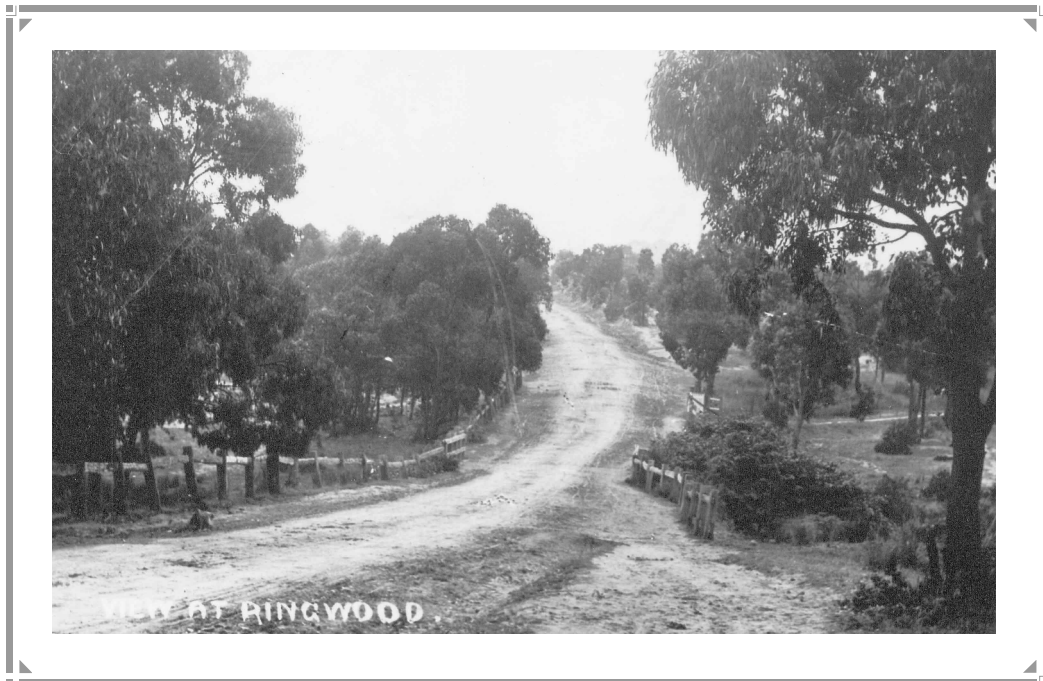


Ringwood and District Historical Society

HISTORICAL TOUR
OF
RINGWOOD EAST



Front page photo - Herry's Bakery, corner of Braeside Ave
and Mt Dandenong Road, circa 1912



Healesville Road, at Sandy Creek, Ringwood East

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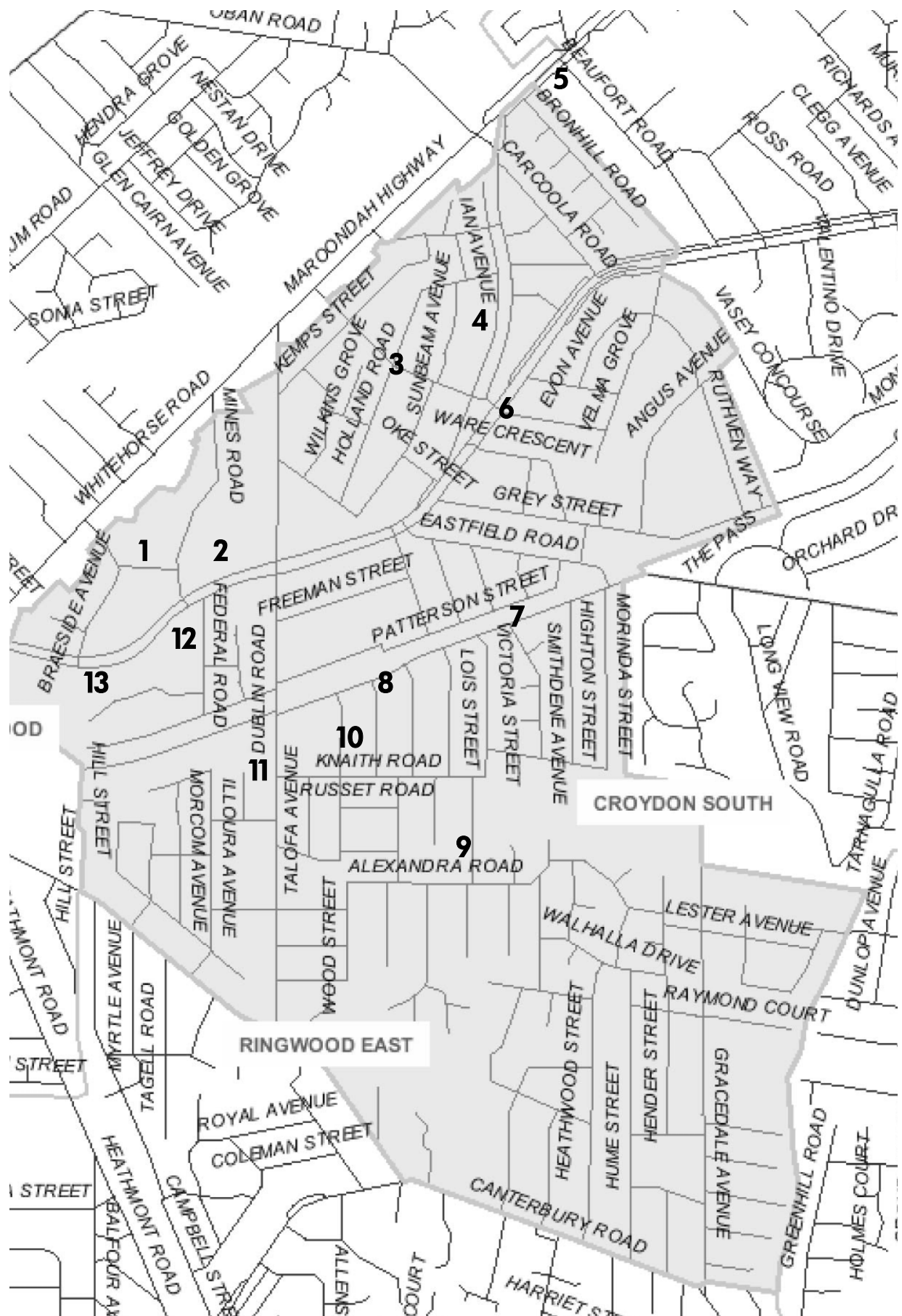
Ringwood and District Historical Society (www.rhs.org.au)

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Map of Ringwood East, showing Stops 1 - 13



Stop No. 1 - Ringwood Civic Centre, Braeside Avenue

Sandy Creek (Ringwood Lake)

The area known as "Sandy Creek" was a dirty, muddy, eroded gully full of rushes, sword grass and fallen logs, and was a constant source of traffic problems for coaches and drays.

In 1923, 14 acres was purchased by the Lillydale Council from Robert Wesley Dawes, Mayor of Ringwood in 1932-33, at £70 an acre. A community working bee in 1926 built the road up and formed the Ringwood Lake.

Mining

The first discovery of antimony at Ringwood was probably by road-workers, the Smith Bros., in the mid- to late-1860s. They involved Pierce Boardman who managed the first mine in the area. He died in a mining fall in 1879.



Main Mine

The mining area extended in the triangle from Dublin Road to Mullum Mullum Creek, and over to the Lake. There were numerous leases and mines of varying sizes, beginning with surface and trench mining then shafts and adits, some over 100 metres deep. Gold was also present in the area.

The mines employed well over a hundred men and boys, gathering wood, maintaining the boilers and equipment, bagging and transporting the ore and, of course, mining. The area became a hive of activity and supported numerous hotels, shops, churches and a school.

Mining continued until the late 1890s but the dropping prices of ore and the continual problem of water levels finally forced closure. The main mine was re-opened in 1921 and during the 1930s depression but without much success. A lease was taken out in the early 1970s but no mining took place, particularly as the new Civic Centre had just been completed.

Civic Centre

The City of Ringwood Municipal offices was built in the early 1970s on the old mining site.

Karralyka Theatre

Originally called the Maroondah Cultural Centre, opened 19th April, 1980 by Sir Henry Winneke.

Stop No. 2 East Ringwood Recreation Reserve

Scout Group

4th Ringwood Scout Group was formed in 1958. The hall was started in 1962.

East Ringwood Recreation Reserve

The reserve was used as a recreation and picnic area from the 1890s to the 1930s. The sporting oval would have been by early local miners, and has been used for gymkhanas, cycling races and athletic meets, as well as football finals in the 1920s. Trees and shrubs were planted on Arbour Days.



1890s Football Team at Ringwood East

East Ringwood Football Club

Formed in 1930 with the help of the local Progress Association, the Ringwood Football Club vacated the ground. They lost, in their first season, by an average of 21 goals and only won one match in the first two years. Success came their way later on, with many premierships and league representatives. Today they are one of the better Division One sides and support a large junior base, and have a close association with the Maroondah Sporting Club.

East Ringwood Cricket Club

The cricket club was formed at a meeting on July 28, 1926 and one team was entered in the RDCA competition in the 1926/27 season. Like the football team, they won few matches in their early years. Finally, the A-Grade team won its first top-grade premiership in 1931/32. In 1960, the pavilion was built and work commenced on the second oval.

East Ringwood Tennis Club

Tennis was played in the area in the early 1920s and 1930s. The first court was opened by the Mayor in 1937, with the club forming around that time. Further courts were added.



Klix's Tea-Room

East Ringwood Progress Association (ERPA)

The ERPA was very active in the 1920s and 1930s, with the Howship, Klix and Wedge families, and others. They had a hand in starting many clubs as well as pushing for a railway station.

Klix Tea Rooms

Store opposite East Ringwood Reserve, owned by W. Dick then the Mrs Klix, later the Cassidys. The site of many a ERPA meeting.

Stop No. 3 East Ringwood Primary School

Cass' School No. 1451

After the mines were in production, the nearest school was at Vermont. On 4th December 1873 a petition requested that a school be established at Sandy Gully, Ringwood. A 5-acre site bordered by Everard, Dublin and Whitehorse roads was purchased on which a timber school and residence was built. Edward Feehan Cass took up duty on 10th of September 1874 as the first and only head-teacher, squeezing his family of nine into three small rooms.



A class with Mr Cass on right

In 1887, 120 children were crammed into a 30'x18' building, so the hall next to the Club Hotel was used for infant classes. The school was closed in 1993, as the Ringwood State School was opened at the corner of Ringwood Street and Main (Whitehorse) Road.

Lionsbrae Retirement Village

Was built on part of Cass' School land in the 1980s.

East Ringwood Primary School No. 4180

In 1916, a petition signed by 33 residents was presented to the Minister of Education stating the need for a school at Ringwood East; the District Inspector did not recommend a school "at present". In 1920, WH Everard MLA interviewed the Director of Education informing him that the district was rapidly developing and a centrally situated school was necessary in the East Ringwood. The District Inspector, AN Barry recommended a school for 75 to 100 children. The building was commenced in 1923, it consisted of 2 rooms each 26'6" x 24' partitioned and built on the corner of Everard and Holland Roads. Over the years, more land was bought for sporting areas and other buildings were constructed. Much of the maintenance was done by the local community, particularly the outside road, the football oval and the gardens. The school closed in the early 1990s.

Everard Road

Named after WH Everard MLA who supported and fought for many facilities in the Ringwood East area.

Stop No. 4 Old Lilydale Road

Orchards

There were many orchards were in the Ringwood East. Some of the notable families in the area, around Old Lilydale Road, were the Meylands, Molloy's, Hardidges, Watsons and Dynes. The crops were apples, plums, cherries, pears and other types of fruit. There were many varieties, of each fruit, some of which are no longer seen today.

Hop Research

The CUB established an experimental hop station on 2.5 acres 400 metres east of Everard Road on the north side of Maroondah Highway. Two important varieties were developed - Ringwood Special and Pride of Ringwood, the later having a profound effect on the industry and used in most lagers today.

Penguin Books

The head office and distribution branch of Penguin Books moved from Mitcham to Ringwood in 1963, 50 metres east of the hop farm. The land was sold, with the business moving to Camberwell and Scoresby in 2002.

Dynes St

At No. 12 Dynes Street was the paint factory that traded as the Australian Stain and Colour Co. The base for their paint was the local clay obtained from a shaft sunk for the purpose, and the actual factory machinery was simply several mixing machine. It closed in 1905, leaving the clay shaft open.



Insulator Works

Broom Factory

On the top sided of Oxford (Mount Dandenong) Road, opposite Joseph Street, Mr Cutts had a broom factory for three years, the brooms were made from the sawed grass growing handy. A fire destroyed the business.

Insulator Works

A pottery works was in Mount Dandenong Road, under the name the Fire Brick Insulator and Pottery Co. - known locally as the Insulator Works. It occupied several acres of land in Ringwood, although the factory itself was merely a shed about 70 by 100 feet with a 36-foot square kiln.

Stop No. 5 Burnt Bridge Shopping Centre

Swamp, Koori and Springs

The springs around the Wicklow Hill area, and was known as the Nelson Hill Swamp Lake. The Aborigines searched for their food there. From 1860 to 1915, they had their camps there.

Burnt Bridge

One story of how the corduroy bridge is as follows. On coming to Nelson Hill swamp, the bullock wagon train found water covering the road, making it impassable, so enlisted the local Wurundjeri Tribe to help erect a corduroy bridge. A corduroy bridge is a type of road made by placing sand-covered

logs perpendicular to the direction of the road over a low or swampy area. They always gave the tribe a hand out. Unfortunately a new bullock wagon didn't know the deal, which resulted in a skirmish with guns. The tribe was upset and burnt the bridge. Police were involved but the original wagon train sorted things out.



Burnt Bridge Store with old Hotel on left

Burnt Bridge Hotel

The hotel was located at the front of the present Burnt Bridge Shopping Centre. It was used by passing travellers, for food and accommodation, as well as a holiday house. Some of the previous owners were Mr Hennessy, Mr Williams and the Cutts family. They brewed their own beer onsite and had a number of small, but comfortable, huts behind the hotel. The Cutts had a 12-acre orchard on Oban Road and were involved in many small enterprises around the East Ringwood area.

Later the hotel was converted to a general store as well as taking over the Nelson's Hill Post Office. This store was run by the De Pelsenaire family and, just before its final closure, the Cheevers family, who bought the business in 1944.

Croydon West High School/Maroondah Secondary College

The school started in 1965 in Croydon High School grounds and was built the following year. It was renamed to Maroondah High School in 1971 after discovery that it was, in fact, located in Ringwood.

Wilhelmena Soccer Club

The Dutch-influenced club had a training ground on the highway side of the high school, later sub-divided and the courts being named Wilhelmena and Juliana, both queens of the Netherlands.

Stop No. 6 Ware Crescent

Ware Children's Home

In 1937, Col. Frederick Davey, of Yering, generously gave his twenty-five acre property "Ware" to the Free Kindergarten. This was part of the estate of late Joseph Maggs estate, now encompassing the area around the Maroondah Hospital in East Ringwood. The property, with the assistance of the colonel, was converted into a holiday home for needy children. Children aged from 3½ to 5½, from the inner city, came on the advice of a doctor or the Kindergarten Union for a stay of about ten days.

"Ware" provided a nutritional diet, clean bed and clothes, and fresh air to run around and play. "Muffy" the cow was popular, as was the milk that she gave, while fresh fruit, eggs and jam were continually donated by the local Ringwood community. A Ringwood committee was formed and chaired by Mayor Pearson's wife, to raise money for the home.

In 1958, the stockbroking firm, JB Were & Son, financed a new building called "Warrawong" which was built beside the old "Ware" house. Both homes continued to provide holidays for children for many years but the need for emergency accommodation became more apparent. Children went there on a short-term basis in times of family crisis.

Maroondah Hospital

The lack of a hospital in the area resulted in considerable fundraising and lobbying. The culmination of 12 years work came when the Maroondah Hospital was officially opened by Sir Henry Winneke on 3rd July 1976, but the first patient was not admitted until October. The land was originally part of the Ware Estate, then a sports oval and recreation area.

Three years later the Maroondah Hospital was treating over 4500 in-patients and 40,000 out-patients a year. The administration block was completed and occupied in March 1980 and the following year both a Casualty Department and an Intensive Care Unit opened. The Hospital's crest is in four quarters: the first, the tree of life with fruit; the second, community and industry; the third, a sunburst or renewed hope and energy for each day; and fourth, a book and quill meaning learning and knowledge.

The hospital celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2006 and has been the centre of many alterations and extensions.

Stop No. 7 Patterson Street

De La Salle School

St Francis De Salle, opened in 1958 by Archbishop Simonds. Now closed, it is now part of hospital services.

Anglican Church

On 17th May 1951, the Church of England Trust purchased Lot 43 in Patterson Street as a site for a proposed church. Early on a Women's Guild was set up and met in private houses. The Mullens family of 77 Mount Dandenong Road offered the use of their home for the conduct of Sunday school and church services. Thus Ringwood East's first Anglican Service was conducted by the Rev. H. A Warner-Bishop in the grounds of the Mullens' home on 4 June 1953.

The first church building was opened in 1955 then the present church building was not erected until 1964. The last church service was held on 27th January, 2008.

Methodist Church

On 12th May 1954, a meeting was held at the home of Mr Eric and Mrs Enid Tomkin, 1 Bondi Street, Ringwood East and it was decided to form a Methodist congregation in the area. On 17th May a Methodist Trust was formed. Commencing 30th May public workshop was conducted at 1 Bondi Street, where it continued until a church was built.

On 16th October, 1954, the Rev. Reg Bandt, superintendent of the Ringwood/Croydon Methodist circuit set the foundation stone for the church on land which the circuit had shown foresight by purchasing in 1948, in what was still orchard country. The church was opened on Saturday 5th March 1955, by the president of the Victorian Methodist Conference, Rev A. Pederick.



Building Ringwood East Station

Railway and Railway Station

As there was a growing demand in 1924 for home sites in 'the beautiful country' between Ringwood and Croydon, said the Herald in October, a new Railway Station at Dublin Road, Ringwood East, was desirable.

The following month, the trustees of the Ringwood East Railway League, an offshoot of the Progress Association, Charles Wedge (President), Thomas Burkitt (Secretary), and C. Howship (Treasurer) -

announced that a deputation to H. Clapp, Minister of Railways, had resulted in an agreement to proceed with construction provided local property owners raised £13/5/5. Much of the money was raised by private subscription. A grand opening ceremony was performed by W.H. Everard MLA on 16th May 1925.

Stop No. 8 Railway Avenue

Ringwood East Community (Bendigo) Bank

Two preliminary public meetings in July 2002 to discuss the Community Ban, the committee engaged an independent consultant to conduct a feasibility study in relation to the proposal. The results of the study were presented to the committee at a meeting held on 14 October 2002 and it was unanimously voted to proceed towards the establishment of the Ringwood East Community Bank

Railway Houses

Two railway houses were located near the Dublin Road crossing.

Post Office

Ringwood East first had a receiving office in 1902, probably at one of the shops on Mount Dandenong Road. Later in 1914, a post office was run out of Klix's shop and a more permanent post office was built in Railway Avenue. This was later closed.

Presbyterian Church

The church was at the corner of Lois Street and Railway Avenue. They sold the land to the Hollingsworth Coaching College after the merger of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches into the Uniting Church. The Coaching College operated for many years, training in the secretarial school, and extended education.

Picture Theatre

An independent exhibitor operating it, the Public Hall (East Ringwood cinema) was adjacent to the railway station and was only a more occasional affair so for as movies went. The hall saw more activity with live theatrical shows and community events in the early 1960s. The theatre seats were batten-mounted, iron framed, plywood backed seats dating from around 1929.

Stop No. 9 Eastwood Primary School

Wedge family

The Charles Edward Lyndhurst Wedge died in 17 January 1962, and lived at "Johns Wood", East Ringwood. He was husband of the late Emily Wedge and father of Charles and John. They grew lemon orchards between Morinda Street and Longview Road area.

Golf Course

In the early 1950s Ringwood orchardist and golf fanatic, Mr John Wedge, owned a property in Longview Road, East Ringwood, 25 acres of which he wished to turn into a 9 hole golf course. The land was heavily wooded, hilly and with a wide deep valley and small creek running through it. It was bounded on three sides with housing. John had approached golf course construction professionals with a view to them building the course but was told the land was too small and unsuitable so he decided to build it himself.

The course was officially opened on the 5th March 1955 and on 21st April the President of the Eastwood Golf Club, R. C. Taylor, sent a letter to all members advising that club competition play would commence on Saturday 7th May.

Eastwood State School No. 4702

The Eastwood State School opened with an enrolment of fifty-four pupils on 26th May, 1953. All grades, except grade VI, were represented. At that time, the school consisted of two classrooms, an office, staff-room and store-room. Mr. B.J. Power was the first headmaster and he was succeeded by Mr. G.J. McNeil in 1954.

The official opening of the school was performed on 20th March, 1954 by the Hon. A.E. Shepherd, Minister of Education, who was supported by Major-General Sir Alan Ramsay, Director of Education.

Stop No. 10 Knaith Rd

Swimming pool and Tip

One of the disused clay mines was converted into a swimming pool in the 1910/20s, and was used for competitions. It was closed due to a couple of drownings and later used as a tip. It was eventually filled in and became Knaith Park.

Red Cross

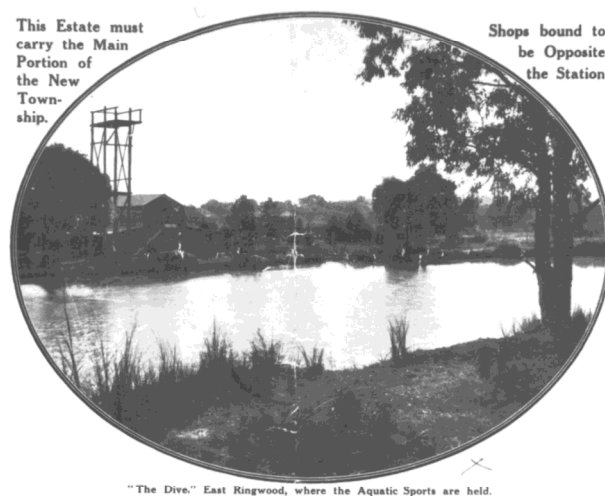
The Ringwood East Red Cross Transport Company held it's inaugural meeting on 16th June 1958, in the ante-room of the Community Hall, Railway Avenue, East Ringwood. The meeting was presided over by Mrs M V (Venn) Parker, Superintendent of Ringwood No 1 Unit in the presence of 11 members. There has been a number of Red Cross organisations meeting at the Hall.

3rd East Ringwood Scouts

Corrie Oke started the scout group in 1955, with the Cubs being run by Mrs. Walters. Corrie had a big part in getting Ringwood started as a scout district. The group first met in the Community Hall then the first scout hall was built in Patterson Street, opposite the Anglican Church where the railway car park is now. That was burnt down. The group funded the new hall in Knaith Road via fund-raising and debentures.

Ringwood East Senior Citizens

Started in 1961, with the assistance of Gwen Horman and others. The group used to meet in the Community Hall until their brick building was constructed a few years later.



Stop No. 11 Army Reserve

Clay Mining - Brickmaking

The second, and perhaps less important 'earth' industry in Ringwood was the manufacture of bricks and tiles. Unfortunately, much less detailed information is available on this subject, particularly regarding the brickyards on the eastern side of Melbourne, but we do know that the first commercial brick-making concern in Ringwood began operating in 1884, that many more flourished during the decade, and that they all closed down when the building and land boom burst in the early 1890s. Although bricks were imported from Europe from the time of the earliest overseas settlement, it was not long before they were manufactured locally by hand and burnt in 'clamp' kilns - a method where 'green' bricks are stacked in a kiln sealed by clay and the firewood fuel is piled outside. This technique was radically altered in 1858 by a German brickmaker named Hoffman, who designed a new kind of kiln that finally revolutionised the industry throughout the world. The essence of the Hoffman kiln was to make brickmaking a continuous process by means of a chamberless tunnel kiln where the waste heat from the hottest part dries off the 'green' bricks. The increased speed of production, in turn, demanded a greater efficiency in handling clay and moulding by a mechanical means.

Other Brick and Tile Works

Some of the other companies in the area were - Porcelain White Clay Co. (Joseph Maggs), Federal Brick and Tile Works, Orient Brick and Tile Works, Universal Brick and Tile Works, Ringwood Brick and Tile Works, Victoria Brick and Tile Works, Bent Co. and, finally, Glew's Brick and Tile Yard, on the Ringwood College site.

Army Reserve

The Army Reserve was formed in the late 1950s on Ringwood Brickmaking Co. site.

Baptist Church

Baptist work, in this district, was commenced when Sunday School was held in the home of Mrs. P Klix in Mount Dandenong Road on Sunday, 8th February, 1925. Mr E Herbert, Miss B Herbert, Miss SJ Good, Mr CHS Good and five children were present. Following action by the Eastern Suburban Church Ext. Comm., the Sunday School hall was erected by volunteer labour at the total cost of £791 for land and buildings, and was opened on 7th June, 1926. Reverend JJ Proctor of Lilydale was appointed part-time pastor in 1927.

After the end of World War II, the need for more space for Sunday School work became obvious. In these immediate post-war years, new building material was scarce, so second-hand scantling, roofing and siding was obtained from a set of disused fowl houses. About a year of hard work ensued in the erection of the kindergarten hall by R A Fraser, L Jackson and others. To the great delight of Miss Good, the building was opened on 30th August, 1952.

By the late 1950s, after various additions and cosmetic alterations to the buildings, it was obvious that more space would have to be found. Kevin Barry, Church Secretary at the time, and an energetic committee engaged CR & GF Lyons as architects to design a new church building which was erected by RJ Grills Pty. Ltd., and was opened on the 14th May, 1966, at a total cost of \$42,000.

Stop No. 12 Federal Road

Gowland's

Jane Gowland, known as Nurse Gowland, lived at the corner of Federal Road and French Street. She helped to deliver many babies in the Ringwood district in the 1920-50s for no cost . She died in 1956.

Federal Brickworks

A large brickworks located from Dublin Road to the Lake and between the railway and Mt Dandenong Road.

Howship/Hill Flower Farm

What was later known as Howship Bros Rosedale Nursery originated in 1905 with John Hill. The Howship brothers, Percy and Harold, bought the property in 1912 and made it into a leading centre for the cut-flower trade in Melbourne. In fact, Ringwood provided a fair proportion of Melbourne's trade in flowers



Hill's Flower Farm

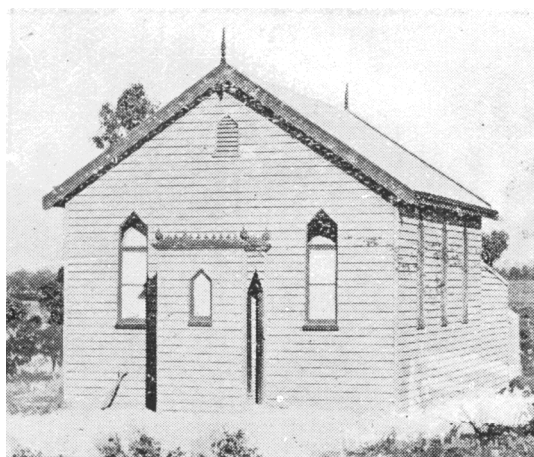
Geraghty's Dairy

The large Geraghty family lived at the east corner of Federal and Mt Dandenong Roads. They were involved in a number of businesses and also ran a dairy with Helena Geraghty a familiar figure on roads as she delivered milk on foot to customers.

Wesleyan Methodist Church

A Wesleyan Methodist group was established in East Ringwood in 1885 and two years later a Church was built in Mount Dandenong Road.

The Hills, the Forshaws, and the McAlpins, were families numbered in the congregation. For some years from 1896, the Rev. David Porteus was the Minister, and at first his family lived in Wonga Road, but later moved to a house in Warrandyte Road a few doors north of the Claridge cottage. Later again, it was renamed 'Selangor' and occupied by A.T. Miles. David Porteus died in 1921, but his widow Katherine lived in Ringwood for a further twenty years. The Porteus's one son, Stanley, who became a teacher of mentally handicapped children in Victoria before going to the USA. and later to Hawaii, where he was Professor of Clinical Psychology, has described the pleasures of his boyhood in Ringwood in his autobiography. He was born in Box Hill in 1883 and died in 1972.



Wesleyan Methodist Church

Stop No. 13 Club Hotel

Club Hotel

The original Club Hotel was built by George T. Wiggin. George was a son of Thomas Wiggin, licensee of the first Coach & Horses Hotel. So, at one stage, the Wiggins controlled both ends of early Ringwood. It was sold to James Lindsay in September 1887 who was the licensee from 1888-1892. It is still operating today under the name of Daisy's Hotel.

Stock Market

Livestock was sold from a paddock on the west side of the Club Hotel in the 1880/90s and was Ringwood's first Sale Yards.

Skerrett's/Blood/Herry Store

Essentially the same store and was located at the bottom of Braeside Avenue, now part of the west lane of Mount Dandenong Road.

Guest's bakery

Located on the west corner of Braeside Avenue and delivered bread a large area in the 1940s.



The Old Ringwood Hall

John Curran's Store

This store was located opposite the Recreation Reserve in the later part of the 19th century. It supplied equipment and stores to the miner's, Curran also having his own lease and mine.

Ringwood ("Miners") Hall

Ringwood's first hall was located on the east side of the Club Hotel; originally called the Gordon Hall. Used as an overflow for the full Cass's school.

Police

After many complaints of lack of police, a station was opened at 32 Mount Dandenong Road in February 1888 and staffed by mounted constable Frank Waters.

Catholic Church

A modest wooden church stood on land in Whitehorse Road donated by the Pratt family and was built for the princely sum of one hundred and forty-five pounds



Catholic Church

Methodist

in 1887, a small Church was erected in Whitehorse Road, between Mt. Dandenong Road, and the Lake. After consultation with Mr. Kennedy, the Rev. Freeman of Lilydale, a United Free Methodist minister, commenced a monthly service, which was later increased to a service every Sunday. The development of the work necessitated the erection of a church in 1879, and this was a weatherboard shell, measuring 24 x 16 feet. It stood on a triangular piece of land now a reserve at the intersection of Whitehorse and Mt. Dandenong Roads.

At the consummation of the Methodist union in 1902, the Free Methodist Church building was sold and both congregations met in the old Wesleyan building. Then in 1904, a site was purchased opposite the Railway Station in what was now the Main Street of the township, and a wooden building bought and removed from Blackburn was erected there.

Presbyterian Church

In 1909, arrangements were made for the holding of a service at the Ringwood Hall every Sunday evening. The Reverend J. H. James officiated at the first service. In 1910, land was bought in Whitehorse Road, and two years later, a wooden building was removed from Oakleigh, and re-erected. The first evening service was held on 24th October, 1912 by the Reverend H. M. Burns, Lilydale. In 1913, Sunday School was opened under Superintendent G. Muller. Mr. W. E. Blackwood was appointed in charge after severance in 1915, from the Lilydale charge.

In 1923, a new Church building was erected, but by 1928, increased membership made it necessary to obtain a larger block of land, and the site in Adelaide Street was bought, and the Church and building were moved there.