



Waverley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

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WAVERLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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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.

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

This rambling weatherboard Federation-period home just south of Waverley Road was built in 1907 by Thomas Colwell (son of the James Colwell of "Wattle Grove" in Jordanville). This house was the centre of a 34-acre farm, previously part of William Prowd's 80 acres. In 1915 the land was sold to a Vincent family, and in 1920 to Hester Murdoch, who owned it till 1939. It is said that the house was a retreat for the executive staff of the Hotel Australia in the 1930s. [The old oak in the back garden is probably as old as the house.]



EDITORIAL

We are well settled in to our refurbished rooms on the upper floor of Mt. Waverley library. Much careful work has been done to display historical objects in the Meeting Room and, more recently, the ante rooms and over the stairs, the latter two accessible at any time the Library is open. Bev Anderson has worked hard at making a fine display of old lace garments, while others have hung the great boards of early Councillors of Waverley and Mulgrave, over the stairs. Inside in the Meeting Room a working bee headed by Norma has been sorting, indexing and preserving old photos, each Wednesday afternoon. We have also preserved stories, some hand written, that were presented at the Birthday Party, last October. And so, continuing our series of presentations at the **2011 Birthday Party** by descendants of the old pioneering families in Waverley, here is Gary Coleman's very interesting account:

Our Pioneers in Waverley

My Great Grandfather Henry Coleman was born in England. He emigrated aboard the Cossipore at 28 years of age in 1852. He was a cabinet maker. My Great Grandmother Amelia Nott was born in 1839 in London. Henry and Amelia were married in 1858 in Maryborough. Later on they lived in Grandview Grove, Prahran. They had nine children and my grandfather was no. 5, George. They had nine children and my grandfather was no.5, George. Later in the 1800's Henry purchased Land at High Street Rd., Mt.Waverley from the estate of the chief Justice, Redmond Barry (the judge who sentenced Ned Kelly to the gallows). The house was called Syndal. This land was turned into an apple and pear orchard. Later on the property was divided into two with my

grandfather George and his brother Charles Henry working the land.

My grandfather George and grandmother Elizabeth (who was born in Christchurch New Zealand inn 1875)* were married at St. Stephens, Mt. Waverley, in 1901. They had five children: Evelyn, Neville, Clive, Edith and Herbert.

In the 1930's when the railway was extended to Glen Waverley, the house name of **Syndal** was used as the railway station name.

The orchard operated until the 1960's and was then divided into housing lots.

I have three sons. Brent (no.2) lives in Pinewood and he has a son Aiyden, who is the sixth generation Coleman to live in Mt.Waverley.

*Elizabeth Coleman, the well-known artist, who painted a number of scenes along early roadways in Waverley.

Footnote: I recall Gary saying he and his school mates walked home from the East Burwood State School along Blackburn Rd. that was just a dirt track. **Ed.**

Coming Event: 42nd Birthday

Anniversary: On Sunday Oct. 7, 2012, at St. Philip's Hall. Please add it to your diary.

Events Report: Bus Trip to

Philip Island w. Marie Cooper, April 15. W.H.S. members had a wonderful trip to Philip Island on sunny Sunday, April 15, stopping at blue water Tooradin for morning tea and on arrival at Cowes, visiting early wooden St. Philip's Anglican Church near Settlement Rd., where we were welcomed. We drove in to town, then, to meet our guide who led us to the exciting Historical Society showroom on the main road. With our guide, we then boarded the bus, went past the

guttled Isle of White Hotel, the main beach and Lover's Walk, then were on our way to Rhyll, with its vivid history of sealers, the aboriginal Bunurong people, and early settlement [against the French]. Then on to Rhyll, with its pioneer settler's grave prominent on the point - and finally to the Nobbies, with its excellent tourist centre and boardwalks on the cliffs, past nesting holes of the little Fairy Penguin. Lastly back to Cowes to drop off our guide and on the road to home.

Shop Changes in Waverley

There have been significant shop changes in Mt. Waverley, Syndal and Pinewood recently: Firstly, Retravision, Stephenson's Rd., Mt. Waverley closed (for liquidation reasons) in Feb. 2012. While Schultz Supermarket in High Street Rd., Syndal [the old Liquor shop] is now the Any Time Fitness Centre, and the old, original Schultz store become a billiard and snooker room. In Pinewood a new store opened in February, 2012, next to the Pinewood Shopping Centre: Tasman Market Fresh Meats. The site was previously a Golden Fleece-Caltex Service Station and the site also of the original "Stanley" T.V. Commercial! (Stanley was the down-trodden service station attendant who was kind to patrons.)

Beverley Delaney

Beverley also requests you keep **Sunday, October 7**, free for our **42nd Birthday Celebration**, at St. Philip's Hall – and adds: Our local history books: **Then and Now \$20** and **Once There Was Jordenville \$30**, are for sale in our rooms on Wednesday afternoons or at our meetings.

Top of the Monash Range

The Monash Gallery of Art, incorporating also the Wheelers Hill branch of the Monash Library, and a Café, stands at the end and a

high point of the Monash Range – though nestled beside great old pine trees once belonging to a farm. It marks the end of the Monash hills that stretch in a broken line south from the northern end of the City of Monash viz. the peak of the old quarry on Highbury and Springvale Rds. Many people, including lecturers and students from Monash University, pass by on Wellington Rd. on their way home to outer suburbs or the Dandenong Ranges, while the road dips sharply to Dandenong Creek on the Eastern side. Some may even drop in to the historic pub on the corner opposite the gallery: called Gessner's Mulgrave Post Office Hotel c.1891, it was rebuilt in 1929 and is now still with its art deco style in front, though with the original roof showing. From the 1890's a stage coach ran from here to the Notting Hill hotel and on to Oakleigh, while motor bike races [hill climbs!] were held in the earliest times up the steep road from Dandenong Creek to the Pub [see photo and text p.18 of **Then and Now**]. These were curtailed by World War 1. [Note that the rider in the photo is passing the spot of the present Gallery.]

On the south side of the Gallery of Art is a row of shops: the Wheelers Hill shopping centre. The land dips on a long inclined plane here, until Wellington Rd. and the site of the Waverley Park VFL football Stadium. [My brother, an Essendon supporter, would leave his car just below the shops when his team was playing and walk down Jells Rd. the 2ks. past open fields to the Waverley Park stadium, enjoying the fresh air and the views over Port Philip Bay. Now, with the Mirvac Development, Waverley Park is a residential area, though still with the original green oval.]

The gallery was proposed in the Sesqui-Centennial Year, 1988, and complete by 1992. However the library, a branch of the City of Monash Library that was once by the west entrance, was built on to the Gallery in 2002,

with an attractive café also. By 2005 Gallery Rd. had been created on the south and east boundaries of the land, each section with a row of attractive double storey houses in front. These are in muted colours, each different and enclosing the Gallery and pond on the South and East [the pond now “Commons Pond”] and adding to the safety of children accessing the library, with several schools, including a campus of Caulfield Grammar School, close by.

In April, 2010, The Monash Gallery of Art was the venue for our W.H.S. Anzac meeting, when ex. President, Ray Price, presented diary extracts of his father’s experiences as an officer in Egypt during World War II to a large audience of R.S.L. and W.H.S. members. It was a memorable evening, with a big collection of wartime photos mounted by the Gallery on display as well.

This year our President, Ed Hore ,will be speaking in the rooms for our Anzac Meeting [see p.8]

Guest Speakers and topic:

At our **February** meeting Ted Mason, Secretary for Friends of Scotchmans Creek, spoke on the work done by volunteers along the long stretch of Scotsman’s Creek in Monash. On a large illuminated map he pointed out the tributaries, many of them barrel drained in parts, some to emerge in a reserve, only to disappear under asphalt again. Ted said that most of the Friends group’s planting and weeding was done in the large area of Valley Reserve.

Geoff Brown, our Events Coordinator, gives this account of Jenny Davies’ presentation of the history of the Flinders St. Railway Station to W.H.S. members on the warm summer evening of February 23:

Meeting Under the Clocks

Generations of Melbournians have rendezvoused under the Flinders St Station clocks. But did you know that these clocks were in place from the 1880s at the Swanston St entrance of the first humble station building that stood on this site? Many of us will remember the furore that erupted about 15 years ago when plans were floated to replace the original clocks with electronic versions.

Jenny Davies, researcher and author, was the guest speaker at our February meeting. With the aid of photos and sketches, Jenny related some of the stories around the building design competition in the 1890s, the construction phase and the many uses of the station building over the past hundred years.

The design competition was won by two in-house VR architects in 1899 but construction was not completed until 1909, and the clocks not returned until 1910. There was no official opening and no foundation stone. The clock in the grand clock tower at the corner of Flinders and Elizabeth Streets became the master clock for all Victorian railway stations through a telegraph connection.

The large upper floor hall and rooms were used by the Victorian Railways Institute to provide ongoing training and library facilities for the self-improvement and career advancement of staff. While one of the many innovations by Chairman Harold Clapp was a children’s nursery where mothers could leave their children while shopping or attending appointments in the city.

From the 1960s, the government’s focus was on funding roads, while the railways began showing the results of minimum funding and maintenance. Much of the station building fell into disrepair with associated safety risks.

While some improvement works have recently occurred around the concourse and platforms, much of the upper floors remain in a dilapidated condition.

Jenny's research, interviews and publicity for her recent book, "Beyond the Façade", have provided her with many opportunities to inform and promote the need to rejuvenate this grand building and open it for the use of the people of Melbourne.

The Society presented Jenny with a copy of our recent book, "Then and Now", in thanks for her engaging presentation.

Geoff Brown

WHS Display at St Luke's Fayre

On Saturday, March 17, WHS members mounted a display at St Luke's Church annual Fayre at the request of the congregation, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Church in Essex Rd, Essex Heights, Mount Waverley. (The church was originally opened in Surrey Rd, Essex Heights.) Our society had maps and aerial photographs of the Waverley area on display, together with the history of some of the local streets [see photo above].

There was much interest by the local people in their district. As a result we sold a number of WHS books and had the offer of copying some early photographs of the old church building and of the construction of the new building. The old church building was originally located in Surrey Rd. and later moved a couple of hundred metres east to Essex Rd. While with the construction of the new church, the old church building was moved to the Berwick Butter Factory.



Remembering Ron Chivers

Ron Chivers was very kind to me when I first joined W.H.S. as a rank amateur of historical research. At the time: nearly five years back, he had undergone an operation for cancer that took off his right arm and shoulder, but he still drove his car in from his family home: the old farm house on Blackburn Rd. [now surrounded by streets and houses and the Freeway]. He had, perhaps, a wider outlook than many in Waverley then: for from the old State School no. at Black Flat he won a scholarship to Caulfield Technical College. Many members will remember the wonderful evening at the historic Black Flat School in **2008? Ch.** when Ron presented the objects and story of his early life to the association. [One thing he didn't mention was the eerie feeling he got in the odd light of an east wind: for as a small boy he had been accidentally shut outside with his father's savage bull terrier, when the east wind slammed the kitchen door behind him.]

I came across this imaginative story Ron wrote when he was on the Committee, and that was published in the **WHS Newsletter**, Feb.-March 2001. [This is an abbreviated account. If you wish to read the whole, check our WHS library in the rooms.] It shows his tender care for all things and seems to me particularly appropriate for these times, when so many houses are being sold and the block rapidly

cleared for units. [How many suddenly empty blocks in Waverley this autumn?!] And yes, I have seen two or three with their old letter box still standing by a side fence.] **Ed.**

I, THE LETTER BOX



There is loneliness about my present status, loneliness not experienced since I was first placed here half a century ago. The house I served is no more, which for me, it seems, will be the last of many changes, which have taken place around me.

It was a dedicated effort by the man who made me; his contribution to the house built with weekend labour by his brother-in-law and his sister for themselves and their daughters, his nieces.

It was an uplifting exercise for Tom to build me in the recovery period from his near death condition on being rescued from a Japanese prisoner of war camp. Yes, they had rebuilt his face from the shrapnel damage, and fitted an artificial eye to that eye socket, but the level of emaciation made his future quite uncertain.

By the time I was needed, Tom had improved to the point where he undertook the task of making me, and here I stand.

The rural scene I faced at first was a gravel road with an apple orchard on the other side, but over time the orchard was replaced by a secondary school, the road was sealed and kerbed, and gradually the rural setting was

urbanised. Tom would visit me occasionally, at first alone, but later, in an improved state of health, with the lady who was to become his wife, and progressively over a number of years with their children. They were the good years as the daughters of the household progressed through school and on to employment...

The secondary school opposite has given way to housing estate; the granddaughters [Tom's great nieces] are completing their education and moving into employment.

The years insist on being counted, and with grandparents now in advanced years, the break came: Tom's sister was now a widow. The decision was made and the property sold.

There is no mail or newspapers now, although the distributors of advertising material still pause as they pass, but they can cheer up as soon there will be three boxes in my place.

There was regret about leaving me, but it is here that my value has been, and I would have no place in a retirement village.

I have been carefully maintained over the decades, but am little changed from my original condition. Tom's work was well done.

W.H.S. Birthday Presentation

Geoff Payne was taken ill on the day of the Birthday Party Presentations. Afterwards he presented his piece, written on the day, to W.H.S. on a "Working Wednesday afternoon". It reads:

I am really disappointed not to be here today. A totally unexpected hospital visit has caused my absence.

Like every white Anglo-saxon Australian, our roots are from Europe. My mother's maiden

name was Fankhauser, whose family came from the Zillertal Valley, south of Innsbruck, Austria, as a result of religious persecution.

My great grandfather was a founder of the East Burwood Methodist Church, near the first K-Mart. His son, Fred Fankhauser, after a stint of driving cable trams, a successful apple grower and 100 acres of land for his three sons in East Burwood. His daughter got nothing.

The Paynes came from Bury-St-Edmonds in England. My grandfather Payne was the first farm manager at the **Tally Ho boys' farm**, which was originally started by the Hoadely family in the late 1800's. My father, William Gordon Payne, was born in one of the cottages at Tally Ho.

William Robert Payne (my grandfather) bought land fronting Springvale Rd. and started an orchard. In 1930 he gave my father 26 acres of virgin bush in Mulgrave Street*. The property was compulsorily acquired by the State Government in 1958 for the building of a freeway (which was never built). This land is now the Glen Waverley North reserve and the Syndal High School was built on a section of it – which was later subdivided and sold off.

William Gordon Payne [Geoff's father] worked for Harry Hore, a Mount Waverley market gardener, in his early life, while establishing an orchard. He moved to Bacchus Marsh in 1960 to continue fruit growing.

*The reserve on Mulgrave St. is exceptionally large, because the many water courses there make the ground unstable. Most is given to sports ovals, but the bottom left section is a Reserve filled with old Stringy Bark trees, native to the area, and lush grass, due to the unstable ground and water courses. **Ed.**

Apology

You may have recognised in an article that was on page 7 of our last Newsletter that described Bevel Yeoman's presentation on the Wilson family's experiences in Black Flat and Glen Waverley over the past 150 years, that we inadvertently referred to her as one of our loyal tea ladies. Unfortunately, we mis-identified Bevel in that context and we apologise unreservedly to her for our error.

Correction

You may also have noticed a reference at the top of page 5 in the same Newsletter which mentioned Windsor Avenue and Grenfell Road being near Syndal Station. The reference in this instance should have been to Jordanville Station rather than Syndal and, again, we apologise for this oversight.

Next Newsletter we shall continue our series of Presentations at the 2011 Birthday Party with Frank West's account of his family's dairy farm on the corner of Blackburn and Waverley rds. [Included in his story of The West Family is an account of his grandfather's adventures on the goldfields of Western Australia.]

CALENDAR: 2012 MEETINGS

Thursday April 26, 8pm: Ed Hore to speak on "Mt. Waverley Volunteers in WWI".

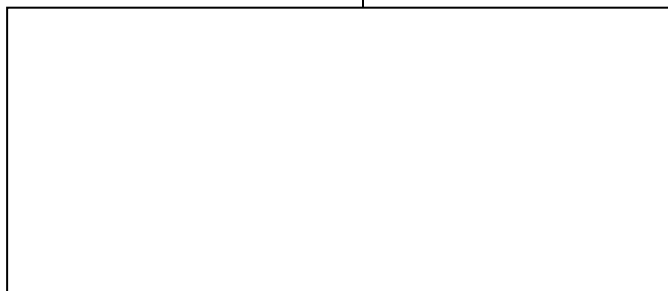
Sunday May 27, 2 pm: Chris Norton on "Photos of Melbourne over the last 100 Years".

Sunday June 24: No Meeting – but the Heritage Steam train will run for its 82nd anniversary on **July 1**.

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

The Monash Gallery entrance from Wellington Rd. Steep drop below to Dandenong Creek.

All Meetings are to be held in our rooms above **the Mt. Waverley Public Library**, Miller St. (opposite the railway Station). Access is by stairs or by the lift on the left, just before the staircase. Everybody welcome.



The Wheeler's Hill Hotel opposite, at the corner of Stud and Wellington Roads.