beyond is worth celebrating!

150 - Presbyterian Church

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria celebrated 150 Years of Service this month.

The first Presbyterian service was conducted by Reverend James Clow in the homestead "Kardinia" (still standing near Geelong) in 1837. He then hastily built a community church in Melbourne and conducted Christmas services their that year, before the arrival of the designated first minister Rev James Forbes arrived in the Port Phillip region January 1838.

Wheelers Hill Presbyterian Church was built and active from 1891. It was the third denomination represented in Waverley after Anglican and Methodist.

Forbes was the first minister of any denomination to be officially settled in Melbourne. This was within two months of the first land sales, when there were few women and few people over 30. There was no water supply, no usable roads, just a handful of huts and two wooden buildings used as hotels. Forbes' house was the second brick building in Melbourne.

As well as setting up the church, he worked hard to defend the Aborigines, and to start schools, many philanthropic endeavours, a mobile library, and a debating club (the first cultural activity available in Melbourne!). He also gave support and hospitality to immigrants and was very much involved in community affairs. Amazingly energetic and capable was this remarkable pioneer churchman.

About that time the Church of Scotland went through some reorganisation, and this meant that the colonial church did not settle its name and allegiances until 1859, with the formation of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, 150 years ago. Incidentally, the Presbyterian Church of Africa celebrates 150 years of another stalwart from the Church of Scotland, David Livingstone this year.

Wheelers Hill Presbyterian Church was built and active from 1891. It was the third denomination represented in Waverley after Anglican and Methodist.

There were 8 Presbyterian Churches inside or very near the boundaries of Waverley in 1977 when the vote to unite was held. All the church buildings became Uniting Church of Australia, but some members

continued the vision of Forbes and others. Waverley Presbyterian Church was still meeting in Mount Street, Glen Waverley, a few years ago.

145 - Cheshire Cheese

There is a plaque on the northwest corner of Lum and Ferntree Gully Rds. It reads, in part: -

“The Cheshire Cheese Hotel - 1864.

“In the 1860s, a number of rudimentary inns were established throughout the district. One of the earliest was ‘The Cheshire Cheese’, built here by Robert Wolstenholme with locally cut sandstone.

“It soon became a staging point for Cobb & Co, and catered successfully for the local settlers, timber sawyers, bushmen and travellers...

“So elegant was this stone that the Anglicans accepted Wolstenholme’s offer to donate what he did not need, to construct the beautiful old St. Matthews on the Wellington and Springvale Roads corner in 1869...”

The land on which the Cheshire Cheese stood had been advertised for sale as 16 ten-acre farms, but none had sold due to the rocky outcrops on the land. Wolstenholme bought the 160 acres, quarried the rock and built his ten-room house.

In 1868, Robert Wolstenholme applied for a licence for the Cheshire Cheese, describing it as having one storey, four single rooms and six double rooms, dormer windows, stables and outbuildings, all on 160 acres. He named it after a hotel in London.

Other licensees include a Joseph Gibson, John Guess, and John Brown, but for most of its life, the Cheshire Cheese was a Temperance Hotel. This is because an 1885 Act of Parliament made hotel licensing dependant on the needs of the community, causing several hotels to lose their licences and become Temperance Hotels. George Cotter had it then, and provided sleeping quarters and meals to visitors to the area, and a meeting place for locals. He also kept a general store on Springvale Rd.

At the end of the second world war, the hotel was converted to a residence by Horace Cornell who reduced the height of the building. The first resident at that time was Keith Marwick. Later the crumbly rock was sealed with an attractive cement render.

Even after it had been vacant for some time, the spot was a favourite picnic place and subject for artists and photographers (if only we could find some of those images!).

Just after its hundredth birthday, on 8 March 1972, the Waverley Gazette reported the demolition of the remains of the Cheshire Cheese Hotel. The site then became part of a housing subdivision. Hughes Court was built over the actual building site.

50 Years Ago

1959 was one of the last years of the Shire of Mulgrave, and it was developing fast - Play Centres began (precursor of kindergartens) with the Mt Waverley one in the tin shed at Virginia St; Waverley opened its first public swimming centre (same location as MARC); Dunscombe Hall in Glen Waverley was opened; Waverley’s first baseball team started; a proposal to shift Glen Waverley railway station was mooted (it happened five years later), and Shire President Muir held a Presidential luncheon at Wattle Park Chalet to honour 150 prominent philanthropists of Mulgrave - all of them women.

History Around Us

Where’s the margarine?

Have you noticed that margarine has all but disappeared from the supermarket shelves? When Choice magazine did a study on spreads, they found that only ten of the ninety used the word “margarine” anywhere on their packaging.

How did margarine start? Margarine was the first alternative to butter. Butter was expensive for those who did not live off the land, so in the 19th century Louis Napoleon III, the emperor of France, offered a reward to anyone who could produce an acceptable alternative.

How was it named? A French chemist named Mège Mouriés won the 1869 competition for the product he named “margarine” after its primary ingredient, margaric acid. This substance had only recently been discovered in 1813 by Michael Eugene Chevreul and derived its name from the Greek term for pearls, margarite, because of the milky drops that Chevreul noticed in his discovery. (Remember the name Margaret means “pearl”.)

How is it pronounced? Occasionally one hears margarine pronounced with the hard G like in Margaret. This is probably the original French pronunciation, and it fits the (English) spelling rule, “G followed by E, I or Y may say <j>; followed by any other letter it always says <g>” and as such the usual pronunciation offends my schoolteacher frame of mind. Yet, inexplicably this pronunciation emerged unchallenged when margarine hit the marketplace.

What colour is it? Margarine naturally appears white or almost white. By forbidding the addition of artificial colouring agents, legislators found that they could keep margarine from being bought. Bans on coloration became commonplace around the world and endured for almost 100 years. It did not become legal to sell coloured margarine in Australia, for example, until the 1960s.

How are sales now? Sales of the product have decreased in recent years due to consumers “reducing their use of spreads in their daily diet.”

Why is the name dying out? The Food Standards Code defines ‘margarine’ as a spread containing at least 80% fat. As most spreads now have less fat than this, they can’t be called ‘margarine’ and still comply with the labelling regulations (unless they’re called

‘margarine spreads’).

So there you have it! The margarine story in a canola shell, start to end. It’s the sort of question you may have wondered about without realising it.

Waverley Historical Society’s ANZAC Special **The Rowville Camp: The Enemy on Our Border Pt 2:**

In the April 2008 edition of this newsletter, we brought to light a number of aspects relating to the military camp established at Rowville in 1942, just over the border of the Shire of Mulgrave. Here, initially, the 3rd Australian Motor Brigade Group was stationed before being sent to Seymour. For a short time, the U.S. Army had control of the base which took up a sizeable piece of land on the southwest corner of Stud and Wellington Roads. During the Americans’ short stay, it was rumoured that they cut an airstrip into the flat land to the north of Wellington Road and parallel to it, in order to land bombers and supplies; however, this has not been confirmed. It was even reported that some of the American pilots were women.

The Americans, who had come directly from fighting the Japanese at Guadalcanal would carry out manoeuvres in the fields around the camp and the “Stamford Park” property became their “battle ground.” They were frequently in the paddocks in their camouflage gear making simulated attacks on the farm buildings. When they finally “captured” the house, they would then go into the kitchen for refreshments! In 1944, they too moved on.

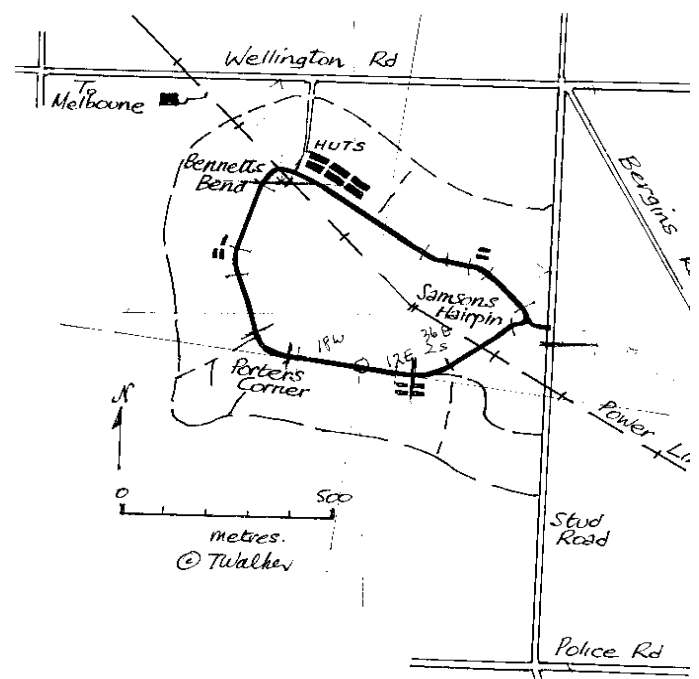
Following the North African Campaign in 1942, a large number of Italian soldiers were captured and became Prisoners-of-War. They were first sent to India and then brought to Australia. A number were sent to Rowville which acted as a low security (some would say NO-security) camp for these men who had had little inclination to fight Mussolini’s war.

The camp was certainly minimum security with nothing but a small wire fence to keep the men in. Although they were of little danger to anyone and in fact, quite friendly chaps, they were restricted to going no further than Dandenong Creek. Many who traversed Stud Road between 1944 and 1946 remember seeing the men in their red-wine coloured uniforms often

sauntering along the road. They were not supposed to converse with anyone, but they did.

With the camp so close to the Shire of Mulgrave’s border, there were certainly connections with our district. Stories abound of Italians arriving at local Mulgrave Saturday night dances, only to be rounded up by the camp guards and herded back to Rowville. Some prisoners were given work permits to leave the camp. Unloading the trains at East Oakleigh (now Huntingdale) station was one way in which they earned some money - Internment Camp tokens which they could only spend at the Rowville Camp store. Skilled workers could earn 1 shilling and threepence per day and unskilled labourers could earn seven pence for the unloading work.

Edda Comelli, with her Italian parents had moved into a house in what is today, Pleasant View Crescent, Wheelers Hill, just before the commencement of war. Being classed as “Enemy Aliens,” they were looked upon with more than a little suspicion, particularly when they received unauthorized visits from Rowville prisoners. She recalls how her mother made tea and home-made cake for the men on Sunday afternoons when they knocked on the door. On two occasions, the camp Commander himself came to their house searching for prisoners and the experience was far from



A motorcycle scramble circuit was established c.1947-8 around the site of the camp at a time when the huts and the site had been abandoned after 1946. The track utilized the existing camp roads.

Source:

www.silhouet.com/motorsport/tracks/asia/rowville

pleasant for the family because they were always treated with scorn.

Many of the connections with Mulgrave/Waverley/Monash have yet to be explored. It is known that some ex-prisoners chose to stay in the local area. Irene Marriott has memories of several Italians from the camp coming to work on the farm in Springvale Road around 1945-6. She recalls that they slept on the verandah at night.

I would be very interested to know if members have any personal recollections of ex-Rowville prisoners who have some sort of connection with our municipality. Some did settle locally and there may be a number of unwritten stories yet to be investigated.

- by Jeffrey Turnbull

ANZAC SPECIAL - Continued

DARWIN DEFENDERS

By Major General Frank Poke, our April speaker

On Thursday 19 February 1942, Australia was for the first time attacked by a foreign nation.

The Japanese air raids on Darwin happened four days after the fall of Singapore and only 10 weeks after the bombing of Pearl Harbour.

The defence achievements of the Australian Government of the time give no cause for pride. Our Wirraways were no match for Japanese Zeros which could out-gun and out-fly anything else in the world. Australia's ability to manufacture arms and ammunition was sadly neglected, so when the need arose, soldiers were trained with broomsticks because there were not enough rifles, and ammunition was a scarce commodity.

The military strength and ambitions of Germany and Japan were greatly underestimated. When Pearl Harbour was attacked and the Japanese started their thrust into South East Asia, it was urgent that our northern shores be protected. Battalions of soldiers were rushed to Darwin to defend their country with only five rounds of ammunition. The 2/14th Field Regiment had 18 pounder artillery left over from WW-I, and only 80 rifles between 800 men. The 19th Machine Gun Regiment had enough ammunition for only five minutes fighting. RAAF ground crew were enlisted as technicians, and they had no military training, and no arms or ammunition.

The scene was set for the greatest military disaster in Australia's history, and when the Japanese attacked Darwin in force with the first 188 aircraft on 19th February 1942, the 10 American Kittyhawks just passing through were quickly annihilated and Darwin was left with no air defences whatsoever. The army and navy gunners fought back with what they had, but they

could not match the ferocity of the Japanese attack. In the second raid, another 54 bombers pattern bombed the RAAF aerodrome. Altogether 683 bombs were dropped on Darwin that day, enormous damage was done to shipping and installations, and casualties were high. It was the biggest air raid of WW2 up to that time.

A political scandal had to be avoided at all costs, so the government imposed strict censorship on all information out of Darwin. The Minister for Air said "15 Killed, 24 Hurt In Darwin Attacks, 9 Women Among Dead." The Americans said they lost 91 on the USS Peary alone, and the Mayor of Darwin Jack Burton estimated about 900 killed. Army Intelligence estimated about 1100 killed. At the end of the war in 1945, the same government was still in power, and they stamped all documents relating to Darwin "Not to be released until 1995". Thus, until a few years ago, we then had two generations of Australians who did not even know that Darwin was bombed!

Changes About Town

Please contribute to this column. Not only is it fun to know what is changing for those who can't get around to all corners of our city (which of us can?), but it will be good in the future to be able to remember WHEN the changes started to happen.

The old New Oakleigh Motors site on Ferntree Gully Rd is now a crowd of tilt-slab factories. The manse at Essex Rd Uniting Church has been demolished. The Clariant site in Warrigal Rd is still vacant, but freshly levelled; and the Checkley house in Waverley Rd may soon suffer the same. The old fast food restaurant on Princes Hwy is finally being transformed into a vet hospital. A large number of units are being raised on the old Dunscombe orchard site on Blackburn Rd and Coleman Parade. The widening of the Monash Freeway to four lanes plus two emergency lanes each way is nearly complete.

Corpus Christi Aged Care in Clayton Rd is expanding again. All but one of the houses that were on its western boundary are gone and more building is proceeding. The street names will be Music Drive, Blues Court, Swing Court, Opera Court, and Jazz Court. Another Aged care facility has taken up residence in an ex-warehouse site on the other side of Carlson Reserve. Nearby, on Gardiners Rd there is a new street, Auguste Avenue, and houses are sprouting there too.

The Brandon Park Technical school site continues to show minor changes - new fences, razed sections - but no sign of any new use for most of the site. About one quarter of it is becoming the Monash Special Development School on Academy Avenue, and is nearly finished

Am I right in thinking that progress has slowed?

Summary of dates mentioned in this newsletter

CALENDAR Winter 2009

All these meetings are to be held at our rooms above Mt Waverley library

Sunday 24th May at 2pm

Scott Brown - preserving old photographs

Sunday 28th June at 2 pm

No regular meeting, but even better - Enjoy riding the Heritage Glen Waverley to Darling

Steam Train

Sunday 26th July at 2pm

The next newsletter will be available for pick-up at this meeting.

Our next few meetings will be Sunday 23/8, Thursdays 24/9, 22/10, 26/11.

Waverley Historical Society Inc
PO Box 2322
Mount Waverley, 3149



~~~~~ **English Spelling**

Wouldn't it be nice if there were just one pronunciation for each spelling? (We don't because of the differing sources of English.) Yet somehow we all manage to read words correctly, despite the complications. Try yourself on these...

Have you heard - beards are in again.

The broad road is smooth.

Could you please give me five minutes?

How lovely - you've come early, my dearly beloved!

My beau is a beauty.

This steak has not a streak of fat!

The man with the moustache has an ache in the head.

How low can you go?

You will need to scour for four minutes.

It will not grieve me if you dispose of the broken sieve.

"I've paid it," he said.

Would you prefer a braid or a plait today?

Before you complain about such spellings, consider this - older languages with simple spelling (eg Dutch) constantly change the rules to suit new usage. Every change makes publications, tickets, signs - everything with print on it - out of date. It is expensive and confusing, and makes old documents hard to decipher.