

Heathmont.

Their garden was old English.

We had the use of the horses.

I went to live in Heathmont when we lost our father in 1928. Mr Herman Pump had helped my mother get a position as housekeeper to Mr Peter and Mrs Henrietta Walker who lived at the end of Bedford Road where it joins Canterbury Road where Walker Park now is.

The area was a children's paradise. We had access to such a variety of wild flowers, patches of deep blue stars, large and small pincushions - blue and yellow, the heaths, the orchids, the beautiful greenhoods at the base of trees, maiden hair fern, and so many wattles, beautiful gum leaves, and ground covers, yellow, red and daisies in the damp areas.

Mrs Walker was a clever craft lady and a great gardener. We used to help her strip bark, gather a few lichens, and strip flax for her to dye in beautiful colours, all for her craft. She taught us how to appreciate nature. She also bred little Australian terriers and Persian cats.

Mr Walker who had No.9 Darling Street used to ask us children to pick large sprays of Lucerne, pick off all the green leaves, and it was used for decoration for weddings. My mother used to drive them into Ringwood each morning by buggy for their day in the city and pick them up each evening. They entertained and we saw many interesting people. We were very happy there.

Opposite Walkers in (now) Aringa Court were Mrs and Miss Russell. They owned quite a few acres of orchard, a piggery, etc., a beautiful mixed farm. A great Christian lady and supporter of our church. We had a fete there twice. Her home had large windows overlooking the Dandenongs.

Miss Russell was very interested in the Country Womens Association. She rode all over the Mallee, especially to isolated farms, encouraging women to join the C.W.A. She was always on horseback. Mrs Russell went overseas quite often, loved Europe, etc., but always said how wonderful it was coming home as there was nothing to compare with our Dandenongs. In those days the hills did not have the scars and not nearly as many dwellings. People were more civic minded when I was a child, for instance the Russells gave their groom a beautiful wedding. My mother helped with cooking, etc. Us children helped carry things across. We saw our first wedding cake and the bride. Great memories.

There were eight orchardists in Heathmont. John and Herman Pump had an orchard on opposite sides of Canterbury Road. Herman Pump and his wife were always out to help folk – great workers. I remember a Sunday night's tea. Such a sumptuous meal. Us children had to take our plate to Mr Pump who carved the cold meats. He would look at you and say you are growing, you must be hungry. Yes, you need another good slice. Meals were never rushed at weekends or evenings. Us children always learnt something from the adults' conversation. The Pumps orchard ended at the Railway and went through to Bedford Road. Canterbury Road was just a track. Thick gluey mud in winter, mainly caused by the steel rims of buggies and wagons.

The Pump family were very civic minded. Loved the area. He was President of the cricket club for 27 years, the Progress Association, a hard worker of the Bowling Club though he never had a bowl there. He loaned his horses and equipment for the work of building the Heathmont Railway Station, plus £200. The Pump family were held in high regard – much loved people. Wilfrid (son) and Linda (daughter) are still alive. The Pumps cleared their land and planted the orchard.

George Muller (Dickason Road, just track to their orchard) came to Heathmont in 1913 with his father (from Echuca), cleared his land, and had an orchard of apples, pears and plums. He built his own cool store. A family man, a son and daughter, his son Douglas still living in Heathmont. He was on the Session of our church (was treasurer) when it was down by the lake. There was a commemorative chair given when he died, used in our pulpit. He was secretary of the Progress Association. Wrote a letter

to the council more than once asking if something could be done to Canterbury Road as the condition of the road was so bad, also Heathmont and Great Ryrie were impassable in winter because of the creeks. He was also involved in the Ringwood Show, and the cricket and tennis clubs. In 1922 he was the principal mover in getting a committee together for the building of the station. Herman Pump was President. He was also the one who helped get the R.S.L. In 1925 the estimated cost was £3392, reduced to £2800 because they did not need a residence. A large amount was raised towards the cost by the residents.

The Sharps had 15 acres where the shops are now in Canterbury Road from the Bedford Road end. They grew apples, pears and plums. Their 4 children walked to school with us. They were all interested in cricket and tennis. Mrs Sharp was a great tennis player. Mr Sharp had come from Portland in 1903. The tennis courts were near the station. We went to all the shows and most activities when we could. Mr Ron Sharp who is still alive remembers the first shop. It was a house up near the Post Office. They were served through a window of the house. The Cuttings had the first general store later, in Canterbury Road.

Further along down Mountain View Road were the Washusen family. They had a variety of fruits. The children walked to Ringwood Primary. Both sons took up land further away.

In 1919 there were Bayleys from Williamstown, Smiths, Gerlachs – all had orchards, Martels house is still standing, also Pumps.

We walked to Sunday School down by the lake. We walked down Bedford Road then to what is now Maroondah Highway.

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The market catered for everything. The stock route was down Ringwood Street to the market corner at Maroondah Highway and Ringwood Street. They also had large auction rooms. A drover riding ahead cracking his whip yelling out "Shut your gates" as the herd was coming through to the sale yards which sold everything. A Mrs Burns did the catering at the market.

About 1921, my father would be leaving at 7:30 to 8pm to Queen Vic Market with apples, pears, plums, or cherries according to season. Once he had a load of peas, cabbage, swedes and white turnips. He arrived home with not a cabbage sold. Better luck with the other produce. My sisters used to pick large bunches of gum tips to sell to ladies - a little bit of pocket money for them. Our mother used to take orders for dressed poultry and settings of eggs. Many women on the land had this sideline.

Mr Herman Pump was a very civic minded man, instrumental in the location and building of Ringwood State Primary School in Greenwood Avenue. Also the bowling green though he never bowled. His youngest daughter, Linda, was a junior teacher in Grade 4. We were one of the first schools to have and learn basketball taught by Linda.

Ringwood Shopping Centre was open on a Friday night.

At Ringwood Show we saw trotters for the first time. My father received prizes for peas and a sister for writing and turning the heel of a sock. There was foot running, dog and poultry judging. We heard M.P.S. Chandler and Mr Reid for the first time. We had our tea (basket) and a service that evening.

Remember 1922? The building of the Church of Christ (in one day).

Great rejoicing when Ringwood became a Borough and we had our own Councillors. A Mr McAlpin had been a councillor at Lilydale previously.

One lunch time at school we went with Win Carmichael and friends, running all the way down to Canterbury Road to hear one of the first loud speaker radios.. Her mother put it on and we heard the stock report - 1924?

The broom & clothes prop man and rabbit used to come around regularly.

Miss Daisy Paddock, our much loved Primary School teacher, was so good and just to all children. The school was opened by Sir Alexander Peacock. The Headmaster, Mr Broben, had taught at the school in Ringwood Street. Miss Gran was the organist, Mr Little the minister, Mr Crisp, music. My sisters went there.

For the building of the Methodist Church, people paid 1/- a brick. All denominations contributed. MacAlpins were instrumental in obtaining the pipe organ. Everyone seemed to be there for the opening.

The Church of Christ was built in a day. We had our tea and dedication service the same day.

My mother told us of coach travel from Mansfield to Melbourne in 1900, stopping over at the Coach and Horses Hotel.

In 1920 we had a second hand shop on Maroondah Highway opposite the Market. Many folk around had furniture from our shop.

The Misses MacGillivray ran the Coffee Palace in the Main Street. They were the ones who had the first church (Pres.) moved to Ringwood from the Richmond/Burnley area. It was situated down by the lake. The new church moved to Eastland built about 1926. Our first Harvest Festival decorated with branches of fruit hanging from the ceiling beams, cases of fruit and baskets of vegs and fruit all grown in Ringwood district.

I and my daughters were married in Scots Church.

Sunday School picnics were by wagon to the beach once by steam train to Williamstown. Around this time the water came to Ringwood. A great asset as when the tanks were low our mother carted water from the dam, let stand overnight and did her laundry the next day.

Occasionally we went to the pictures. They rung a bell when the pictures were going to start. Folks came from Mitcham.

In 1928 Ringwood State School raised money in different ways towards the clock tower in memory of soldiers who fought and died in the Great War. One was a Cantana and it was the first time coloured lights were used on the stage. The North Ringwood school was opened due to Dicksons family and MacAlpins.

Ringwood East station opened around 1923 built over swamp land known as a snake area. Not long after Heathmont was opened. Mr Herman Pump was instrumental.

The Meyland family. Ringwood East school helped overcrowding at Ringwood.

Our first small library – Brown's next to the Post Office operated by Miss Qyinn.

A midwife, Mrs Nurse Maggs and later Mrs Nurse Gowland, looked after mothers in the district from before I was born.

The blacksmith, Mr Picket, opposite Kenworthys - coach builder, later Laurie Flynn in Pitt Street. These men were artists in their work.

Great day when Sir Dallas Brookes opened the City of Ringwood. He said how much the family would enjoy the case of cherries he was presented with.

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