



Waverley Historical Society Inc Newsletter

May 2011

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WAVERLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established in 1970
Incorporated in Victoria
Reg. No.: A 0006377 A

PATRON:

Dr. Morna Sturrock AM

PRESIDENT:

Ed Hore 5233 1056

SECRETARY:

Norma Schultz 9802 9332

EDITOR:

Judy Borg 9802 5081

EMAIL:

whs@kepl.com.au

WEB SITE:

www.vicnet.net.au/~whsvic

POSTAL ADDRESS

PO Box 2322,
Mount Waverley, Vic 3149

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



Thomas Moore (1861 - 1903) emigrated from Tyrone, Ireland aged 22 and bought a farm in Huntingdale Rd. Unfortunately he died whilst taking his vegetables to market, leaving a wife and six young children. Their eldest son, John, left school aged 10 to work the market garden. Thomas's brother Andrew (1865 - 1953) followed him in 1887, and developed this property, Tyrone, in High Street Rd., Burwood, near Thomas's.

Andrew married the girl next door, Elizabeth Hore, later in 1903 and worked this land for many years. Some of their 12 children are still WHS members.

Editorial

Dear W.H.S members,

Welcome to our Anzac Meeting, the first in our newly refurbished rooms on the top floor of the Mount Waverley Library. We have worked hard at recovering all the boxes and regalia stored in various homes and hired storage and placing them all in allotted space in the rooms. In February just a few show pieces and the St.Stephen's record books brightened the Meeting Room. Since, we have filled many of the drawers and cupboards with historical books and regalia recovered from storage and members' homes - including the President's chair (commissioned for the Shire of Mulgrave in 1897) and several glass cases, now in the foyer. [There is one new display: a trousseau c.1940, arranged by Committee member Bev Anderson, whose special interest is old fabrics and garments.] As well MarJo is in charge of extensive files filled with all manner of Waverley matter of historical interest.

We have made good use of our folding work tables too – that are very mobile, so can be wheeled to wherever most suitable for access to files or W.H.S. library books. At Committee Meeting we bring them all together in a big open square [the President and Vice Presidents at the head] so that everyone can see and contribute readily. While – especially helpful at afternoon tea time - we bring two together end on, in a less formal configuration. Members are welcome to visit any Wednesday from 1 to 5 pm, especially at tea time. I hope you will be able to attend our Thursday night meetings on April 28 [for Anzac remembrance] and May 26.

W.H.S is fortunate in gaining several new committee members in late 2010: Geoff Brown,

Chris Norton and Dianne Ward: all younger than their peers, but very eager to uncover more of Waverley's history. Geoff has written a short piece about his reason for joining and discovery of the history that underlies our suburban blocks. We are all grateful, too, that he has volunteered to arrange guest speakers for our meetings.

Geoff Brown:

I joined the committee six months ago and took over from Jeff Turnbull arranging guest speakers for our monthly meetings. While I have lived in the area since the 1970s, my interest in local history only began a couple of years ago with my family's change of address. When I visited the Society's rooms with a question about my new street, the friendly and detailed answer I received led me to become a member to learn more of the area. One fascinating aspect of Waverley for me is the opportunity to talk with residents who grew up on the farms and orchards that became our suburban blocks. I've gained a sense of the pioneers who laid down the foundations of this now sought-after part of Melbourne.

Chris Norton has written a longer piece about growing up in Waverley soon after sub division of the land south of the railway line, their home near the top of Alvie Rd: you may find it on pages 4 and 5. Below is a photo of Chris, aged 4.



Anzac Day: Vivid Reflections

Waverley Historical Society is very fortunate in having a most interesting account of the First World War at the fronts of Gallipoli, then France and finally the cold “hell of Pozieres” in Belgium, written by **Donald Lechte** c.1973, at the request of his daughters Ruth and Rae. The Lechte family is very well known in Mt. Waverley: Lechte Rd. winds up the steep hill past Mt. Waverley Secondary College, the school built on land originally farmed by two of the Lechte brothers who bought the land c.1870 from one who had bought it in the first division of 1854. [While one Lechte house to survive was featured on the front page of our W.H.S. February edition of the Newsletter.] The family is highly respected for its contribution to society: following their marriage Donald’s parents held Methodist meetings twice weekly in their house and a little later donated a corner of their block half way up High Street Rd. hill for a church. Nevertheless Donald spoke of no wages at all when he left school at 15 to work on the farm: their parents “had a job to pay their way & feed & clothe us all...eleven children”, Don said, “I enlisted on 15th of Feb. 1915 – two days before my 20th birthday. I was really only a big boy for in those days there was no holidays for us, no travel, no wireless or T.V. as we know them today.” After training he was given 4 days leave and left Port Melbourne on May 8, reaching Alexandria, where they trained before embarking on a “filthy” ship for Lemnos, from where they boarded a flat bottomed boat for Gallipoli, landing by barges at midnight. Next day they were taken to the front line to relieve the 1st Division.

Most readers would be familiar with the stalemate in the fighting at that time, but conditions in the trenches became worse with the onset of winter, and many came down with dysentery. Don was one of the first to take clorodine, experimental at the time. He said “I didn’t care if it killed me or not; when one has dysentery for a couple of weeks one wouldn’t mind being dead any way”, adding “I was right in two days and never had a sign of it for the three months after”, though conditions worsened. Lord Kitchener arrived to assess the situation and spoke to Don and his friend Frank Downie, who were on duty on the front firing step, “probably firing at tins in no-man’s land”. Most would be familiar with the evacuation plan: the three days of complete silence some weeks before, every man out of sight. Their officer, Lieutenant Bunning, called 13 Platoon together, told them of the evacuation and that he had volunteered they would be the last to leave, on the third night. They spent the third day “running around the almost empty trenches firing off the rifles making out things were as usual”. Don had a sense of history in the making, saying “I claim to be almost the last Australian to get off Gallipoli, for, coming to the pier where we got on the barge, I went to the last in the line”. One man, Barney Horan, volunteered to stay behind to blow three mines if the enemy came over. Don said “The navy eventually got him off in a small boat”, adding “Barney Horan was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal... we all thought it should have been the V.C”.

The platoon was taken to Lemnos, then back to Alexandria and to a new camp Tel el Kebia, 150 miles from Cairo. He found his brother Bert among reinforcements there and also “Perc Muir & Harry Hore & Norman Lewin & Perc Dunn from Burwood”.

In April 1916 the platoon sailed for Marseilles, where - the first Australians to land in France - the men received a wonderful reception. They boarded a train north and disembarking, went on a series of route marches until close to the front line, where they relieved a Battalion of Suffolks, "our baptism to the war in France". Later there was the Armentieres front, then the Somme offensive, begun in August 1916, and where the casualty list of the Battalion was the highest in the Brigade. Don gives a graphic description of the battlefield. He himself was wounded and put on a hospital train and sent to England. Returning to France, he found his platoon decimated and winter [1916-17] coming on, the coldest in living memory: 29 degrees below zero for six weeks. A friend, Ralph Dickens, asked for him to be transferred from D Company to Headquarters, to help him with the mail - a welcome break. Donald describes the arrival of the Australian Army under Sir John Monash, stopping the German advance at the Battle of Hamel, the turning point of the war...

I shall leave it there - though there is much more of interest. Members and others are welcome to come and read the photocopy of the document at our rooms. There are a number of maps and other documents, including the Regimental Register of the 22nd Battalion. Especially interesting is the photo of the original members of "D" Company, 22nd Battalion, A.I.F. at Broadmeadows, where they trained in 1915. Young Donald Lechte is in the front row and also Frank Downie from Yarrowonga, who was to be his long term mate. This is contrasted by a photo of the two at Southport, England in 1919, before embarking on the troopship which brought them home - and also a photo of them home, civilians again, dressed smartly for the occasion.

Growing Up in Alvie Rd. Mt. Waverley, in the 1950's

One of my early recollections of growing up in the late 1950's was the Ex Police Commissioner's ladder put up against our back fence - climbing to the top (presumably to escape from my property) and seeing Mount Waverley Railway Station in the distance. This was about 1958 and Mick Miller's sons Graham, age 4 and Geoff, age 1 and myself age 2, climbing up my father's ladder put up against our back fence - climbing to the top (presumably to escape from my property) and seeing Mount Waverley Railway Station in the distance.

This was about 1958 and we saw too, the property of a man called Johnson (who rode a horse which he kept in the Waverley Riding School). The latter was owned, we thought, by the Robinson's, on the 10 acres or so over the road - with white, horse style, fencing - on the corner of Alvie Rd and Miller Crescent.

The Stott's: Paul, Marne, Anne, Sally and Simon, lived in the next house, no.60, and are still close friends. Sally still remembers me sneaking through the open French Doors to her bedroom and indicating "Shh" with my finger and lips, when she was in her cot. She was months old and I was one and a bit. Anne later had horses on the Riding School property and has fond memories of Anne Robinson. [We are still hoping to have her as a Speaker, this year (Ed.)]

Paul Stott had bought ½ a block of land to add to his property from the next three-house-block property, owned by the Crosiers (Accountants). The Crosiers put in a

tennis court and heated in ground pool in their front yard, which was still 2 ½ blocks wide and wraps around the corner. I'd gone to Kindergarten with John Crosier. Last I heard he is designing golf courses, is a member of the Tennis Club on Riversdale Golf Links edge, High Street Rd., and drives a Porsche. Next house is the Randal's. Joanne Randal and I were in prep together at Mount Waverley State School. She has sisters too.

The next property was the Meyer's, parents of the Meyers over on the low side if I am correct. [Ian Meyer was my best friend in prep.] The next house - I have forgotten who - the next were the Neil's and the last, on the corner of Avondale Grove, were the Heaths. Tony Heath was in my grade level.

Going over the other side of the road: on the corner was the Waverley Riding School which I knew only as "Snakes Gully", probably nick named so that we would always be aware of the snakes - never saw one - then the Cartwright's. Mr. Cartwright was a retired Bank Manager, then next were our close friend's, the Millers. Mr. Miller became the Victorian Police Commissioner and Father of The Year. I met up with him about three weeks ago for a good chat.

The next was a larger block about 2 wide and 2 deep and was the Jones', then the Gault's, Amanda and her sisters. Recently I met up with Mrs. Gault - who now lives in Armadale, just a couple of streets from where we moved! The next was our first Scout Leader's, Mr. Graham, who started the 12th West Waverley Troup. He was an upholsterer and had a shop on Stephenson's Rd opposite the Newsagents. Next was the Mayer's, Ian being my early friend and his younger sister being born the same year as Jenny Miller. The next was the

Izie's. They owned a large block which was sub-divided into 4-6 blocks and originally included the roadway now called Yarrabee Court, which was their rear entrance. The next was a sell off from their property, never really knew them, then my best/good friend for years, Peter Runting. Mr. Runting was a sales engineer for ICI. The next house was the Upton's and rumour had it they were a 6th share to Myer's at Chadstone.

The next house was the Dusting's; they had a [well known ed.] car yard in Burwood. Next was the Birch's, with tennis courts behind where I used to play tennis and had lesson's. Mum played there also.

Back to Yarrabee Court. We played in the houses as they were being built and knew the 2nd property down was the Bergman's, I think. Rodney was our age and his father a builder. The last house on the left was the Kenly's [Kenleigh's?] David was our age.

Over the road on the vacant block was built - and just recently re-sold - a lovely property built by my good friend Trevor Bridges, whose father had a shop fitting business in Carlton. [Trevor had shown me timber work and cupboards around the escalators in Myer Chadstone, that were his father's work.] They had previously lived in Hillview Rd Mt. Waverley, then Stock's Rd. Mr. and Mrs. Geoff Bridges used to stroll up Alvie Road on afternoon walks; they bought the vacant lot in Yarrabee Court and Trevor moved very close to me. I remember him showing me his dad's new Mercedes Benz in the garage - and that they had scratched the grill and were going to replace it; the scratch was pretty bad.

There were other streets close by and in those days people seemed to know each other. We had a great time building billy carts that we raced on footpaths and down

steep Yarrabee Crt. before it was finished. I have many happy memories of the area.

Chris Norton

What a remarkable memory! Thanks, Chris, I'm sure you've brought back memories to many people. **Ed.**

Coming WHS Events

Bus trip (Tentative: details to be advised.)

Guest Speakers and topics:

Thursday April 28 at **8pm**

Jack Walker – 'Visiting the Somme, Anzac Cove and other Australian fields of battle'

Sunday May 22 at **2pm**

Ann Robinson? Ann would like to come but has been double booked. Speaker to be advised at the Anzac Meeting.

Sunday June 26

STEAMRAIL Train Rides – Mt Waverley Railway Station. [A steam shuttle running between Darling and Glen Waverley, stopping at Mt. Waverley. Great fun for young and old!] Tickets may be bought at **Matilda's** Book Shop [beside the Commonwealth Bank], or on the train.

Sunday July 24 at **2pm**

Michael Howes – 'The Victorian Education Dept Grade Readers'. Michael has a large collection to display –that should bring back many memories.

All meetings are in the rooms.

Beverley Delaney suggests that Members might like to bring a plate of afternoon tea – and reminds all that there is a buzzer on the **tall, narrow window** around the corner, right of the lift, but left of the glass doors, if you are late.

Vale

With sadness we announce the death of John Turner, who, with his late wife, were members of the society.

AOEHS

Members are cordially invited
to
45th Anniversary Luncheon
And Annual Conference
at
Karralyka Centre
Mines Road, Ringwood East
On Saturday 14 May 2011
from 10 am to 4.30 pm.
Cost \$30. Morning and afternoon tea
And luncheon included,
Which needs to be paid by 30th April.

Please notify Norma (9 802 9332)
Of intention to attend
for catering purposes.

Congratulations

Congratulations and best wishes to Norm and Topsy Gibbs, who celebrated their **60th Wedding Anniversary** in February, 2011.

Now just a note, for your diary:
W.H.S. Birthday Party will be held on **Sunday, October 23rd** at St. Philip's Church Hall.

Beverley Delaney would like to remind you that W.H.S. has books for sale:
Then and Now - \$20 per copy
Once There Was Jordenville - \$30 per copy
These can be purchased in our rooms or at meetings. Also, please remember that W.H.S may benefit from use of your Ritchies card.

SCHULTZ GROCERY STORE **“Entertain Successfully with Schultz of Syndal”**

From 1958 to 1990, the Schultz family grocery store in High Street Rd Syndal, near Blackburn Rd, supplied many of the household needs of local residents and became a household name. The article’s sub-title, above, is one of the advertising slogans used by the popular family business over the years.

At the Society’s February 2011 meeting, John Schultz recalled that his family made their first foray into the grocery business when John’s father and mother bought a general store in Boort, northwest of Bendigo, after Allen returned from war service in the Middle East. It was a long way from their pre-war Brunswick butchery business. In 1958 John moved back to Melbourne to play football and, as Robert was at boarding school, Ada and Allen decided to sell their property in Boort and set up business in Syndal. This was John’s first of 11 seasons playing VFL football with Footscray. In 1960 John was awarded the highly esteemed Brownlow Medal, which he circulated through the audience during the meeting.

Allen Schultz was known for his entrepreneurial ideas and began designing a weekly advertising flyer and home order form. This was printed on his Gestetner copier and hand delivered to local

homes by family and staff. Residents returned their completed orders to their letterboxes at the front fence, from where they were collected, orders filled and home delivered by the Schultz family. All this was achieved by travelling the frequently muddy and sometimes hazardous unmade roads of the area.

As the family business grew, John and Robert joined it on a full-time basis and many local mothers and high school students found part-time local employment with them. John remembers the shop as one of the community hubs in a new and growing suburb where facilities were in short supply. The Schultz family and their business were involved in sport and many other community functions, frequently helping out and receiving local support in return. John suggested that the family’s friendly approach, good stock management and a lot of hard work by Mum, Dad, the boys and great staff was their recipe for success – even as larger supermarket chains gained market share.

When Ada and Allen retired, both brothers continued to manage the growing business until their own retirement. It was sold in 1990, then resold and operated until 2002. Sadly, for reasons unknown, the supermarket has remained vacant since then.

Geoff Brown

John and his family have kindly provided the Society with photos of their Syndal store taken during its years of operation. [You may see two of them below on the cover. **Ed.**]



Schultz: Crowd outside for the annual drawing of the Xmas Hamper. c.1980s



View of the store, probably 1980s

**Waverley Historical Society Inc
PO BOX 2322, Mount Waverley, 3149**



Dianne Ward, our third new Committee Member, doing a great job at the Xmas party, 2010