

The Newnham House *(cont. from p.2)*

MarJo Angelico

all the cupboards, drawers, and benches all around and a recessed area for the fridge. He couldn't bear to waste things so many secondhand items were brought home and incorporated into the design of the home.



cupboards on top of the wardrobes to allow plenty of storage room.

He worked very hard maintaining house, garden and tools. I can remember him getting home from a long tiring day and sharpening his hand saws and re-arranging the tools ready for the next day's hard slog. No electric drills or nail guns in those days. He had hand drills, hand saws, hammer and nails to work with. Dad had

wanted to be an architect but family finances had not allowed him it.

Maeve Newnham was a great homemaker, often playing with the girls and their toys. She made all the soft furnishings and the family's clothes and toys. She played the piano and organ, both at home and at various churches, directed choirs, wrote poetry and prose for publication, and collected stories, pictures and items to make scrap books for children. She was always busy and always happy. In his 40s John took



up painting and won many prizes. He made the house a gallery!

Sharon concludes; We were fortunate to have such creative, loving parents. We appreciate our house and the effort Dad and Mum spent to create a home for us all.



Would you like to see this unique house? Some of us already have, and was it a delight!! Much of the house is still exactly as John built it, so it is a picture of the modernity of the 1950s. Features like the brick barbecue, the wishing well, the playhouse, vegie garden, mosaic garden paths, as well as those already described make it like a museum of our Melbourne

childhoods. We have a limited opportunity to take a few interested people through. Please talk to MarJo if you would like to be one of them.

The open courtyard originally had a copper on a brick structure for mum to wash clothes. We bought a washing machine when I was little and I can remember the relief for mum not having to light the fire under the copper to wash the clothes. At the back of the kitchen was a chip heater in the laundry".

The courtyard ended with double doors and the toilet was directly opposite the laundry. There was a pan toilet in those days of no sewerage. The pan was collected once a week and the sanitary 'engineer' had the dirtiest job in Melbourne to do that. They had metal tins with lids to replace the filled tins, and they would collect this raw sewerage from houses, carry it on their shoulders to a cart pulled by a horse, and collect and deliver tins weekly. The toilet had a hatch door at the back. The collector would pull the door open, pull out the old and put in the clean can and be on his way. There were fears of being in the toilet when the 'engineer' arrived! I remember the smell of the pans to be obnoxious. By adding ash from the fire some of the odour could be quelled. When the sewerage service arrived, we were all very happy, although it was at some expense as we had to pay to get it put on. I remember dad and mum anguishing about the cost.

Next to the toilet was a bathroom with a bath and a shower and basin. All mod cons! Next to that was a bedroom, then another bedroom, then the main bedroom in the wooden part of the house. A hallway ran down from the main bedroom to the other 2 bedrooms. Dad built in all the beds, cupboards and wardrobes. There were large



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THE HOUSE

A more remarkable house would be hard to find, yet it is unlikely this one will last out the year! It is the well-loved *Alumuna*, the owner-built Newnham house in Mt Waverley, and it is crammed with features designed to make life pleasant and comfortable for the family who lived here all its life. The name is alleged to have been derived from the aboriginal for *Our Home*.

The builder was John Russell Newnham, who shared the bungalow behind his father's McKinnon owner-built home with his new wife Maeve while spending weekends building his own. Typical of so many, he sold his car to buy materials and caught the bus as far as it

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Coming Events

Sun 28 Oct 12-4pm Open Day in the WHS Rooms and our Historical Walk in the MW Central area at **1pm**.

Tues 27 Nov 7pm Xmas Meeting with WHS Historic Video

More Details P.5

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.

Annual General Meeting

The 2018 Annual General Meeting of the Waverley Historical Society Inc. and 48th Birthday celebration was held on Sun 26 Aug 2018

The elected office bearers were:

President: MarJo Angelico

V President : Philip Johnstone

Secretary: Norma Schultz

Treasurer:

Committee: Ed Hore, Virginia Barnett, Sueie Barber, Beverley Delaney, Kerrie Flynn, Sandra Hymas, Chris Norton, Jane Turton.

The House, cont. from p.1

would take him to the block, humping his tools on his shoulder in a sugar bag the rest of the way. He would sleep in his small shed on Saturday nights and spend both days working furiously on his ultra-modern house, before returning to paid work as a carpenter on week days. The design had been published in a periodical of the day (1950s) but he adjusted it to make a unique family home.

As soon as John had the place to lock-up stage, the couple moved in. At first, they had kerosene lamps for light, a methylated spirits stove for cooking, and a Coolgardie safe for storing perishable foods, but on their first wedding anniversary the power was connected and they could progress to a Pope fridge and a Vulcan stove.

Sharon, the oldest of the eventual three daughters, wrote the story of the house. She says, *The layout of the house was a lounge and bedroom at the front with an entrance porch leading into a little lobby. The back of the house consisted of a series of rooms built around an open courtyard.*

From the lounge, there were 2 steps down into a small dining room and a beautiful varnished pine wall dividing kitchen from dining room. A little servery was cut into this wall to allow mum to put the food through easily. Dad built

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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 2018 are every second month.

DID YOU KNOW?..

Our building - the Mount Waverley Library, turns 50 years old next March 2019. Long term members may recall its builder, G W Dore, spoke ten years ago about its construction and also other buildings he had built in the area. Even then he was surprised that the building had lasted, because the architect insisted on a novel but troublesome 3/4 bond, even on the two-storey part.

So next March be prepared for some 1960s style partying. If you still have in the back of some cupboard a favourite 60s outfit, don't throw it away yet!

Research Enquiries

Requests for our assistance continue throughout the year. Over the last few months we had queries regarding: Waverley Nth school, St Georges Crt, Glen Waverley

Has anyone more information on the Small Homes Service? Do you live in one of these house designs? Have you a story?

www.monash.edu/mada/news/articles/2018/small-homes-service

Opening of the *Jessie Tait* Building

On Tuesday September 4th, at the Eastern Innovation Business Centre, the *Jessie Tait* Building was officially opened. We will present a full report in the next issue of History Here. Regular readers may recall the details covered in History Here 221, October 2017.

Education Sessions

During recent months MarJo Angelico and Kerrie Flynn spoke to the students of Holy Family School. MarJo also spoke at the Syndal Ladies' Probus.

Ray Price & Philip Johnstone spoke at the Mt Waverley Women's Probus Club and later the combined Probus Club of Mt Waverley

Welcome to New Members

David Felstead, Ted Sullivan, Noelle Rigby

She even embroidered the Queen's coronation gown, adding Australian wattle to the intricate design representing the royal mandates.

On return from England Morna met and married Bill Sturrock (1955), had three sons and a daughter, and began a time of intense community building – working to start schools, secondary colleges, churches, scout and guide groups, sporting clubs and everything that the then Shire of Mulgrave needed. An expert motivator, organiser and fundraiser, she boosted many a new group with her contributions. Our own WHS funds received such a boost because of exhibitions



WHS file image

Morna mounted and classes she taught.

She also began writing books, perhaps sixteen in all, on such diverse topics as St Stephen's church (*They Continued Steadfastly* 1965) and soon after, St Matthew's (*Sacred Corner*), European and Aboriginal contact in 1800s Victoria (1983), The Anglican Deaconess Movement (1989), Stonington Mansion (1990), *Gilbert Dyett the Architect of the RSL* (1992), the Brigidine Sisters (1995), Bishop James Moorhouse (2003) and, at age 70, *Life Begins at Fifty-something*. For some of these she received her BA (Hons), MTh, MA, and PhD (the last at age 80!). About this time she was also awarded her AM for her services to embroidery, though she could have received half a dozen such medals for other services.

Always one to encourage women in their chosen pursuits, she took particular interest in fostering doctoral level theology students and was honoured in 2008 to have a scholarship for such women, named after her. Even at age 83 she displayed great energy, insight, and concern for others. She spent five years knitting – and motivating others to knit – the *longest scarf in the world*, which was later made into blankets for the needy. At the Highway Gallery she and others painted portraits of their mothers and held a touching tribute to inspiring women of the past. She travelled Victoria to celebrate 50 years of the

Embroiderers' Guild. Meanwhile she was working on her second PhD!

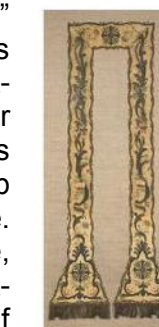
Asked how she could fit in so much, she once said, "Every day I read a little. Every day I write a little. Every day I sew a little." Another time she admitted to "half an hour of creativity with a needle each day." In the past five years it has been the knitting needle rather than embroidery, as her eyes were not up to fine work any more. Often her words were, "I'm not old; just getting older," and, "If you have something to do, then you have a future."

It is sad that some newer WHS members have not met this energetic and inspirational woman. The rest of us can never forget her and her legacy, which is probably not even fully covered here.

MarJo Angelico



An Embroidery Using Wattle as a pattern on the Queen's Coronation Gown



From www.scotschurch outreach event



Some examples of Morna's embroidery skills

Armistice Ceremony, cont. from P.4

The Honour Board was eventually erected on 11.9.18 at the western end of the *Avenue of Honour*, on the SE corner of Fleet Street.



P. Johnstone Sep 2018

Vale - Morna Sturrock

On accepting the role of Patron of Waverley Historical Society in 2001, Morna Sturrock said, "What an honour... your letter has given me great pride, so I accept with pleasure. It has been very satisfying to watch the Society develop over the years, as I knew it would, and to find more and more people realize how important an understanding of their local history continues to be. My understanding of the role of Patron is to be a supporter on the outside, someone who keeps informed yet never interferes unless approached..."

We didn't know then (but wouldn't have been surprised) that she had already held that role for Waverley Patchworkers since its inauguration in 1981. They also appreciate her unfailing enthusiasm and encouragement. Morna as WHS Patron has been encouraging, inspiring, respectful, concerned, available.

It must be remembered that in her years as journalist for the local Progress Press, she was the one who researched and wrote about our early beginnings for the Shire of Mulgrave's Centenary in 1971, before any official or unofficial history had been recorded. She pinned down the exact location of the first permanent house built in Waverley, being *Amstel* House, from mere wisps of rumour. This was just one year after she proposed and helped to start WHS, becoming its inaugural Secretary and later its President.

Local history was just one of the areas in which Morna spent her enormous energy. At various times (and usually for multiple decades) she has also been:

- on the Board of Australian Local Government Women's Association (National Secretary 1972, Victorian Secretary 1975, still attending 2014)
- City of Waverley Councillor 1984-90
- member of the Council of Christians and Jews for nearly 20 years, editor

of its magazine *Gesher* for 20+ years

- a founder of the Brotherhood of St Laurence shop in Mt Waverley
- recipient of the Dame Phyllis Frost award for her work in MOW (Movement Of Women)
- A Friend of the Highway Gallery and Mount Street Neighbourhood House

- editor of the new State College of Victoria (1981ff) staff newsletter
- wife, mother of four, grandmother of four
- chaplain, lay preacher, speaker, scholar and much more.

For example, she was the first PR person for any Australian university. That was Melbourne University, which wanted someone to promote its centenary, and Morna won the job soon after the last of her four children were born. The largest fundraiser she organised turned out to be an embroidery exhibition, and this led directly to Morna and another launching the Victorian

branch of the Embroiderers' Guild of London. (There are now eleven Victorian branches, and Morna was often invited to distant branches to open exhibitions.)

You see, embroidery was in her blood. Her mother, whom Morna names her "lifelong inspiration," and herself an exquisite embroiderer, taught her to thread a needle at age four, and never stopped inspiring her to attempt more beautifully creative (and difficult) projects.

Morna's first big journalism break came when she was asked to cover events in London for the Melbourne Herald in the 1950s. She was there in that capacity when King George VI died, and his daughter Elizabeth became our Queen. She was to send an article every day, and she did! While there, she had the opportunity to attend the Royal School of Needlework, doing classes for four years.



Morna (in the doorway) with the Save Closter House Committee in 1977

Smithy Flynn House Sale

The house and land that is 69 Bruce Street, Mount Waverley, occupies part of the original Jeanes property, which totalled 160 acres, purchased over several years in the 1860's – 1870's.

Ellen Jeanes married William Flynn and they were given twenty acres of land, on which this home was built. It is said that blacksmith Flynn's Melbourne Cup winnings in 1890 contributed towards the cost of construction. So, it is approximately 126 years old.

The house is nestled on land that became an old garden of mainly exotics, including a stately old oak near the southern aspect and an old wood-shed still clings to the wall. There was no mistaking the feel of yesteryear; you could close your eyes and try to picture the front door of the rambling house, facing Waverley Road and that is where, at the end of a sweeping drive, old Mr. Flynn ran his smithy – even today one hears of the odd horseshoe being dug up in one or other of the nearby gardens. The thriving smithy up on the hill would have been known to all.



Google Street View, August 2017

The rooms facing east still have an uninterrupted view of the distant Dandenongs and probably always will. This was originally a four bedroomed house solidly constructed of stuccoed handmade bricks on a bluestone foundation and over the years more rooms were added, as the family grew. The original wooden shingles over the 'central wing' have long gone, and now the remaining tri-gabled corrugated roof looks to be in pretty good condition. The French windows, and others, are almost occluded by straggly bushes and vines and an air of nostalgia hangs over the backyard – an *Extensalene* looked strangely out of place. A couple of lemon trees are holding their own and the grassy backyard felt secure and safe.



Aerial view looking west

The naturally well-insulated interior of the house exuded "coolth" on the hot auction day of 17.Mar 2018, as a small crowd wandered, and wondered what the outcome could be.

It was eventually sold for over \$1.8M

Virginia Barnett

Friends Group turns 50

Friends Of Damper Creek Reserve celebrated its 50 year Jubilee on 30 Sep 2018.

Back in 1968 a group of residents in Sunhill Rd met to discuss a proposed extension of Swayfield Rd south, to join up with Sunhill Rd. They believed that the new road would result in much increased through traffic with consequent potential danger to children attending the nearby primary school. They called a meeting of nearby residents. This was very well attended and *The Damper Creek Conservation and Development Group* was formed. Local resident Peter Davies stood for Council and was elected. This provided a direct voice to Council on matters relating to the creek and the reserve. As a consequence the road link did not eventuate.

In 1993 the Group's name was changed to the Friends of Damper Creek Reserve (FODC). Since then, the group has liaised with Council highlighting maintenance items, assembled working bees for weeding and planting projects. At one stage the group members directly assisted in the construction of the Alice Street footbridge and access track handrails. The FODC has also been fortunate in obtaining grants from Melbourne Water for revegetation of the Riparian Zone.

A win-win situation for the community over the 50 years!

ARMISTICE COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY

Virginia Barnett

One hundred years ago, Mount Waverley was part of the North Riding of the Shire of Mulgrave, thinly populated and set in undulating land which was patchworked with dairy farms, orchards and market gardens, which followed on from the land divisions and clearing of woodlands.

But there was war, and the North Riding, and Mount Waverley in particular, saw many of its men marching off to the battlefields, thirty-eight of whom never came back.

The Mount Waverley Avenue of Honour was planted on the 20th July, 1918. This was to honour the war casualties and to show those boys at the front the strong support and esteem of its community back home by planting an avenue of mainly Portuguese Oaks, which would keep these memories green forever. Back then, a line of flags marked the newly planted Avenue of Honour, and in front of a large gathering, speeches were made by the Shire President, Cr. C. H. Coleman and Captain S. M. Bruce, MC and MHR for Flinders, who was a distinguished soldier himself, and who delivered a stirring address. The Oakleigh

Brass Band played patriotic tunes and the crowd sang along. The 1918 ceremony was held in the long-gone Horticultural Hall, right next-door to the present day Uniting Church.

The original trees were planted on both sides of High Street Road, now only ten remain on the south side: each tree symbolised a soldier who had fought in the war.

Each remaining tree was decorated with a temporary wreath of our natural flora.

Members of the public, along with the soldiers' families, attached soldiers' names to each wreath, left to flutter in the wind. Thanks to Kerrie Flynn, for all her work in this department.

So there it was, on Sunday 15th July, 2018, in a

fitting ceremony at the Uniting Church, Waverley Historical Society member, Ed Hore, addressed the crowd, then handed over to long-standing resident and former Liberal Member for Syndal, Geoff Coleman, (grandson of the aforementioned C.H. Coleman), who unveiled the Honour Board. This board will eventually be erected on the corner of Fleet Street and High Street Road. Geoff had strong memories of the Avenue, saying that he thought one original cork-oak (*Quercus suber*) remains, and the others have been replanted, for various reasons, over the years. But those replanted oaks stand sturdily, today, and are a constant reminder of our past history. Mount Waverley should be proud of what remains of its Avenue of Honour: many similar avenues planted in Victoria have disappeared altogether.

Geoff declared that the Waverley Historical Society, and indeed the general public, must thank Norma Schultz, for electing to have a permanent signboard erected, depicting the names of the thirty-eight soldiers so tragically taken.

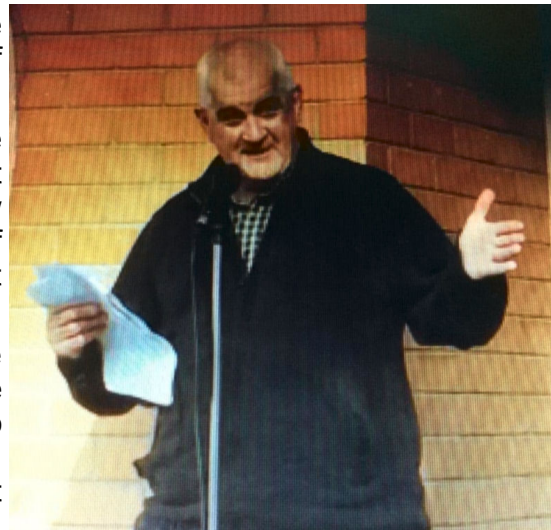
The Oakleigh Brass Band played the National Anthem and other rousing, sentimental tunes, to the delight of the crowd.

Afternoon tea, served by the Uniting Church, followed the unveiling and WHS President, MarJo Angelico, and Uniting Church Minister, Julie Ross, made speeches befitting the occasion.

Thanks were extended to the Mayor, Cr Paul Klisaris, and Cr MT Pang Tsoi, for their attendance, and also to Neil Whittington, and other mem-

bers of the Uniting Church, for liaising and helping so much on the day.

Continued P.7



Ed Hore, master of ceremonies on the day, is descended from the family of 3 members who are remembered on the board



Guest speaker, Geoff Coleman, is a descendant of the Coleman family represented at the original tree planting ceremony of 1917.

VISIT TO BISHOPSCOURT

On the wet and windy afternoon of the 15th September, 2018, fifteen members and friends visited *Bishopscourt*, in Clarendon St., East Melbourne.

This large, colonial mansion is the oldest house in East Melbourne. It is set back from a high fence facing west and has a sweeping, curved driveway creating a sense of space and grandeur.

The house was designed by architects Newson and Blackburn and was completed in 1853; Melbourne's 'boom' time. The building, part bluestone, in a style of Gothic architecture, and an attached red brick section, added in 1903, in Queen Anne domestic style and designed by Inskip and Butler, has been in constant use by all of Melbourne's Anglican Diocesan Bishops and Archbishops, apart from a brief interval of two years (1874-70), when it was used as Victoria's Government House.



K Flynn

Bishopscourt was first occupied and purpose-built for the diocese's first head, Bishop Charles Perry, in 1853; for the past 160 years *Bishopscourt* has been the home of the Archbishops of Melbourne; the current incumbents are Dr Philip Freier and his wife, Joy, and Bishop Paul Barker.

Our visit was generously catered by Volunteers and Friends of *Bishopscourt*.

Stepping into the building was a step back to days of yore. Afternoon tea was served in the drawing-room with French windows exposing the gardens without. Chairs, of Regency style, are still in use from the very early days and occupy the bay window section of the room. Then we gathered in the adjoining lounge room, a long room, bright and airy, with more beautiful old pieces of furniture. A painting above the fireplace depicted the old St James Cathedral, before it was moved to its present site in King Street. Throughout, paintings

and artefacts of Australian Indigenous Art abound.

Then the chapel; after crossing the original black and white tiled floor, we see the carved wooden decoration on the staircase reminding us of bishops' hats. Walter Butler, designer of the chapel, was of the William Morris Arts and Crafts and Domestic Revival Style and this was evident, from the beautifully upholstered pews to the soaring stained pine ceiling, creating a sense of peace and calm.

We ended our visit of the home's interior by being seated round a massive purpose-built dining-table, to hear further anecdotes about the furnishings and early days of *Bishopscourt*. On the wall hangs a treasure – a painting of the clipper, 'Stag', which brought Bishop Perry and his wife, Frances, to Melbourne in January 1848. The artist was Alexander Weynton, a great friend of Perry; the painting, faded with age, is considered the most important item in the house and has a convoluted history, only relatively recently finding its way to *Bishopscourt*.

Then, braving the cold, we were guided round the gardens by another *Friend of Bishopscourt*. The gardens have landscape scientific significance for their collection of mature trees. Our own flora was well represented with a magnificent River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), and two huge specimens of silky oak (*Grevillea robusta*) and others. It is only in recent years that the gardens have been fully restored; our guide recalled a time when they were swamped with ivy and grass cuttings; now the mixture of trees and carefully bordered paths make a display befitting the home they surround.

We sincerely thank our member, Jane Turton, for organising such a memorable visit.

Coming Events

(Note Day, Time & Venue)

Sun 28 Oct 12-4pm Open Day in the WHS Rooms and Historical Walk in the MW Central area at 1pm (meet in library carpark).

Tues 27 Nov 7pm Xmas Meeting with WHS Historic Videos. Please bring a plate for the Xmas supper.