

An Introduction to the History of Ringwood

A paper written by Gerry Robinson for the Ringwood U3A, March 2007

I begin by acknowledging that there were aborigines in the area before white settlement, but I know virtually nothing about their history (although I like their tribal name, because I pronounce it “Wurrun- Gerry!”).

This talk is an introduction to the history of white settlement in Ringwood.

The most important factor influencing Ringwood’s history has been its geography. In contrast with the flat basalt north and west of Melbourne, Ringwood is hilly. Nearly in the foothills of the Dandenongs, it receives sufficient rain to maintain a natural stringybark forest suitable for clearing to become farmland of moderate quality. For the earliest settlers, from the 1840’s, the trees provided wood for building, heating, and for sale to folk who lived closer to Melbourne. Eventually, into the first half of the 20th century, the cleared farmland was mainly used for orchards, producing a wide range of fruits, especially apples, but also including peaches, pears and lemons. In many cases, it was the children of the Doncaster orchardists who, newly married, settled in the arc from North Ringwood to Heathmont, filling in part of the semi-circle of German Lutherans from the Aumanns and Schramms round to the Fankhausers of East Burwood. It is not prime farming land (“barren and infertile” according to the government surveyor Hodgkinson in 1858) and by our material standards, local life in the orcharding era was difficult, characterised by long working hours, trips to market, large families, intermarriage, sport on Saturday afternoons and church on Sundays. Yet there were some fine achievements of the times, of course. Among them were the famous Annual Shows of the *Ringwood and District Horticultural Society* (formed in 1896), the building of the Cool Stores (1911) which were a landmark for many decades, the Clock Tower (1928), an even more famous landmark in both its locations, and the Town Hall (1936), replaced by the Civic Centre built in 1966 over the antimony mine shafts in East Ringwood.

For many years, settlement was sparse. The population of Ringwood was only 700 in 1908, and indeed only 5000 in 1947. The timeline of administrative milestones also reveals this slow development: “Ringwood” was named by surveyor N.M.Bickford in 1857, became a parish in the Berwick Road District in 1862, then part of the Shire of Lillydale in the Upper Yarra Road District in 1871, and was given municipality status as a borough 50 years later, in 1924. Ringwood was proclaimed a City in 1960, and joined Croydon to become the City of Maroondah in 1994.

Geography has also influenced our history in other ways – mining the natural resources of antimony (discovered 1869), and clay from 1884; providing a ridge route to Gippsland and the goldfields at Warburton and Woods Point (theoretical buckets of water emptied from each hand on Bedford Road end up 40 km apart, the north draining into the Yarra via Mullum Mullum Creek, the south into the Bay at Carrum via Dandenong Creek); separating North Ringwood from Heathmont; and influencing the location and importance of highways and roads, often with ribbon commercial development. Geography was also a factor in finding a route for the railways which in turn attracted developments such as the 19th century western relocation of the centre of town from its earliest focus around *Daisy’s* back to “new town” near the station, the 20th century

building of *Eastland*(1967), the development of East Ringwood and Heathmont shopping centres, and determining that Ringwood became a bus terminal for folk north and south. It is geography also that influences land and house values, from the elite North Ringwood to the flatter New St areas, and even determining that the hillier non-trained Park Orchards, Donvale and Warranwood became the more expensive residential areas in the late 20th century. Geography also located industry, sports grounds and walking paths in the flat flood plains of the Mullum Mullum, Bungalook, Heatherdale and Dandenong Creeks.

Yet by far the greatest influence of geography has been our proximity to the city of Melbourne: 15 miles (23 Km) from the CBD. In the early days, our produce was sold there, and in the 20th century our residents often worked, shopped, ate and were entertained there. A generation of suited men caught the 7.50 red rattler to town. Inexorably, Ringwood became part of Melbourne's suburban sprawl as street after street was formed, summer dust and winter mud until surfaced. There were no sealed roads in Ringwood in 1924, and 185 Km in 1974. Farm and forest became quarter-acre blocks, the hammer replacing the horse and the houses replacing the snakes, koalas and bellbirds. In 5 years, Heathmont's population multiplied by five: 600 (and 2 shops) in 1953, 3000 (and 28 shops!) by 1958. "Don't ringbark Ringwood" became the cry as services, kindergartens, schools, churches, health centres and shops multiplied with dramatic speed. Ringwood's population grew from 10,000 in 1952 to 30,000 in 1966. (Maroondah has nearly 100,000 in 2004). The first connection of a Ringwood house to the MMBW sewage was in 1964 (first electricity 1915, water 1921, gas 1960) Pubs such as *The Coach and Horses* from 1850 and the *Club Hotel* from 1877 had always been a feature. Estate agents multiplied – *Carter's*, *Dickson's*, *Barry Plant*, *Ray White*, *Stockdale and Leggo*. Land and home values have escalated – at the first land sales, in 1854, 80 acre lots were offered for 80 pounds! 77 "glorious allotments" were offered by auction at the Dublin Road Station Estate on Saturday November 10th 1923 on terms of no deposit and one pound a month, and prospective buyers were offered free first-class tickets from Melbourne. A random choice of a *Carter* advertisement in 1974 lists six Ringwood homes priced from \$24,000. In the most recent *Maroondah Leader* property section (6/2/2007) there are four Ringwood homes listed by *Carter's*: only one is a stand alone and one of the three others, at 2/33 Albert Street, is priced at \$425,000! Many local homes, particularly in Ringwood North, are now valued at well over half a million dollars! The spread of Melbourne has meant that Ringwood has become just another suburb, like Greensborough or McKinnon or Watsonia, although always more Anglo-Saxon than Springvale, St Albans and Mill Park. It has been said that in being swallowed by the metropolis, Ringwood and many other suburban stereotypes have lost their historical identity. The last Maroondah Highway tree was cut down in 1959, the Cool Stores Co-op wound up in 1960, and the Washusen orchard, the last in Heathmont, was subdivided in 1966.

So, it is clear that geography affects history. History has also affected our geography! Our creeks have been barrelled and straightened, Ringwood Lake was formed (1926), our bush has largely been devoured by suburban growth, nature has so often been made subservient to humans, our contours and indeed our lifestyles have been altered by the roadmakers – so dramatically shown in *Eastlink* . What an example this is of history altering our geography – although not all in Ringwood, the project will result in 4.7

million plantings and the excavation of 7 million cubic metres of rock and earth. Man can move mountains! Indeed, as the route generally follows creeks, we really ought to use it as an example of the inter-relationship between geography and history.

History also affects history! That is, past developments influence present directions and future plans. Local Councils and other authorities declared some areas to be commercial or industrial zones. Hume Street residents had \$10,000 added to their home values overnight by living in "Ringwood East" rather than "Bayswater North." Ringwood itself was small enough to be combined, if uneasily, with Croydon, and become "Maroondah." On what could be seen as the most important individual event ever in the history of Ringwood, a Grand Ball was held on Monday evening November 28th 1887 to mark the official opening of the railway goods shed! The railway had come to Ringwood in 1882, and went on to Ferntree Gully in 1889. Train stations have acted as magnets for land developments such as "The Railway Park Estate" as early as 1887 and for commercial development - the poor location of *Eastland* being our classic local example - and indeed for louts and graffiti vandals! Increases in population density have affected most aspects of our living, including vehicular traffic. Car yards such as *Bill Patterson*, *Ringwood Mazda*, *Alan Coffey's* and *Etheridge Ford* have become "Car Cities!" Multiple dwellings further increase the population, as double storey units and retirement villages impinge on the traditional building block. Traffic problems accelerate as more and more families own two cars, 18 year olds see a car as a necessity, and mums consider it normal to drive their children to and from school (and ballet and basketball). "The History of Transport in Ringwood" awaits an author who may well start with *The Coach and Horses* and *Cobb & Co.* from 1874, and include Milner's taxis and Matheson's cycles, and at this end the impact of *Eastlink*, the absence of garages in Heathmont where once there were four, the huge reduction in school student cyclists, and the perennial "transport hub" theories - recently euphemistically updated to "Transit City!" So too is there scope for "The History of Shops and Shopping in Ringwood" - the demise of the local milkbar, draper, and hardware store; the orange effort of *Mitre10* to be in the grand tradition of *Bamfords* and *Ringwood Timber and Trading*; self-service and the end of deliveries; the emergence of *O'Connors*, *Barclays*, *Turtle Den*, *McDonalds* and a hundred other restaurants and food take-aways; the impact traffic and *Eastland* have had on Maroondah Highway shops; the *Eastland* story, of course, and the attempts of North Ringwood, East Ringwood and Heathmont to follow Canterbury's lead and become warm local "village" shopping centres.

For their roles in the commercial, social and administrative aspects of the history of Ringwood, some names deserve to be in this introduction to its history: families such as Blood, McAlpin, Aird, Dickson, Maggs, Parker, Corr and individuals like Town Clerk A.F.B.Long, Engineer Frank Lucas, Mayor Ben Hubbard, editor Ted Sleeman (the *Ringwood Mail* was born in 1924), Captain A.T.Miles, Jim Manson MLA, newsagent Ken Ward, Doctors Langley, Hewitt, Widmer, Deerbon, and "Freemen of the City" Alan Robertson and Bill Wilkins. Lest the list be all men, itself an eloquent piece of history, I include historian Ellie Pullin, and her husband Ron.

So to recent times. Overall, people are wealthier and, despite all the modern conveniences and electronic whiz-bang, busier, than ever before. The baby boomers of the 1950's are "downsizing," and their units, retirement villages and hostels are found throughout the district. The orchards are gone. *Cadbury-Schweppes*, who came to

Ringwood in 1967, has the highest building(8 storeys) in Ringwood, *Eastland* has movies, Maroondah Hospital (opened in 1976) keeps growing, as do Ringwood Secondary College, Aquinas and Tintern, it seems that everyone and especially the young spend hours on their mobile phones, the most water in Ringwood is probably in bottles bought at supermarkets, on the roads every hour seems peak hour (2001 census figures show that 70% of workers travel by car, and a third of all households have 2 cars), text messages fill the air, young mums pay to drink morning coffee, no-one plays cricket in the street, single parent families (11.5%) and lone person households (27.5%) are increasing (7.8 and 21.4 ten years ago), Ringwood Market fades and Ringwood Square grows, we waver between Liberal and Labour in Federal and State politics, church-going is petering out, football matches between the various districts within Ringwood remain intense, in casual dress we drive to the shopping centres, a home has recently sold for one million dollars, recreational walkers have things in their ears, and we await with interest the impact of *Eastlink*. And as History is the tale of continuity as well as change, Ringwood folk live as they always have – challenged, sometimes sad, sometimes happy, sometimes purposeful and sometimes consciously pleased to live in what is still a leafy attractive and well serviced environment.

Select bibliography:

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Gerry Robinson, Ringwood Parklands named after Notable Local Folk (2005)
Gerry Robinson (ed) , Heathmont Recollections 2006
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Peter Timms, Australia's Quarter Acre (2006)

HEATHMONT/RINGWOOD

Books on local and surrounding history

Reviewed by Gerry Robinson, 1996

1. Sally Symonds, *Healesville: History in the Hills*, (1982) Like Ringwood's, a story of aborigines, overlanders, timber, and GOLD until the 1860's. Then mountain resorts and tourism. I particularly enjoyed the origins of place names, surveyor Steavenson (river) and his wife Mary(sville), Premier Richard Heales, Blacks' Spur, Woods Point, and a couple of surprises - Badger Creek, named after Badger, a bogged horse of Rylie (Great?) and Launching Place, from where the miners launched their punts which they towed upstream! Of interest also are the stories of the Coranderk aboriginal settlement, The Maroondah Reservoir - ruining the timber industry, St. Hubert's vineyard, the local public holiday for the opening of the railway in 1889, Cobb & Co. and then the first motor coach in 1905, Royal visits, fires and floods, in the 1920's over 100 guest houses in the town and 10,000 visitors at Christmas and Easter, the 1934 opening of the Sanctuary, , the 1964 Centenary, RACV Country Club, and the private car meaning the day-tripper and even the city commuter replaced the holiday-maker- and killed the train service, and altered forever the nature of the town.

GR

2. Charles Daley, *The Story of Gippsland* (1959) The author was a well-known President of our Royal Historical Society of Victoria. We in Ringwood are familiar with the outline of this history - topography and drainage, aborigines, explorers, pioneer settlers, timber, gold, transport and communications, growth and transition. McMillan, Macalister and Strzelecki were prominent explorers. There are some excellent descriptions of pioneer housing and travel, especially in Ch. 9 and Ch. 10, and Ch. 13 reminds us of the popular local excitement and economic importance of the coming of the railway (1877). We in Ringwood would have like Daley to say more about the road to Gippsland through our area, thus avoiding the swamps to the south.. The mining and industry in the Latrobe Valley, and the tourism at Wilson's Promontory and the Lakes are mentioned, but this is essentially a book about the 19th century - as Daley sums up at the start of Ch.15: "Thus, by the beginning of the 20th century, after 60 years of peaceful penetration of the province, which at first so apparently formidable in its natural barriers had effectually resisted human occupation, Gippsland had been successfully opened up for settlement and enterprise by the indomitable energy and persistent labours of the pioneers." GR

3. Niall Brennan, *A History of Nunawading* (1972) Again, an aboriginal name, meaning something like "ceremonial ground" or "place for coming together". Brennan writes of the stock routes east to and from Melbourne, especially Delaney's (now Canterbury) and The Great Three Chain Road (now Maroondah Highway). He also features pioneers John Gardiner, Henry Elgar, first settler Arundel Wrighte (most readers will be familiar with his memorial cairn in Woodhouse Grove), David Boyle, August Schwerkolt. Much is made of the hilly forested nature of the area - Forest Hill, Box Hill, Mount Pleasant, Vermont, and of the lack of clearly defined natural boundaries. As Hugh Anderson did for us, Brennan tells tales of settlers, schools, churches, coaches, brick-making, and of course, the coming of the railway. His preference for the past creek over the present drain is repeated at every opportunity, and he lingers fondly over the Blakburn Lake and the Tree Preservation Society. It is interesting to read a little of the traditional

rivalry between Blackburn and Mitcham which flared yet again in the mid 1940's when the amalgamation discussions of that era were in full swing. Indeed the "Argus" of 1945 described the new City of Nunawading as a "name without a city", "Nunawading" having been revived ("Shire of Nunawading" 1872-1925 then "Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham" 1925-45). One idea was to give Blackburn to Box Hill, and Mitcham to Ringwood, rather than combine the two villages to make a new "Nunawading". Interesting stuff, this, in the light of our new cities of Whitehorse and Maroondah. Good potential here for a local historian!

Brennan ends his History with a fascinating chapter of social analysis which he titles "The City of Tomorrow" and which reminds us of the pleas (and optimism) of our own Bill Wilkins at one of our recent meetings. Searching for a community spirit to give richness to our modern lives, Brennan ranges widely and wisely over the features of modern suburban life, and concludes, if more in hope than with conviction, that "as Nunawading was a pioneer in the battle for environment: it may well be a pioneer in the battle of suburbia." Do try to read this book on our neighbour, and especially this last chapter.

GR

4. Tom Griffiths, *Secrets of the Forest* (1992). Sub-titled "Discovering history in Melbourne's Ash Range", this is a fascinating and authoritative two part study. The first is based on the familiar chronological study of themes - timber and mining industries, Black Friday, water, tourism, conservation and heritage, followed by Part II, in which various authors describe 26 selected Historic Sites in the Great Dividing Range to the north and east of Melbourne, from Wandong to Walhalla, from Gembrook to Jamieson. Both the Mountain Ash and the bushfires encouraged Griffiths to name the area "Ash Range", and indeed in a most interesting section he tells how the Ash is dependent on fire for the release of its seeds, and therefore its on-going existence! He writes lovingly of *E.regnans*, the tallest hardwood in the world .

In the introduction to the historical section, as settlement pushed towards the Ash Range from the 1840's, we meet familiar folk - Gardiner, Ryrie, Gulf Station, Ferdinand von Mueller, and the Coranderrk aborigines. Then comes the era founded on gold, featuring timber and tramways and tourists and Walking Clubs, and ended by Black Friday. Stimulated by recent Conservationists vs. Foresters debates, Griffiths ends this section with some evocative reflections on the nature, importance and uses of History. Areas of interest in the second part include Fernshaw, Kinglake National Park, and Noojee. Historically interested folk going bush walking would find this book of considerable value. GR

5. Michael Jones, *Prolific in God's Gifts: a social history of Knox and the Dandenongs* (1983) Victoria Knox, after whose husband "Knox" was named, writes in this book's Foreword: "The fascination of this book lies in the width and depth of the author's research, as he traces out the metamorphosis of a small, rather disadvantaged, insular rural community into a thriving mini-metropolis, totally different in character. Many of us who lived in that small community did not realise at the time that we had no hope of successfully resisting change: we were far too close to Melbourne." The same could be said for Lilydale, even Healesville, Ringwood, Dandenong, and earlier Box Hill, Oakleigh, Heidelberg, and so on. All of which makes the scope of this book interesting. We in Ringwood keep Wombolano Park and the Kalinda Forest as some approximate remnants

of "nature", but clearly the City has won - with the Bypass its new standard-bearer! In the areas covered by this book, the fight has been more intense - "hills versus plains", ferntree gully versus Knox City, and to the author the solutions looked, at the time of writing, to be more profound, helping "dispel the myth that the history of Melbourne's outer suburbs is of no real importance." (!) This is a book of strong opinions and Big Pictures. In the Introduction, Dr. Jones talks of the area's "guilt feelings" at the destruction of its tall trees, and speaks of 20th century Melbourne's shift of preference from the mountains to the beach, describing this as "the end of a particular type of society, more insular, more intellectual and non-conformist, and more closely knit than the showy beach culture." Interesting stuff!

The book has three parts - "Pioneers Up to 1920", "Neither Country nor City 1921-1963" and, provocatively, "A Successful Experiment." Part 1 features the aborigines' destruction, Rev. James Clow, pioneer of Dandenong & Ferntree Gully, Baron von Mueller's failure to be interested in saving the tall trees, the plunder of the forest, lyrebird shooting, the coming of the railway in 1889, through Ringwood rather than Dandenong after a lively debate, and the "Puffing Billy" (at first a term of sarcasm - later, of course, of endearment) line from 1900. In Part 2, we read of the Gully as "the lungs of Melbourne", the very rapid growth of Boronia in the 1920's which encouraged Boronia and Bayswater to consider breaking from the Gully and joining Ringwood, 81 boarding houses in 1921, and 21 Progress Associations in the hills by 1929. Dr. Jones tells of the origin of the district names "Scoresby" and "Knox", and suggests "Chandler" would also have been a good choice. In Part 3, the praise for the City of Knox and its leaders is lavish, and the book ends with a couple of pages of reflection, notably "the private motor car liberates locals from dependence on each other and on local communities." The use of "liberates" is interesting, for the motor car and suburban growth have indeed savaged local identity - and local history?

GR

6. Hazel Poulter, *Templestowe: a folk history (1985)* We in Ringwood are very familiar with the family who dominate this very interesting book.. The father of local historian Win Jones, Walter Chivers settled in Armstrong Road, and his son Mervyn sold some of his land to the Education Department for HEPS. Walter's father was Thomas (1844-1942), son of John and one of the first white people born in Templestowe. Hazel Poulter dedicated this collection of recollections to her grandfather, Thomas Chivers. Other Heathmont folk, including Herman Pump, also came from Templestowe, and the book is a fascinating folk history, with many accounts of everyday pioneer life.

The first settler (1837) in Templestowe was Major Charles Newman, who built "Pontville" near the junction of the Yarra and Mullum Mullum Creek. In 1840, John Chivers arrived to work for him. The route to and from Melbourne was via Heidelberg. Mrs. Poulter writes of bushfires, bushrangers, Finn's Upper Yarra Hotel, gold at Anderson's Creek, orchards, street names, Lutherans, horses, Tom & Emily's 51 grandchildren, the Memorial Hall, lots of memories of what life was like. "Some Easter holidays the family would spend at Heathmont" and at another time, several children walked to Mitcham to visit another uncle. It took 2 days to get to Rosebud for a holiday. The descriptions of life then are absolutely fascinating - yonnies, nicknames, swimming in the creek, mushrooming, coppers, chip heaters, Sunday school, roast, jelly and junket! GR

7. Muriel McGivern, *A History of Croydon: a second volume (1967)* This best-known of all local works was the result of painstaking scholarship over many years by Mrs. McGivern, founder of the Croydon Historical Society. Despite a regrettable absence of maps, there are many photos supporting more than 300 pages of detailed text, telling the story from the first white settler, William Turner (1837). She writes of roads, shopping centres ("Arndale", 1964, was the first in Australia), coaches and the coming of the railway. The middle chapters of the book are devoted to the "fringe areas" of Croydon - Croydon North, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth, Wonga Park, Montrose, Birt's Hill, with very detailed descriptions and tales of the pioneers, natural features and homesteads in each. Also featured is our own Warranwood (pp.152-158), and mention is made of A.T.Miles and James and Samuel Maggs, land owners in Ringwood and Wonga Park. In all, a very thorough account of our neighbour by an expert local historian - but so much clearer if supported by maps!

GR

8. Ellie Pullin, *25 years of Paper: Ringwood Historical Research Group 1958-1983*. In 1983, to mark the Silver Jubilee of our Group, Ellie Pullin, "matriarch of our History," compiled this brief report of the Group's history. It is unbound and has only 25 pages of text, although these are well supported with illustrations. Mrs Pullin recalls our first meeting, in 1958. 6 were present: Mr. J.K.McCaskill, foundation Chairman, Mrs.J. Anderson (Sec.), Albert Aird, Ron & Ellie Pullin and E.T. "Paddy" Miles. The latter, son of A.T., was President from 1960 until he left for Sale (that is, to live in Sale, not himself "For Sale!") in 1965. Mrs. Ellie Pullin succeeded him, and with her husband, our first Archivist, devoted many hours and indeed years to our History. A number of folk helped, especially Mr. Brian Pump, photographer. From 1970, the store of memorabilia was housed in the Special Collections Room in the Ringwood Library. Particular events in which the Group was involved included the preservation of the Clock Tower in the 1960's and the Golden Jubilee celebrations in 1974, when Hugh Anderson's "Ringwood: Place of Many Eagles" was launched. Mr. Rob Akins and Mr.H.M.Thomson were effective Presidents in the mid 1970's, supported as always by the Pullins, Life Members. The Group suffered a great loss when Ron Pullin died in 1978. After considerable lobbying and research, the Miner's Hut was opened at the Ringwood Lake in 1983, and the book ends on a note of guarded optimism - there is ongoing interest in our History, but the demands on the Group's few members are considerable, and some younger members are needed. (And so say all of us?)

GR

9. Eric Collyer and Ken Smith, *Doncaster: a short history (1981)* Short it is, for school project use, and part of a projected series including similar studies of Templestowe, Park Orchards, The Tram & Tower at Doncaster, and The Orchards. The story is familiar - Hoddle's survey of Bulleen, bounded by Koonung & Deep Creeks, and the Yarra, Unwin's 1841 purchase, Burnley's 1853 purchase and naming of the area "Doncaster" after the English town where his parents were born, pioneers, especially the Germans in the little area then called "Waldau" around present George and Victoria streets. Here there were families such as Thiele, Pump and Aumann (Heathmont street names), Zerbe, Finger, Meyer, Schramm. Other early settlers, orchardists by the 1870's, included Whitten, Williamson, Serpell, Lawford, Dehnert, Fromhold - all familiar road names now. Landmarks included Holy Trinity Church (1869), Doncaster State School (1886) The

Athanaeum Hall (1871) the Cool Stores in east Doncaster (1914) (the largest in Australia), Hummell's Tower (1879), the first electric tram in Australia (1889), Serpell's store (1890) on White's corner before Shopping Town (1969), Zerbe's general store (1909) in East Doncaster, Council offices (1890, then 1958, then again 1979, as the orchards disappeared, and Doncaster became yet another, if highly desirable, Melbourne residential suburb. GR

10. Ann Thomas, *Maroondah Country* (1979) This is a chatty collection of 17 brief essays of a page or two each, supplemented by many photos, and centred on Healesville. It has some interesting accounts of Fernshawe before the Dam, and of the preparation for and building of the Dam, and also a few local anecdotes. GR

11. A.P. Winzenried, *The Hills of Home: A Bicentennial History of the Shire of Sherbrooke* (1988) The bicentenary of Australia, not of Sherbrooke! This is an attractive book of considerable scholarship, with outstanding photos, and written with zeal but not too obtrusively didactic. As with most books of local history, it lacks sufficient maps - to a record degree, for it contains no map at all! The author's other books include *Tram to Warburton*, *Scoreby: a Guide to its History*, and *Britannia Creek*. As we might expect, Winzenried begins with an account of the habits and scope of the Bunurong aborigines. Then came the pioneers - William Turner is not mentioned (c/f Muriel McGivern's *Founder of the Dandenongs*, but we are told of Rev. James Clow at "Tirhatuan" homestead on his "Corhanwarrabul" run, Beilby with his first sawmill, exploring botanist Daniel Bunce, the timber cutters with their tramways, the gold diggers who became settlers (notably the Watsons, Stuarts and Kirkpatricks). Two important events happened in 1889 - the formation of the Shire of Ferntree Gully and the coming of the railway. As the author evokes the atmosphere of "The Hills", there is much here on "Puffing Billy", on the era of the Guest Houses and on the artistic and creative folk who were attracted there - Louis Esson, Vance and Nettie Palmer, Mrs. Aeneas Gunn, Max Meldrum. Chapter 12, "People and Politics", deals with the troubles the FTG Shire experienced in the 1950's and 60's, as the area began to wrestle more openly than ever with the great debate between the developers and the conservationists. The "scandals" of the FTG Shire were a major factor in its replacement in 1963 by the Shires of Knox and Sherbrooke.

In his last three chapters, Winzenried deals with the recent period, the present, indeed, as he titles his last chapter, "The Present Tense". He documents the rise of tourism (day trippers) galleries, plant nurseries, restaurants, community groups. The conservation movement, including the Shire Council, faced a big challenge after Ash Wednesday, 1983.

From the Prologue: "Houses have swallowed up the apple orchards of Doncaster, the market gardens of Scoresby and Lysterfield, the dairy farms of Harkaway and the rolling plains of Langwarrin. Nevertheless, "the Hills" remain," and with far more trees than they had 100 years ago! "As a living environment, the hills continue to give inspiration." GR

12. Scoresby Historical Resource Centre booklet, *Aborigines of the Port Phillip Region* (n.d.) This small unbound project booklet describes the way of life of the Wurundjeri and other three tribes who lived around Port Phillip. It is very clearly presented, with illustrations and a bibliography - an excellent introduction to this topic. GR

13. Bruce Bence, *Anderson's Creek Cemetery, Warrandyte, 1866-1988 (1988)*

An interesting booklet, if loosely organised. It contains some maps, tables and illustrations. Early settlers were buried in the Melbourne cemetery - for the Chivers, in 1850, a 2 day journey.-or on the property, the last recorded of which in Doncaster-Warrandyte was in 1888, the same year in which the Waldau cemetery was closed. From the 1850's, districts developed their own cemeteries, Anderson's Creek opening in 1866. Bence writes of the various causes of death in the 19th century, ranging from drowning in river or mine to contracting a contagious disease. The change of district name from "Anderson's Creek" to "Warrandyte" took place gradually, the school changing in 1908. Cemetery records were lost in the Black Friday fire. There are some quaint captions to the photos - "The grave of George Hollaway who died in August 1881 before restoration"! GR

14. Muriel McGivern, *Founder of the Dandenongs, (1979)* The Wurundjeri aborigines were the first folk to know the Dandenongs, but they did not settle there. Charles Grimes, 1803, was the first white person to see the Dandenongs, Hovell (1826) their first explorer. Overlanders Gardiner settled at Kooyong (1837) and Fletcher at "Mooroolbark:" (Chirnside) (1838). In her anecdotal, but informed way, Mrs. McGivern ranges across the hills, explaining the origins of place names and identifying John Weeks as the founder of Montrose (1856), Robert Blair of the township Mooroolbark (1850), Isaac Jeeves of Kalorama (1856). She goes township by township North to South until we reach the Clows at "Tirhatuan", then the Rourkes at Bayswater (1843), and finally William Turner at "The Basin" in 1844, the first settler in the Dandenongs. GR

15. Robin Da Costa, *Blackburn: A Picturesque History (1978)* . "Picturesque" because of the great number of full-page photographs which are the strength of this collection of accounts of the emergence of the Blackburn township from about 1882, when the railway came through and "Blackburn Creek" (named in the 1850's after Melbourne city surveyor James Blackburn) settlement became just "Blackburn." For a page or two each, supported by the photos, Da Costa uses about 40. We read of hotels (which prospered after adjacent Booroondara went dry in 1920) the opening of the railway on Christmas Day 1882, George Goodwin, Thomas Morton ("Morton Park") and the "Freehold Investment and Banking Co." and the "Blackburn Company," which made the Lake and planned the development of the township, the brick works, churches and schools, Wandinong Sanctuary, bell birds, coolstore, Blue Moon Fruit Co-op, the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society, and the native plants and birds. GR

16. Jan Penney, *Reclaiming the Past (1985)* To assist studies of local history, the History and Heritage Committee of the Victorian 150th. celebrations initiated a project which involved the establishment of 3 Support centres, at Oakleigh, Ouyen and Richmond. This book reports on the project. It identifies all the problems endemic to Local History It deals with artefacts, photographs, oral history, newspapers, maps, storage, collection policies, staff training, ephemera material, registers, cataloguing, and publicity. This is a useful and interesting manual. GR

Conform

17. Diane Sydenham, *Windows on Nunawading (1990)* In contrast with Niall Brennan's "impressionistic" study of Nunawading, this is a "More richly detailed and documented study" in which the post-war period receives more attention. Indeed, put nicely in the Preface, this book "does not conform to traditional expectations of local history, but it may assist in overcoming professional doubts as to the genre's respectability." This thematic rather than chronological study, is then to Nunawading's Brennan the same as Andrew Lemon's "Box Hill" was to Southall's. Who will follow Hugh Anderson for us?

So, Dr. Sydenham's outstanding book contains an excellent timeline, a full and learned bibliography, a context of the uses of local government in Australia, an extensive treatment of the 20th century, maps, pie diagrams, analyses, perspectives. Yet it is possible to omit the story from hi-story, and very soon we are reading of the Wurundjeri and Coranderrk, of Elgar and Roads Boards, timber, Boyle, Rooks, McClare, McClelland, McGlone, L.L. Smith, the Schwerkolts. But soon we leave the pioneers and move to the Blackburn Lake, Tally-Ho Boys' Village, orchardists Slater, Pearce, Fankhauser, Matheson, flower farms, Daniel Robertson and E.E. Walker and the "Australian Brick, Tile, and Tesselated Tile Company."

Ch. 6 is titled "Life in Suburbia", and deals with bringing modern comforts to the commuting suburb - water, power, roads, sewerage, transport, postal and garbage services and welfare services. The Eastbridge migrant hostel receives a number of pages of attention. The author acknowledges a modern loss of a sense of a united community, but regards the municipality as "well supplied" (title of Ch. 8) in services and in cultural pursuits, where she evidences the Mitcham Memorial Hall, Rep. Group, Arts Association, Nunawading Arts Centre and Library. Ch. 9, "Environmentally Friendly" continues the praise of the suburb and its residents - and reminds me of the perennial concern that local historians, often employed by local Councils, seem too keen to be laudatory ("public relations exercises" is how the author herself describes them in her Bibliography). But Dr. Sydenham is able to cite Blackburn Lake, the many parks and creeklands, Wandinong Sanctuary, the Horticultural Centre, Bellbird Dell, the Tree Preservation Society, Antonio Park, Yarran Dheran, Abbey Walk, Schwerkolt Cottage, the unmade protected streets in the Blackburn bellbird area, and indeed the care with which many citizens tend their own gardens as convincing evidence.

The final chapter is an analysis of the situation facing Local Government generally at present, with application to the contemporary Nunawading position. (Concerns expressed would surely be multiplied had Dr. Sydenham been writing now that the City of Nunawading has gone!)

Readers of this book are urged not to ignore the Bibliography, with its critical analysis of Local History in Australia, and its incisive comments on relevant available sources. GR

18. G.C. Fendley, *A centenary History of the Mount Pleasant Methodist Church (1965)* This booklet starts with Joseph Aspinall in 1864 coming from his Woodhouse Grove Chapel in Box Hill to help Francis Rooks (Rooks Rd) convene a meeting at his cottage with the purpose of establishing a Wesleyan chapel. William Bennett from Damper Creek (Bennettswood) was also helpful, and L.L. Smith, M.P., obtained a Crown grant of two acres on Scotchman's Hill. Of the 8 on the original committee, 4 were wood-carting selectors. The Chapel soon served as a school, too. Of the 1889 committee of 9, 5 were

impossible

orchardists. Church benefactors included Edward Bishop in the 1880's and J.T. Tweddle, owner of "Winlaton". New church, 1916. In the 1965 trust, only one orchardist. Most of the others were professional men commuting daily to Melbourne. Kindergarten again from 1955, as the local farms were subdivided and the population grew. Indeed Forest Hill State School was so over-crowded that some classes were held at the church, 1958-61. Indeed the 100 years ended with church membership a record 215. It had been under 10 until 1882, then about 30 until 1917, about 60 until 1951, 100 for the first time in 1958, 150 by 1961, thus mirroring the growth of population of Nunawading. GR

19. Jeff Leeuwenburg, *The Making of Melbourne in Maps (1987)* This unique book is a collection of 16 A3 historical maps, a few from each decade between 1830's and 1930. The maps cover the bay, the city, and some suburbs, and as such are very interesting. Of particular help to us are maps 5 and 26. 5, "Parish plan of Melbourne region, 1850-51", extends east only to Nunawading, but shows the Survey area of Elgar and Unwin. Map 26 is titled "Ringwood 1930", but is a great let-down, for it turns out to be Zone 7 of the series called "Ringwood", Commonwealth Section, Imperial General Staff, and is a map of the Oakleigh- Dandenong area! Nevertheless, most local history books have too few maps, and this collection is of considerable general use and interest. GR

20. Jack Lundy, *Ringwood Memories: No. 1, Loughnan's Lake (1978)* Are there others after this No.1? "Luffie's Lake", over Loughnan's Hill, was an attractive and popular swimming pool for the locals before World War I. In this little booklet, Jack Lundy provides very effective descriptions of the area around Kubis Drive and Glenvale Rd, which some folk think has only recently been opened up, but which was indeed a popular Ringwood area 100 years ago! GR

21. Graham Keogh, *History of Doncaster and Templestowe (1975)* This is one of my favourite examples of traditional local history writing - there are maps and a timeline, many photos and clear, orderly prose. There is also an effort to avoid the trivial without precluding all things anecdotal, and some interpretations are made to balance the inevitable narration. Indeed, for its time, 1975, there is quite an effort to include 20th century material and analysis, although this lacks the professionalism of some more recent Local History works, and indeed resorts to unsupported platitudes as it peters out! The author identifies 5 stages of the development of D & T.: river flats 1838- 1850's; gold and the settlement of the high timbered country in the 1850's; thirdly, the emergence of the fruit growing until 1900; then its consolidation to its peak in the late 30's, and finally the conversion from rural to urban. As Keogh tries to work out the pattern of early settlement, he wryly comments that the contemporary governments had the same problems. But we find Gardiner, Nutt, Darke, Wrighte, Ryrie, Unwin, Elgar, Wood, Anderson, Newman, Chivers. Like "Ivanhoe", "Templestowe" is a place in one of Sir Walter Scott's novels. Jimmy Finn's Upper Yarra hotel gets a good mention, as do familiar Doncaster folk - Fingers, Serpells, Irelands, Whittens, Anderson's Creek goldrush, Roads Boards. After some efforts with berry fruits, it was found that lemons, peaches, pears and apples did very well. The biggest dam built, on Sydney Williams' lemon orchard, was 22' deep and covered 2 acres. Keogh writes of Co-ops, new varieties produced by Thiele, Zerbe, and others and new techniques, often developed by

the Petty family. He tells how the South Warrandyte growers shopped and stored at Ringwood rather than Doncaster, and the Warrandyte minings left no mullock heaps because the tailings were used on local road-making. Churches, schools, halls and sporting grounds are dated and described. The Great Depression hit the area hard, as did natural disasters - the 1934 flood, the 1939 fire. (in one area, 168 houses lost in half an hour, and many historical records were lost forever at the South Warrandyte Statre School) and later the 1962 fire. And came the car, the suburbs, fascinating photos comparing 1910 with 1970, Shoppingtown, the freeway, and the complex problems of modern suburban life. With a pious ring, Keogh affirms his confidence that just as the pioneers rose to meet their challenges, so too will the modern community, "taking inspiration from the past, face its future with confidence and serenity." Wow! GR

22. Earle Parkinson, *Warburton Ways (1984)* Parkinson is editor rather than author of much of this book. He has collected many accounts, very loosely put together, and without the help of any maps. Two well-known official explorers begin this tale - Hoddle (Creek) in 1845 and Panton (Hills) in 1865. In the Upper Yarra valley, William Ryrie settled first, Yering Station, 1838, sold to de Castella in 1850, and where vines were first planted in 1853 (St. Huberts). Gold was discovered at Mount Little Joe in 1859, and there were soon miners everywhere, especially at Hoodle's Creek, and also at Reefton and Yankee Jim's Creek (Old Warburton). There were over 3000 miners, for a few years only, and their ghost towns and huts have generally been destroyed since by one bushfire or another. From time to time, gold mining has been revived. The first landholder in Warburton town district was E.J. Buller, 1871. The rambling nature of "Warburton Ways" is illustrated by the fact that by p. 58 we are told that Buller settled in 1863. First State Schools at both Hopodle's Creek and Warburton were opened in 1875. After gold, the other industry around Warburton was timber, boosted by the coming of the railway in 1901, and we read of the tramways, sawmills, Britannia Creek distillation, mountain ash, woodchopping contests, flood and fire

. Upper Yarra was constituted as a shire in 1888, with a population of 160. The train came in 1901, and was closed in 1964. The Adventists came in 1904, "the greatest single influence in the growth and progress of the Warburton district" (Con Crowley) The Warburton Sanitarium, opened in 1910, and the Sanitarium Health Food Co. The 1920's was the era of the convivial guest house - Green Gables, Mayer's Warburton Chalet (1937- 1973 fire), Dora Lynn, Mountain Grand, Milner's hire cars and Martyr's bus company, O'Shannassy's Dam 1912, Donna Buand bridel track 1912, Warburton Ski Club 1930, Royal visi 1954, Upper Yarra Reservoir 1957. The Warburton Advancement League came in the 1950's was after the boom years of the guest houses, as the one-day trippers took over. The book finishes with a useful bibliography. GR

23. Donald Garden, *Heidelberg: its Land and Its People, 1838-1900 (1978)* This is an honest way to avoid the difficulties of describing the history of a residential suburb - stop at 1900! Hoddle's 1837 survey allowed for land sales in 1838. Garden tries very hard to trace the successive land sales, but as we all know the records (or lack of) make this a difficult task. Certainly, however, with a reputation as an elite district, much of the land was taken up in gentlemen's estates: "Ivanhoe", "Banyule" "Viewbank" "Rosanna" "Charterisville" "Cleveland" "Yallambie Park".. The owners of these properties (well

mapped by Garden) dominated the district - roads, social activities, Warringal village plan, an English character about it all. Then came Gold., with population increase and more intensive farming. After the gold decade were twenty years of slump. Garden blames Collingwood and floods and absentee landlords for the fact that the northern suburbs lost prestige, and therefore development, compared with the East and South-east. Brighton, South Yarra, Toorak became what Heidelberg had been. Rail, gas, and water came 20 years after the eastern suburbs, and Heidelberg became popularly known as "sleepy hollow", a dairying village, "a rural backwater." with a declining population. 1888 railway opened, but it was only a spur, not a direct route to Melbourne. One of the factors against a direct link was local bickering about the best route. Yet, partly because of the very poor communication with Melbourne, the area remained very pristine and attractive, stimulating the Heidelberg School of painters. In 1882, based on a large gift from Mrs Thomas Austin, of Winchelsea, Austin Hospital was opened, at a cost of 8000 pounds, and with 62 beds. The depression of the 1890's kept Heidelberg's development back, so that indeed when the century closed, Heidelberg was still a quiet village. Railway, 1901, and eventually private car and post W.W.II population boom turned Heidelberg into a suburb (well, perhaps a number of suburbs, because the inequality of wealth (e.g, East Ivanhoe c/f West Heidelberg) has remained. GR

24. Susan Priestley, *Cattlemen to Commuters: a history of the Mulgrave District 1839-1961 - now the City of Waverley (1979)* Between the ribbon developments of the east to Box Hill and Ringwood, and the south east to Caulfield and Dandenong, this area was rural far longer. Indeed it started more slowly, for Hoddle did not survey it, rather it was one of his assistants, and not until 1853. With the help of effective maps, the author tells of cattle runs from the 1840's, then the 1853 survey. Soil had limited fertility, but steady growth of small farms and Sir Redmond Barry's farms "Syndal" and "St. John's Wood". Gradually the farmers turned to fruit and vegetables in the 1890's. Tally-Ho - Harkaway the big fruit areas, Jordan's 30 acre orchard on High Street Road the biggest. He also had 30 acres as a dairy farm. The Horticultural Society's hall ("Horty Hall") built in 1899, now owned by High St. Uniting Church, was the social centre of the district, and in 1909, Waverley sports ground and Mechanics Institute were opened. High Street Road Cool Store, 1920, as the area continued to prosper as a fruit-growing and market garden district. Railway to Glen Waverley, 1930. "The Council in 1925 took the modern step of advertising for a lady typist, its first female employee." 1927-8, Mt. Waverley reservoir formed.

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