



HISTORY HERE 250

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PRESIDENT
Ralph Bartlett

SECRETARY
Kerrie Flynn

www.vicnet.net.au/~whsoc/vic

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The Oldest House in Notting Hill, "Oxton"

Behind the picket fence at 610 Blackburn Road, Notting Hill, stands a double-fronted weatherboard house showing signs of vacancy, neglect and a dim future. However, before it disappears from the landscape a few words about its history.

The outline of the house fits a simple 'Federation' style that emerged in the 1900s. While the inner-structure of the house is certainly over a century old, curiosity remains about its first owner, or tenant. Presently, the farmhouse, is one of very few remaining in the City of Monash.



2022

610 Blackburn Road, Notting Hill

The last farmer to occupy the homestead was James George West, who purchased it, and the 53-acre farm, in September, 1919, from the estate of West Brunswick farmer, Robert Howie, who had purchased that piece of Portion 26, Mulgrave, in July, 1874. R. Howie, maintained tenants here until his death in 1918. Details of earlier tenants is found in the essay titled: "Crown Portion 26 – History". This is certainly the second house built on the 53-acre farm.

Post 1900 history

Shire Rate Records, a rough timeline of long-term Howie tenants.

1900-1904. Boyd, Hugh Alex., farmer, house & 50a, sec. 26

1905-1911. Lane, Thomas, gardener, house & 50a, sec. 26

1912-1913. Madigan, Timothy, farmer (councillor), house & 50a, sec. 26

1914-1916. Dagnall, John Wm., milk producer, house 'Oxton' & 50a, sec. 26

1917-1918. West, James Geo., farmer, house & 50a, sec. 26

- Clive Haddock

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Annual Subscriptions \$25 per household are due on
July 1st each year

The WHS is open each Wednesday afternoon from 1 to 4:30pm.
Events on page 8: unless otherwise stated, General Meetings are held at 2pm on the fourth Sunday in our rooms above Mt Waverley Library 41 Miller Crescent Mt Waverley (lift available).h

Coming Events

Next Event

Essex area walk
Sun 23 March 2025

Thank you to Matt Fregon MP, State Member for Ashwood District, for assistance with the printing of this publication. If you require assistance with any State Government issues please contact Matt's office.

Matt Fregon MP

STATE MEMBER FOR ASHWOOD

P (03) 9561 0531
E matt.fregon@parliament.vic.gov.au
A 240 High Street, Ashburton, 3147.



Continued from Page 1 While the Oxton house was renovated in later years, the original was likely built by R. Howie. Perhaps, when Shire Councillor Timothy Madigan, became a tenant, or when John Wm. Dagnall arrived, and his wife began hosting gala-like events at "Oxton:"



The War

Oakleigh and Caulfield Times Mulgrave and Ferntree Gully Guardian (Vic 1914 - 1918), 1914 November 28 p. 1. Retrieved from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article88806920>
PATRIOTIC PICNIC.

On Saturday afternoon a picnic in aid of the Patriotic Fund, arranged by Mrs Dagnall, was held in the wooded portion of the home-stead, "Oxton," May Road, Notting Hill, and proved highly successful. There was a large attendance, fully representative of the adjoining districts, and in addition several old friends and confreres of Mr Dagnall, when he was an officer of the National Bank of Australia...

On the left is a map based on the City of Monash Interactive map for 1951, superimposing "Oxton" and showing the boundary of the 53acre Howie property in 1874. A close study may also reveal remnants of earlier structures, and a driveway to Ferntree Gully Rd?

- Clive Haddock

Also, on the west boundary (left), the Centre Riding Avenue of Honour can be seen, and on the east the driveway to the McKenna property.

A History of Motoring

The WHS's first meeting for 2025 occurred on Sunday afternoon, 23 February, and the talk was presented by Jerry Ding - Manager, Chadstone Toyota. This talk provided a brief review of the early introduction of motor vehicles. It became a detailed discussion about the modern vehicles (made in the last 20-30 years), the development of various technologies, particularly electronic components.

Jerry Ding has been interested in vehicles for a long time, including during his childhood / teenage years in China. Since arriving in Australia, almost 20 years ago, he has been working in many aspects of vehicle sales, etc.

Some interesting comments included those on electric vehicle and their dangers, and that it is questionable whether they are really better for the environment. Jerry also said that car technology changes our culture, for example, the distance between

EV charging stations will control where and when trips are taken.

In appreciation of delivering this Talk the WHS President, Ralph Bartlett, presented Jerry Ding with a copy of the Society's 'Then and Now 2' book.



LES BAILEY, a Lifetime in Waverley

Following our AGM, our speaker for August, Les Bailey, talked about his life in this district and what it has meant to him. He is Waverley through and through. With his robust persona, every memory, some overlapping at times, brought a permanent smile to his face.

His family heritage goes way back to when his great-great-grandfather landed in Portland in 1860. The family travelled to Melbourne and in next to no time set up their general shop on 'Bailey's Corner', right on the corner of Springvale and Ferntree Gully Roads. Around this time, the beautiful sandstone church, St Matthews, was being built a block away, on the corner of Springvale and Wellington Roads. Les's father helped in this construction. We are all aware of 'progress' stepping in and demolishing the picturesque old church in 1976, after which it was re-constructed in Lum Road, Wheelers Hill. Snippets like this kept cropping up and are all recorded in Les's own booklet, 'My Glen Waverley 1940-1990'.

But back to Les. He was born in the old farmhouse which was the family home on Watsons Rd., where the Glen Waverley South Primary School now stands. He grew up in that house, and stayed there until his marriage. Back in 1940, the area was nearly all farmed on the "best soil around", the larger portion owned by the Catholic Church and was farmed by the Baileys until the Seminary was built in 1960. From the age of fourteen, Les worked on his father's onion farm: his schooldays were over. His father declared Victoria Market was the best 'teacher'.

His early days were spent at Glen Waverley Primary School which, fortunately, is still standing. Across Springvale Road from the school, he saw a clump of shops develop, a general store and farm products, later run by Jim Sampson, who was still there in the early seventies, running the post office. Then a garage and petrol station appeared followed by the first Holden dealership in 1948, along with Waverley's first taxi service. Next to the school, eastwards, was an old shop and barber, then a printing press was rolled in to create the district's first newspaper, the 'Mulgrave Mercury', much later replaced by the 'Waverley Gazette'. Further north, on the Kingsway corner, Baylis's milk-bar became a focal point for the young teens, the juke-box being the prime attraction.

There was a photo of 'Beeky's Butcher Shop.' The same Beeky established the area's very first football club. Hosken's Bakery stood behind the butcher, and Les clearly recalled paying 9d for a freshly-baked loaf of bread. Nearby stood the old Mechanics Hall and Free Library; this old hall was the hub of the district and is also where Les met his wife. Dances and events were held there and people came from all over. Waverley RSL had its first meeting there and it was also home for the 1st Glen Waverley Scouts. The local baby health centre operated from this central place. Great consternation and sadness was felt by everyone when the hall burnt down in 1957. No proper replacement has ever been built, to this very day.

Sport was a big part of Les' life during his footie days at Waverley Football Club. Despite approaches from the Victorian Football Association, WFC held firm and decided not to join the larger League; meanwhile there was strong competition between Glen Waverley and, over Blackburn Road, Mt. Waverley. However, as ways of life changed with the times, the old clubs gradually disintegrated. Les proudly showed us a picture of he and his father being presented with life memberships of the WFC.

I daresay Les could have kept going; he sparked a lot of memories for people to talk about afterwards. Our elected Leader, Ralph Bartlett, thanked Les, on behalf of us all.

- Virginia Barnett



Melbourne Water Plaque Unveiling

27th November 2024 - Carina Leitch

On a warm Wednesday morning in late November Committee members of the Waverley Historical Society and invited guests joined the Melbourne Water project team to unveil the mock-up of the Sid Brown and Waverley estate information board and replacement of the Sid Brown plaque. Among the guests were Doreen nee Brown, a granddaughter of Sid Brown, and Andrew Brown a descendant of Sid Brown and a former student of committee member Norma Schultz. Also attending were Helen Gobbi from History Monash, Steve McGrath, Place maker, Community Strengthening for the City of Monash, parishioners of the Uniting Church and interested community members.

Mark, the project manager, warmly welcomed us all to the event. He described the importance of the collaboration between Melbourne Water & the Waverley Historical Society in continuing stories from the past into the present and future. Paul Klisar is the newly elected Mayor of the City of Monash also spoke about the importance of community & working together for the benefit of future generations. Ralph Bartlett President Waverley Historical Society also gave a speech on the historical background to the Brown family.

The unveiling of the information board and placing of the plaque mock-up was met with keen interest and appreciation for the historical information about Sid Brown and the also the Waverley Estate which will be displayed when the information board and plaque are installed at the corner of High Street Road and Fleet Street near to the ANZAC memorial board. This installation of these will go ahead after works have been finished on the reservoir renewal works. Historical research was contributed by Waverley Historical Society and Ralph Barnett's dedication to presenting the research in an interesting and engaging manner that will then be used in the making of the information board.

At the end of the unveiling Melbourne Water hosted a lovely lunch for the guests. The guests were able to meet and talk with the project team working on the water pipe renewal project. Many of the team were excited to meet the family members of Sid Brown and to chat to the members of the Waverley Historical Society. Much reminiscing was had by participants and stories of long ago were shared. It's interesting to note that this gathering took place at the Uniting Church Hall on High Street Road Mount Waverley. This may be the last large event the church hosts before redevelopment begins on the property.



WHS President and Doreen nee Brown prepare to lift the veil, with Andrew and mayor Paul Klisar is looking on. Under Ralph's hands the original Sid Brown plaque can be seen.

More on the Brown Family

Not only were the Brown family pivotal in the establishment of Mt Waverley, they were also foundational to Waverley Historical Society. They also loved family names, so it is easy to confuse one person with the next.

Sidney Charles Brown (SCB) “civilised” Mt Waverley and a large surrounding area by running a general store for many years. It did not look big, but almost anything could be bought there. If it was not immediately available Sid would travel into Prahran to obtain it. He also fetched mail, had all kinds of farm essentials mended, and generally provided an efficient and hugely appreciated service to the Waverley, Burwood, Tally Ho and more (till his death in 1950). He married Florence TIMBERLAKE and they had four sons and one daughter Marj who was WHS’s longest attending member in 2001 when she died. SCB’s 4th child was Sidney Arnold Brown.

Sidney Arnold Brown (SAB) was an aborist and farm worker. He married Dora JEFFREY (1910 - 2001). Both were foundation members of WHS when it began in 1970, and SAB was on the editorial team producing the first newsletters. He became our third President in 1973 and was re-elected in 1974, but tragically passed away in September of that year, aged just 60. In his honour an angophora tree was planted with a plaque in the grounds of High St Rd Uniting church, but sadly it was in the way of an extension and a shrub replaced it in a new spot. Then recently it again succumbed to developments so Melbourne Water vowed to give it a new place that *should* be permanent. Thus the recent unveiling. SAB had two children, Kevyn Sidney Brown, and Doreen.

Kevyn Sidney Brown (1940 – 2020) was also a very regularly attending member of WHS, and by all accounts a curious and interested student of all things Life. Readers might recall his stories of observing railway workings in History Here 233. In fact there are at least ten issues of the WHS journal that mention the Brown family. Andrew Brown, who attended the unveiling with his Aunt Doreen, is Kevyn’s son.



How the plaques will look in Fleet St, very near the site of Brown's General Store. The original SAB plaque will be mounted under the new one. The black notice board is WHS's acknowledgement of the Avenue of Honour there and the 2018 centenary of Armistice Day.

QUIZ TIME: Who are they?



Found in our Waverley Gazette collection without a caption... We feel we ought to know who they are, but it escapes us for the moment. Can you help?

Note they are sitting in front of the Mt Waverley Community Centre when the original sundial was still intact! However there are no gardens in the area yet – only lawns.

Judging by those details, plus the style of cars in the background and the fashions worn by the couple, we estimate the date to be very late 1970s or early 1980s. If you were in the area then, can you say who they are and

maybe even why they were photographed for the local paper?

Fifty Years of Probation – The History of Victorian Drivers Licences

Remember when would-be drivers had only to slap L-plates on a car, persuade a licensed driver to brave the left seat, and drive away? No road rules test, no learners' permit, no logbook, nothing - just... learn! Then, when they thought they were ready, learners would present themselves at the police station for a quick eye test, a quiz on road rules and a drive around town with the policeman in the back seat. All being well, on paying a small fee (\$12), they walked out with a scrappy grey one-third of an A4 sized sheet of ordinary 80gsm paper, duly signed and stamped, and freedom was theirs!

That paper was to be carried at all times, yet had to last three years. Admittedly people did not use them as much as now, when they act as photo ID as well as permission to use roads. They were removed from their protective wallet only when a police officer or car rental company requested it.



A 1964 vintage licence for a new driver [instagram.com > vicroads]
If you remember all that, you are over fifty years old. Getting a drivers' licence all changed on 20th September 1974.

The first licence from 1974 onwards was called Probationary, a term we are familiar with now, but a totally new concept that implied that a good driving record was needed in order to progress to the full licence. (Think of any other context the term 'probation' is used today.) A P-plate was to be attached to the car, front and back, to alert other drivers to the inexperience of the driver. Later restrictions on P-plate holders were introduced.

The P-plate in 1974 featured a red P on a white background (like the other states have now, but only WA and Vic now have a white P on a red

background.) The original commercially-available P-plates were made of brittle plastic and had holes at the top for threading string through to attach them to the car. However the plates notoriously declined to stay attached and in one piece. More than a few young drivers, after replacing them several times, found a workable solution. A white ice cream container lid and some red electrical tape could easily be made into a durable inexpensive version that lasted the distance – three years of red P's. The buyable options now are much better.

Did you know?

The very first Victorian number plate was issued on 2 February 1902 by the newly formed Motor Registration Branch.

There were no green P's yet. They came in 2007 with the Graduated Licensing System, which mandated that the first year of driving, "P1," was for red P's and the next three years, "P2," were for green P's, a new concept. Adding a few new rules, like restricting alcohol and phone use, and limiting the number of peer passengers a P-plate holder could carry, made a lot of difference to the safety of young drivers. The graph shows the relative risk to drivers when learning (accidents are very rare, believe it or not), versus once they may drive independently – huge road tolls, which get less only gradually. The restrictions on new drivers effectively lowered that toll.

Like so much that is history, we get used to changes and sometimes forget that things were not always as they are today.



Figure 1: Crash risk for Victorian drivers

All illustrations on this page from VicRoads

Hotels Here 140 Years Ago

Here is a report from Argus Thursday 18 December 1884 on the Cheshire Cheese failing to obtain a liquor licence, thus becoming a "Temperance Hotel." How many of the hotel names do you recognise? Don't be tricked by similar names. Check the location, eg there were at least two called the Mountainview. However, some have been in non-stop operation for a long time, despite challenges.

LICENSING MEETING - OAKLEIGH.

At the Oakleigh Court on Wednesday the following hotel licences were renewed :-
 Foresters' Arms Hotel, Oakleigh, R. Trail ;
 Railway Refreshment rooms, W. Moore ;
 Oakleigh Arms Hotel, Jas. Dixon
 Mulgrave Arms Hotel, S. Irwin,
 Springvale Hotel, Spring Vale, J. R. Brettargh,
 Post-Office Hotel, Dandenong-road, Joseph Ford;
 Mulgrave Post-office Hotel, John Sands ;
 Halfway House Hotel, Ferntree Gully road, Thos. Wilkinson ;
 Waverley Arms, Waverley road, P. Bolch ;
 Rosstown Hotel, Peter Connelly;
 Mountain View Hotel, High street, J. Moylan;
 Tally-ho Hotel, Boundary-road, J. Jones.

The Mountain View Hotel, Wellington road, kept by a man named Kennedy, was reported by the police as not only badly kept and badly furnished, but also in bad repair. On the lessee agreeing to rectify these matters, the licence was eventually granted.

An application was made by a Mr. Guest for a licence for a house situate on the Ferntree

Gully road, to be called the Cheshire Cheese, consisting of 12 rooms, but the magistrates were of opinion that there were quite sufficient hotels in the district, and refused to grant a licence.



New Acquisition

We have received some business diaries from the Chivers family. These cover the business of Wm Chivers and J Dunlop market gardeners in the shire of Mulgrave over the period 1905-1908. A number of sites were in operation with the prime items of produce appearing to have been cauliflowers, cabbages, kidney beans, peas, potatoes, apples and flowers. The entries cover the weather conditions over the previous days through the weekly trips to the Victoria market, with numbers and prices received for the produce sold. Many of the return trips from the market involved the purchase of supplies and manure. The market trips required leaving at 4am and finally returning home in late afternoon.



Thank you Rosemary these wonderful records of life in Waverley in the early 1900's.

1pm Sunday 23rd March 2025

Historical Walk

Essex Heights Area

Exact meeting place will be
advised to participants beforehand



Bring walking shoes, hat and water

Booking required by 18.3.25

via our Email

waverleyhsvic@gmail.com

6am 25 April 2025

No meeting at our rooms but,

ANZAC

Wreath Laying

at Glen Waverley Cenotaph
Central Reserve GW



WHS Members at an earlier event

2 pm Sunday 25th May 2025

London to a Brick Veneer

Bartlett's Designed House



By Ralph Bartlett

At our rooms

Booking required by 20.5.25

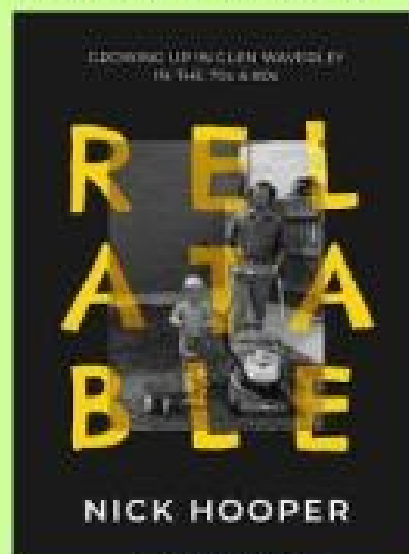
via our Email

waverleyhsvic@gmail.com

2 pm Sunday 22nd June 2025

Nick Hooper : Relatable

On growing up in Waverley



At our rooms

Booking required by 17.6.25

via our Email

waverleyhsvic@gmail.com