Virginia Barnett

ur October meeting was well-attended when our own member, Jane Turton, presented her topic: *Murder, Mysteries and Mayhem in Monash.*

We might have expected some sordid and shocking stories and yes, in the flickering light of a candle-lit room, we were not disappointed.

Jane recounted selected events of a distant past – when Waverley's hills, this romantic name inspired by the novels of Sir Walter Scott, were divided into farm and orchard holdings of varying size, and occupied by those willing and able to make their way in this 'new land'.

Times were tough.

Jane. with court-like precision, began her talk with reference to the Scottish-born nineteen-vearold Charles Andrew who, in 1887, after distributing grain (laced with strychnine), to annoying the sparrows somehow maybe due to a sudden wind change, inhaled the poison! The hap-Charles less



The *Mountain View* Hotel, circa 1882 – 1885 when Thomas Moylan was Licensee. (We assume that it is Thomas and wife Catherine with children pictured)

took a seizure, collapsed and died. This was only one of several tragedies to beset the family – two of his siblings died from scarlet fever and another two met their demise through tuberculosis.

The one surviving family member, William John Andrew, went on to spend his entire working life in Oakleigh and served as mayor six times, a well-respected community member.

An imposing grave, in the Oakleigh Cemetery, bears his name as the sole survivor of a once proud Scottish family.

Then we heard of Catherine Moylan, a young wife and mother of two daughters and two sons; Catherine suffered depression and manic disorder, along with suicidal ideation. She must have struggled to adapt to a life of hardship and

who knows what dark thoughts overtook her when, one evening, in sheer desperation she attacked her four-year-old son and eight-year-old daughter, with the brutality fraught by blows from a hammer. As a result, the son, Bernerd, died; the daughter survived.

How long would it take the community to recover from a crime such as this? Catherine tried, unsuccessfully, to take her own life through drowning. Her remains lie, along with those of her husband, in an unmarked grave in Springvale Cemetery.

The preceding tales were but two of many, all true. There were similar stories but these sad

and shocking events occurred rarely, and over a long period of years.

We heard of a wayward doctor who, in his shady practice, was tried and found responsible for various women's deaths.

Asylums were in greater demand yesteryear, than now, and probably many families could lay claim to at least one family member ending up in this type of institution.

Jane's stories were all different but she was talking about another era and we can hardly compare the stress of living today, with those times. Several pictures of cottages, inns and district maps punctuated the talk, and we were treated to the simple line drawings by student illustrator, Erica Gage. This type of illustration requires a special talent.

Much research had gone into the talk, as was obvious, and Jane thanked Lynn Mather and Clive Haddock for their contributions, and particularly Erica, for her artwork.

These stories, and others, are on their way to being reproduced in book form.

Well done, Jane!



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Annual subscriptions 2017/18 are due on 1 July. \$25 per household



THE HOUSE

The Lovie House. We are often asked about an attractive late-Victorian house near the corner of High St Rd and Warrigal Rd, Ashwood. With a corrugated iron roof, board facade, verandah on two sides and plenty of iron lacework and other decorative features, it looks both well-built and well-kept. However the streets in the area were only subdivided in 1927 (the "new township estate, Ashburton", though now this area is called Ashwood), and still the street remained vacant for some years. Even in 1951 there was only one resident, being Frederick Lovie. Thus it appears that the house was relocated to this site from elsewhere.

Please note that General Meetings are now held every two months and are usually afternoon meetings starting at 2.00 pm, (except where advised). Special activities will be held in most alternate months. We are located above the Mt Waverley Library 41 Miller Cres., Mt Waverley.

Coming Events

Thursday, 23rd November at 7.30 pm Dr Andrew Kilsby: Topic: 'The Rifle Club Movement in Victoria from 1860'. Followed by a 'Christmas' supper.

Friday 26 January 2018, Annual Open Day Display.

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Office Bearers AGM

As a result of our AGM the following members

were elected for 2017/18: **President:** MarJo Angelico

Vice President: Philip Johnstone

Secretary: Norma Schultz **Treasurer:** Jane Turton

Committee: Ed Hore, Sandra Hymas, Virginia Barnett, Chris Norton, Kerrie Flynn, Beverley

Delaney, Sue Barber

Welcome to our new and returning Committee

Society Visit to *Ambleside*

n September several members of the Waverley Historical Society visited *Ambleside* Homestead and Museum in Ferntree Gully. We were warmly welcomed by the Committee of the Knox Historical Society who were delighted to show us around and share their knowledge of the history of the house, out-buildings and garden.

Ambleside is a century old farmhouse built with Hawthorn bricks. Two of the rooms contain displays depicting a parlour and a bedroom early in the twentieth century. The School Photograph Collection is a popular section of the museum, approximately 25,000 photographs are kept in this room. Other displays show aspects of the development of the area from a series of farming communities to the City of Knox. The area depended on agriculture and a large collection of farm machinery and implements are on display in the garden and in the tool shed. A two room cottage, the tool shed and the former porch of St Bartholomew's Anglican Church are part of the museum complex.

Ambleside Park is located on two acres of land. Many of the trees in the gardens surrounding the house were planted in the 1870s. Behind the homestead a huge magnolia tree and an oak tree date from that period. In the front garden camelias, rhododendrons, a holly, a magnolia and a blackwood tree were planted when the homestead was built. The Knox Historical Society members made sure we had a cup of tea and a chat before we went home. It is well worth visiting Ambleside - it captures the lifestyle and endeavours of past generations, from early settlement to recent times. Margaret Boyes

2

The Mulgrave Ladies' Rifle Club

id you know that there was a Mulgrave (old name for Monash area) Ladies' Rifle Club in Mt Waverley at the turn of the 20th century? Do you know where it practised? (If you were at our recent October meeting, you would know!)

One day a metal-detecting prospector came in to ask us why there were so many rifle cartridges embedded in the bank of a certain creek in Mt Waverley. He had just found the site.

Here is one of the cartridges.

But why were there rifle clubs at that time, especially ladies' rifle clubs? Who was pushing the idea, and who funded it?



Dr Andrew Kilsby wrote his doctoral thesis on the subject *The Rifle Club Movement and Australian Defence 1860-1941*. He is currently the president of our sister Society, History Monash Inc (formerly Oakleigh and District Historical Society), manages a history consulting firm, Cooee History and Heritage and volunteers as Executive officer of the Military History and Heritage Victoria Inc. He has also authored several military history books.



Please come along and hear him speak on this fascinating topic. *MarJo Angelico*

Welcome to New Members
Kerrie Flynn, Jacqueline Dargaville

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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 2017 are every second month.

drew are brothers and they have 2 other brothers and 1 cousin with them. Perhaps they intended to invade the country.

Granny said they had 6 strawberry plants with them and they had to be watered with this precious water. Every one of the Wilsons eventually had 1 acre of strawberries each from these 6 plants. The 2 ladies paid for their fares and the men worked their way on this troopship and also had 20 acres of land of their choice as payment. Granny has a funny saying if anyone isn't being the best they can be she says they are as "rough as goats' knees" it tickles my funny bone!

Uncle George Findley (3rd in line) is married to Aunty Eddie and she owned the *Sarah Sands* Hotel in Brunswick. She also owns a holiday house in Chelsea and she is happy to lend it to anyone in our family to use. We will all use it for our honeymoon house as we get older.

Mr and Mrs Mazza owned the store opposite the school and I worked there when I was 14. Mrs Mazza was telling me one day that she was afraid of Mrs Dunster and didn't know how to talk to her. Being the over confident person I was, I said "I'll call her Nellie when she comes in today". Mrs Dunster was old enough to be my grandmother. Mrs Mazza was horrified and told me so. That didn't deter me and it was with the store full of customers that Mrs Dunster appeared and I said "ahh it's Nellie Dunster". She took it in good fun and called me a cheeky boy! After that I seemed to be the apple of Mrs Dunster's eye and I could do no wrong.

Mr Dunster was the caretaker of the Mechanics Hall and I had heard he was an ex London Bobby but I'm not sure of that. They lived in Springvale Rd (next to the now Rehabilitation Centre) and later shifted to opposite the Hall. On a Saturday night some of the local boys would arrive at the hall drunk. Jack Mullens was one of these and he would stand in the doorway and sing "Whose is taking care of the caretakers daughter, while the caretaker is busy taking care!"

Every night Mr Dunster's wife Nell (a very firey lady) would have a verbal fight over the singing. One night things got a bit rougher than usual and Nell hit Jack. Jack promptly hit back, and the pair of them slugged it out right there in the hall. Mrs Dunster was treated with caution because no one was ever sure what mood she would be in. They had a brick fire place built outside the back door of the hall with a copper inlay that was filled with fresh milk to be heated for the coffee at supper time.

SPRING 2017

It was the best coffee ever. Patrons brought a plate of goodies to share for supper.

Granny Doherty had sold her orchard in Wilson Rd and they have bought the land on the top of the hill in Waverley Rd (Police Academy). They have the usual 1 acre of strawberries and 1 acre of gooseberries as well as an orchard. There is a strip of land along Waverley Rd that is not in their land. It has 2 rows of apple trees but they will buy that land from Watson Jane at a later date.

I have wondered if the flowering gum in front of the Academy may have been planted by them but I have since found that it was planted by the Catholic Seminary. Tom was a one-eyed Orangeman and Aunty Sissy said he would have been spinning in his grave to know the Catholics had his land. One of their daughters married one of the drinkers I've told you about and they lived at the Dandenong Creek at the end of Highbury Rd.

She became pregnant and one night the baby came and her husband was sleeping it off somewhere and didn't come home. She had the baby by herself and in the morning bundled up the bed-clothes and with the baby on her arm and the washing over her shoulders she walked to her mother's on the top of the hill. There weren't any washing facilities at her home other than the creek.

I have met the girl I want to marry! It was a Saturday holiday, 8 hours day and there was a carnival on the Oakleigh football ground. I was there with my mates and I was introduced to Minnie Hatch. She's beautiful! My teeth are awful and I made up my mind to get them fixed so I could ask her out. She lives at Notting Hill and is 15, I am 14.

I see the dentist the next week and eventually have my teeth removed and a plate put straight in. I've told my cousin Bert Wilson who has the bus, about Minnie and he knew her because she travelled to work on the bus. One Sunday, Minnie and Annie caught the bus from Notting Hill to the milk bar just short of Springvale Rd on Ferntree Gully Rd. Bert was driving and he made fun of not letting the girls off the bus and bringing them to the recreation ground. He then drove to the store and told me, Minnie was walking back to the shop with her sister. I took off after them and walked her back home to Notting Hill, asking her if she would go out with me, she said yes and we had our first date on her 16th birthday.

(Bevel has the gift that he gave her for her birthday, it was a Fan.)

7

Bevel Yeoman is the daughter of Arthur Rhodes

milk to be heated for the coffee at supper time.

As freeways sliced into the expanding me-

tropolis, Ron's hardy plants were supplied for

popular climber, Lonicera heckrotti, or Fire-

cracker, which was Shrub of the Year in 1976.

Two other popular plants were Azalea Jezebel

To say that the Nursery, in Ron's day, was orderly and well-managed, would be an under-statement. This was depicted in an aerial photograph which was copied and turned into a painting, in 1978, by graphic artist, Bob Dobson. The picture shows the sheer scale of the Nursery and took Bob eighteen months to complete. Bob had worked at the Nursery for about five years. Ron's wife, Elly, commissioned this painting as a wedding anniversary present; Elly had joined the Nursery in her early days, fresh out of Burnley Horticultural School. She and Ron married, sharing their gardening and nursery interests, along with their hobbies of rock collecting, and opal and sapphire mining.

Recently, Ron's daughter Kathy McLean donated a print of the above painting to Waverley Historical Society. WHS is indebted and thankful to the Gross family for this gift, and Linda Taylor for delivery of it.

Virginia Barnett

3

More Recollections of Arthur Rhodes

ances were held in the Mechanics Hall on a Saturday night and one day a handsome young man appeared with his horse and buggy. He unhitched the horse and let him onto the football ground to graze. This ground was surrounded with a post and rail fence as was the hall. This man ran the buggy shafts under the fence and went into the dance. He seemed to fancy himself as a "Lady's Man". No one knew who he was and his only interest was in the female variety. He found himself a girl who would go outside with him while the dance continued, for a little canoodling. They would get into the buggy, lean back, and the shafts would come off the ground and come to rest under the fence rail leaving the pair sitting in a level position. He had done this before! He turned up each time there was a dance and chose a different girl each time.

The local boys however were not impressed with this stealing of one of "their dance partners" and they were going to fix him! They waited till he was set up and in the hall and then they removed the nails from the fence rail and left it balanced on the posts. Then they lay in wait to see the fun.

Later the couple emerged from the hall and sat in the buggy, leaned back and up went the shafts, knocked the rail into the air and the buggy went over backwards tipping the occupants onto the ground. No one hurt except pride and the problem was over. The young man hitched up his horse and left never to return. Nobody seemed to know where he came from or where he went but it wasn't going to be Glen Waverley, the local boys made sure of that.

Joe Allen had started work at the blacksmith opposite the school with George Streeter and he had met and married my Aunty Emma. She is my mother's sister next in line (7th) in the Findley family. James and Mary Findley bought the home and land on the south side of Wilson Rd at Springvale Rd from Andrew Wilson. Joe takes over the blacksmith's shop in Oakleigh and they go to live there. They eventually lived in Warrigal Rd having one son, Lesley. They were away camping and Aunty Emma was cooking on a primus stove with Lesley at 18 months holding onto her skirt, the primus exploded and Lesley died from the severe burns he received around his face and head.

George Findley bought the land on the corner of Springvale and Waverley Rd. He was later to sell this land for the building of the school.

Bevel Yeoman

Vic O'Dea tried to drive his horse and Jinker into the Mechanics Hall probably on a dance night. The O'Dea boys liked a drink or two and weren't opposed to a punch up either.

Alex Bailey was attacked and severely beaten to the point where he was at death's door for a week all over the false report of a girl in the community. He did survive and went on to be an asset in the organisation of events here in Waverley.

Les Hunter liked to tap dance when he was at the Mechanics Hall.

Clavor O'Callagan (spelling unknown) owned the Glen corner at Springvale and High Street Rd and next door in High Street Rd to the west and up the hill lived Charlie Probus on an orchard.

Alf Hamling lived near the Mulgrave Shire Hall in Notting Hill when Freddy Finch was a boy. Maddigan's had the property opposite on the north west corner of Ferntree Gully and May Roads. May Rd (Blackburn Rd) had an Avenue of Honour between Ferntree Gully Rd and Pinewood, Oak trees, I think.

I have been to see old Uncle Frank today. He lived between Great Grandfather Wilson and Granny Doherty on the north side of Wilson Rd. He's a funny old fellow I don't think he has ever been married and he can't read or write. The floor of his house is dirt and it's packed so hard that it shines. He's got the best places for a young boy to play, with the extra sheds (wattle and daub) built any old where around the yard.

After that I called into Granny Doherty's house for something to eat. She's always careful not to let Grandfather Doherty see her give us something because he is a mean old coot. It's doubly good today because Great Grandmother Wilson is here. I love to ask her about her trip from Ireland and how she, Eliza age 19 and Great Grandfather Alexander age 27 married and got straight onto the ship to come to Australia. They come from a place in Ireland called County Armagh. It was a sailing ship called the Conway and they had to provide all their own food for the trip. Her sister-in-law Liza and her husband Andrew were also on this ship and they had 5 children with them.

They are allowed 1 jug of water per family and if you have children you get 2 jugs of water. You could not all leave the cabin at the one time because someone would steal your water. One jug to do everything including cooking and washing was not much and so it was very scarce. Alex and An-

PARAMOUNT NURSERY

Mount Waverley

ack in 1954, Mount Waverley was fast developing, gardens springing up everywhere, and it was then that Ron Gross purchased six acres of land on Surrey Road, Mount Waverley.

This was the site for a wholesale plant nursery, spread over six acres, therefore of considerable proportion. Home gardens were being established and Ron's 'Paramount Nursery' became a leader in the field of cultivation technology. Ron's innovative ideas engendered respect of

nurserymen across the country. He even designed and made his own glass-houses, such were his engineering and building skills. Ron, and Fred Taylor, an engineer, developed a first: steam pasteurisation of soil, which became a model worldwide.

Ron was a quiet achiever, working long hours and eventually turned a rabbit and

blackberry-strewn tract of land into a very successful nursery.

Bob Taylor worked with Ron over several years. Bob was a plant pathologist with the Victorian Department of Agriculture and worked alongside Ron on a range of innovations; this created a happy mix of commerce and science.

Coming Events

(Note Day and Time)

Thursday, 23rd November 7.30 pm Dr Andrew Kilsby: 'The Rifle Club Movement in Victoria from 1860'. Followed by a 'Christmas' supper. Please bring a plate of supper.

Our last day our rooms will be open will be Wed 6 Dec. 2017.

Friday 26 Jan 2018 12.00 noon to 3pm with our annual Australia Day display.

Wed 7 Feb 2018 Rooms Re-open

Wed 28 Feb 2pm Helen Doxford-Harris: Women in Council

Thursday 26 April 7pm Celestina Sagazio Jane Turton

and the climber, Gloriosa Lily. Paramount made and developed its own distinctive plant tags, which are par for the course nowadays.

Full-filling Plant Growth requirements throughout the GARDEN STATE **PARAMOUNT** SUPPLIERS TO THE RETAIL INDUSTRY, PHONE 277 2299 277 2217 SURREY RD. MOUNT WAVERLEY

This image of the painting was used on Paramount Nurseries' advertising brochures as shown here.

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Tait's Store on Stephensons Rd.

astern Innovation Business Centre, at Hartnett Close Mulgrave, is a Monash council project that seeks to help local small businesses by providing crucial support services at start-up phase. It opened in late August 2015 next door to the Tom Morrissev building, named after ex-Monash mayor and

local plumber, Tom Morrissey.

This new building is to be named after Jessie Tait, who opened the first shop in what is now Mt Waverley Proper. (Originally Mt Waverley was to have had its CBD on the High St Rd

hill, near the reservoir, Fleet

St Neighbourhood House,

the Uniting church and the

Avenue of Honour, but the coming of the railway soon meant that the present location was preferred by shop owners and service providers.) Mrs Tait's little store was therefore "off the beaten track" at first, but ended up being in the right place to serve the town.

Jessie Theresa MacMeikan was the illegitimate daughter of Hugh MacMeikan, sea captain. She was born in Tasmania in 1852. She had a half-brother who was 11 years older and whom she cared for in his later life at her home in Mt Waverley. She had a cousin John MacMeikan who bought the dairy farm Wandoolah in Ashwood, but soon sold it in 1907 to Thomas

Philip Power, after whom Power Avenue is named.

In 1869 she married James Tait, 5th of 8 children of the renowned Rev John Tait of Geelong. James worked in banks and did rise to being manager of some country branches, but struggled with loneliness and begged to return to the city. There he met and married Jessie and together they moved to many locations in Victoria and NSW before settling in Mulgrave, as it was then

called, early in the 20th century. Their five daughters (one of whom died as a teenager) were born in the 1870s in various locations. None ever married.

By 1903 the family had settled and built their

home, Waimarie which is Maori for "between two creeks" in Stephens Lane (now Stephensons Road). (Waimarie is a small town on the west coast of the South Island of NZ, not far from where Jessie's half brother Hugh used to run a tug service). They had enough acreage for James to retire from banking and become a mar-

> ket gardener. Jessie became a music teacher and she also opened the shop on the southwest corner of their land.

> The shop sold "notions" - sewing needs and stationery, newspapers, first aid items, hand crafts, sweets, baby clothes and other little things. and the Mount Waverley mail was brought there from Notting Hill. Outgoing mail could also

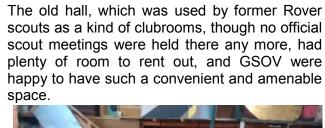
be left at the shop for posting at Oakleigh. Later it became a full post office, and two daughters were at different times the postmistress. (The other two got jobs in the city). It was a useful service for the far-flung locals, and a suitable occupation for the daughters who no doubt helped with the garden as well.

Their land was basically all of Waimarie Drive, including the houses on both sides. The driveway was where Waimarie Drive starts and there were wind-rows protecting the vegetables from severe weather. Unfortunately the house and shop are long gone, but the stables survive.

> Jessie's husband James Tait died in 1913, as also did her brother, Hugh, and her uncle James MacMeikan. She herself finished her labours a mere three years later, leaving the shop and market garden to the girls. The shop continued until about 1944, having provided a good service for over 40 years.

The new Jessie Tait Building is, in the words of one proponent, a spectacularly modern building: very energy efficient, environmentally friendly, with

reticulated water etc. According to the website, it is a brand new high tech. facility providing a hothouse environment in which to turn innovative ideas into commercial successes. I wonder whether Jessie would wish she had such help.



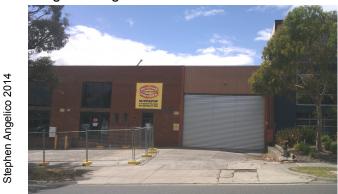
had a scenery store and quasi HQ at a cavern-

ous scout hall in Blackburn, is moving to M.W.



Constructing the pirate ship for the current show, *Pirates* of Penzance at the old scout hall.

The old popcorn factory in Mt Waverley was vacated a couple of years ago when Movietime moved out to Dandenong. It had been in Mt Waverley for 27 years, wafting tempting smells over the industrial zone and supplying walk-ups with great bargains.



Popcorn factory before renovations



Making caramel corn - Movietime Popcorn



During renovations

Soon afterwards the facade was changed, as renovations to the office area in the front of the building uncovered instability.



After renovations (before GSOV moved in)

The GSOV has now moved from Blackburn into the old popcorn factory. Gilbert and Sullivan are famous for producing between 1871 and 1896, fourteen comic operas, of which the best known are probably Pirates of Penzance. HMS Pinafore and *The Mikado*.

Since its beginnings during the Depression of the 1930s, the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Victoria has been delighting audiences with its productions of Gilbert and Sullivan and other works of light opera.

The performing arm of the Society, GSOV, has been critically acclaimed as Australia's leading light opera company and, at the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in England in 2007, won several awards for its production of Patience. The Society is actually no stranger to this area, as for years the main performance place was the Alexander Theatre at Monash University.

MarJo Angelico

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