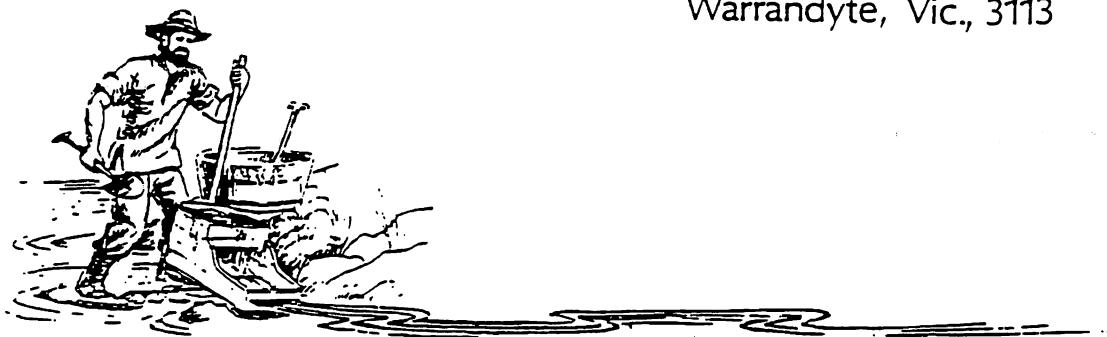


Warrandyte Historical Society

Post Office Box No.67
Warrandyte, Vic., 3113



NEWSLETTER

"Recording the History of Warrandyte"

No 85

ISSN 0158-0493

JUNE 1992

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Publication No. VBH5874



Warrandyte Historical Society

Post Office Box No. 67
Warrandyte, Vic., 3113

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE

Our Treasurer wishes to remind you that it is that time of the year when the annual subscriptions are once again due. Details of subscriptions are shown on the bottom of the page. The fees have remained unchanged again this year.

If any members can see their way clear to make a donation in addition to their membership fees we would be more than grateful as although we now have our own home, we do need funds to develop the museum.

NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME

IMPORTANT

We would also like to remind you that Tuesday 14 July is the annual general meeting and election of office bearers. The meeting is held at the museum at 8 pm. Your attendance would be appreciated.

The Treasurer
Warrandyte Historical Society
PO Box 67
WARRANDYTE VIC 3113

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

RENEWAL _____ NEW _____ DONATION \$ _____

NAME.....

TEL NO.....HOME.....WORK

ADDRESS.....

SPECIAL INTERESTS OR SKILLS.....

ARE YOU HAPPY TO BE INCLUDED ON THE MUSEUM ROSTER ?.....

FAMILY \$10 ... SINGLE \$7 ... STUDENT \$0.50 ... PENSIONER \$5 ...

George's love of cricket was passed on to his six sons as they all played for the club and at least one member of the family represented the club for over forty years. The sons all played football with the local club, the eldest Edwin, captained the club for several years. Alan was also to captain the club.

The years especially after 1929 were a struggle for such a large family, jobs everywhere were at a premium but luckily most of the boys could work with their father and the girls were of great assistance to their mother but were also expected to do their share outside like milking cows and other light jobs around the place. Life was a constant battle but one of the family's sources of pride was that they did not owe anything to anybody. The family in those days stuck to the rule that if you couldn't pay cash you didn't get it.

Over the years several floods and fires of various magnitude occurred in the area causing the family degrees of trouble. The large flood of 1934 had very little impact on the family except for the plight of some of their neighbours, but the fire of 1939 was a disaster to most people in the district, although not many lives were lost. Considering the enormity of the fire, the loss of property was disastrous. George and May were just seeing the culmination of all their years of work when they lost everything and being in their late fifties, it was a shocking blow to have to start all over again. Burnt in the fire was his home and contents, most of his animal stock, his small orchard, engines and equipment, tools and several hundred tons of firewood which were stacked in the yard. The fire in the yard must have given off tremendous heat as the coals that remained were several feet deep and smouldered for weeks. Of course, as with most people of that era, insurance was very low.

There was no thought of quitting and in line with others in the district, George and May just picked up and started off from scratch again. Quite a lot of people just quit the district having had enough.

A few months after the fire, the Second World War commenced and subsequently three sons, Edwin, Frank and Alan, joined the Army. Alan served in the famed 9th Division and was a "Rat of Tobruk". When he returned to Australia from the Middle East, he also served in the Island campaign. Cecil had joined the Police Force in 1942 and Sydney had had his right hand severed in an accident at the Box Hill Brick Works and Stan was only twelve at the outbreak of war.

George continued to operate his firewood business and raise milking cows and when he put his cows on the market at Newmarket, Croydon or occasionally Dandenong, they were keenly sought after as he had built up a good name over the years at these venues.

Roads where we live - FITZSIMONS LANE

From Bruce Bence

While Fitzsimons Lane is not in the Warrandyte area, the road does have an interesting history. It is named after John Henry Fitzsimons who bought the land east of the lane between the river and Porter Street in 1860.

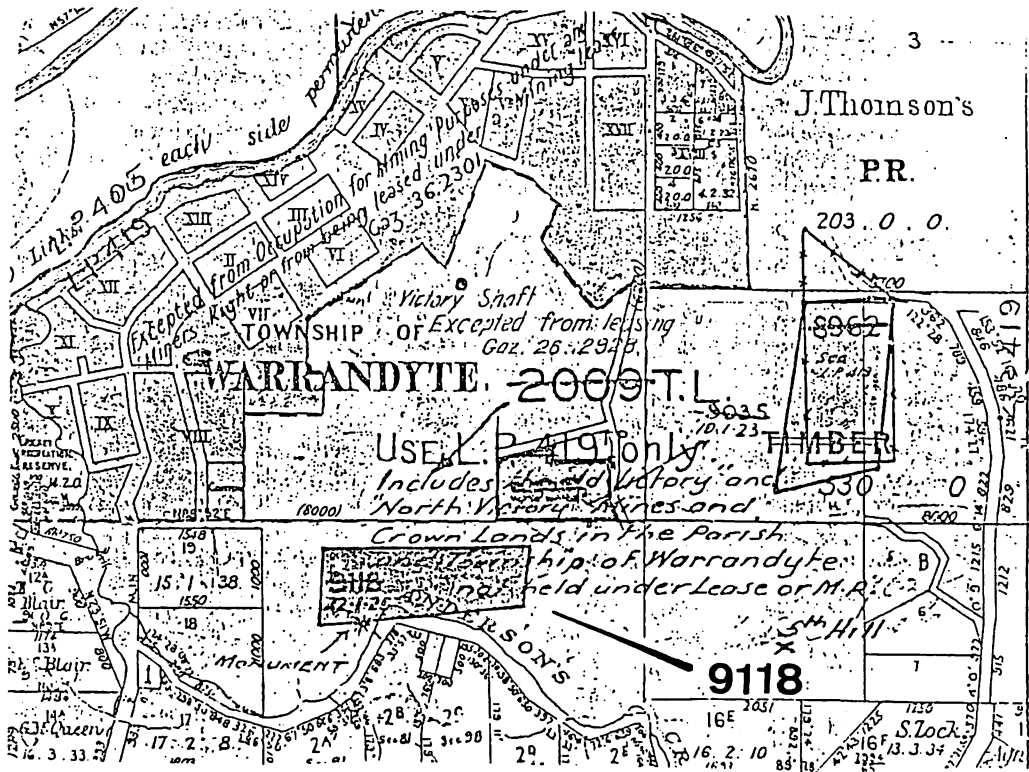
John grew vegetables, planted an orchard, and raised cattle on the land.

His great grandson Brendan Fitzsimon now lives on part of the land which has now been subdivided.

The spelling of the name has always been a problem, the usual way is Fitzsimmon, and I was to live in the area for some 30 years before I learnt the correct way was Fitzsimon.

Hazel Poulter informed me that the lane was originally a water lane, ie, to give access to the river. Local people drove sleds down to the river to fill up water barrels and tanks when their own water supplies ran low during the summer. The women would also take their washing down to the river when the home tanks were running low, do the washing, then string up a line to dry the clothes.

Mike Fitzsimon, who grew up in Warrandyte, had an even greater problem, as his mother's maiden name was Johansen, who were a pioneering family in the district. Johansens Road was named after them and only the name was misspelled. It should have been Johansen not Johanson as it appears on the maps and official records.

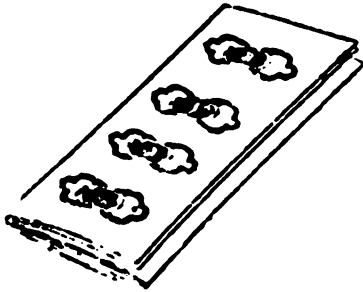


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PV.6.32

WARRANTYTE RED CROSS

Convalescent soldiers from "Stonington" are entertained at the Warrantyte Recreation Ground by Mrs Miller on the first and third Thursdays in each month. They arrive at 2.30 p.m., and sit down to a delightful afternoon tea provided by the committee and others.

They are then entertained for several hours with games, community singing and dancing, and enjoy the visits immensely.

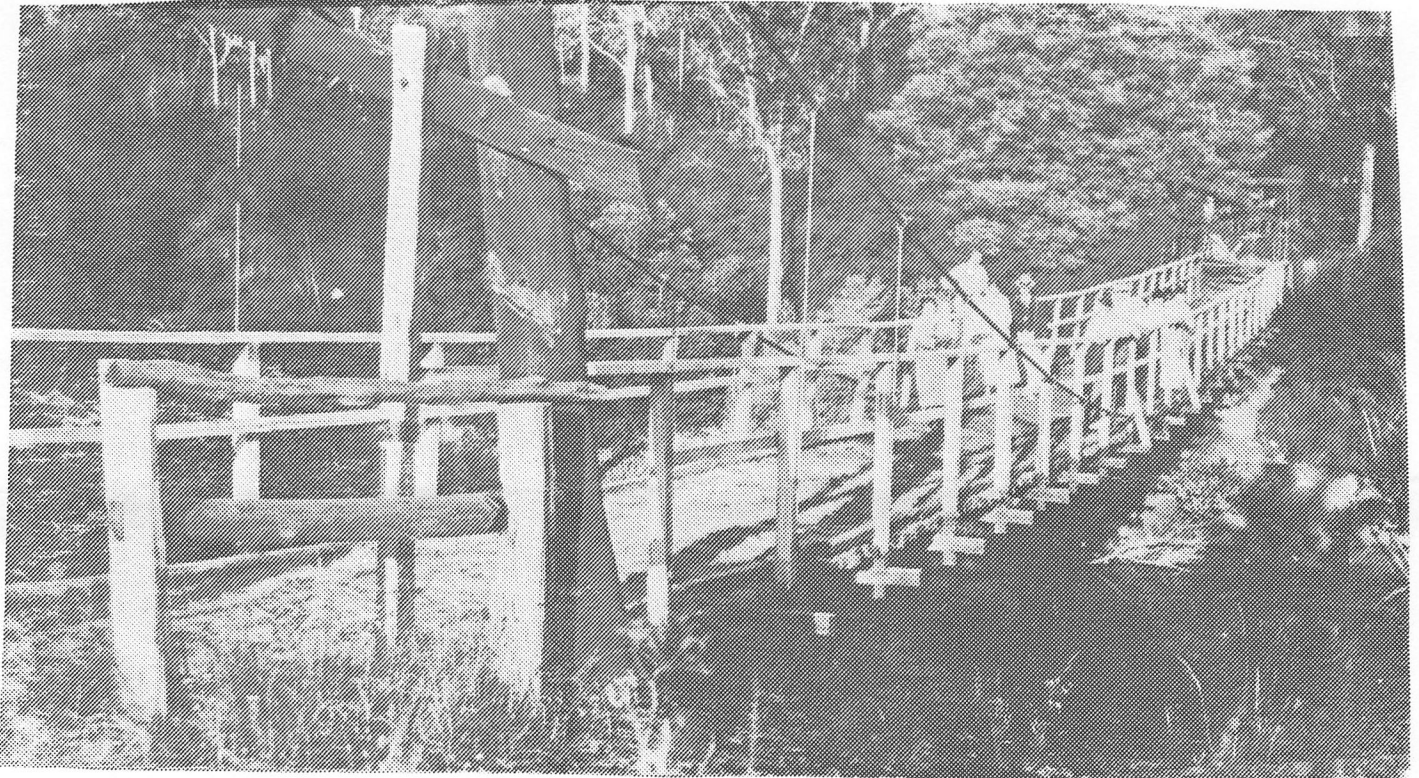
Every second Thursday Mrs Miller holds a dance for the Air Force boys camped near by. A collection is taken up and the Red Cross generally benefits by £6 to £7.

A Euchre Tournament will be commenced on Tuesday, February 22, at 8.30 p.m. at Mrs Warr's shop, Main road, Warrantyte. £1 1/ will be awarded the winner of the aggregate and a small prize given each night. Supper is provided, and the admission each night is 1/-.

On 10th March an excellent picture night will be held in the hall, featuring "Reunion in France," starring Joan Crawford and John Wayne.

The patronage of the public is solicited at these entertainments.

FROM THE ARCHIVES



Pearsons Bridge over the Yarra River which was located about 500 metres upstream of the Pound Bend tunnel outlet. The bridge was destroyed in the 1934 floods and never replaced. It provided access from the Pound Bend reserve to Glynn's Paddock on the north side of the river.



William Hussey's bullock team opposite the East Ringwood School. He kept the team on his property at South Warrandyte and used them for exhibition at various functions.

Warrandyte Historical Society

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NEW SOCIETY OFFICE BEARERS

Following elections at the Annual General Meeting, our new Office Bearers are:

President	Bruce Bence
Vice Presidents	Michael Willersdorf Ken Crook
Secretary	Gina Jones
Treasurer	Alan Alder
Committee	Ted Rotherham Andy Jones Joyce Bellingham Richard Warwick

As mentioned in his report, Ted Rotherham has retired after almost fifteen years as President of the Society. The importance of Ted's contribution to the Society cannot be understated as he has been the guiding light (together with Shirley) over that period. In particular, Ted has been involved in the preparation of the photo collection and also the development of the Old Post Office. Thanks Ted for a job well done.

THE BELZER FAMILY OF WARRANDYTE

The following article has been written and researched by Bruce Bence.

The Belzer family came to live at Anderson's Creek not long after Philip Belzer married Harriet Marriott at Christ Church, Eltham on 11 November 1868. When he married, Philip was a miner and lived at Diamond Creek, he was then aged 30 years and had been born in Beharheim, Prussia, Germany. Philip had come to Victoria around 1861. His parents' names, shown on his marriage certificate, are Juln and Hannah Maria, however at the time of Philip's death, his parents' names were recorded as Johann and Eva (nee Schmidt), farmers. (See note on Page 9.)

Harriet was a general servant living at Eltham and was aged 26 years when she married Philip. She came from Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England. Her parents were Daniel Marriott and Ann (nee Medham).

Philip's name is frequently spelt with two "l's" in various records but Philip is most probably correct as it is spelt with one "l" on his marriage certificate and their eldest son was John Philip Belzer.

The marriage of the late Philip Belzer's eldest daughter Harriet to Christopher Blair on 10 October 1893 was reported in the Evelyn Observer at some length. What made the wedding significant was that it was the first wedding in the district where both the bride and groom were born at "the Creek" (Anderson's Creek now Warrandyte). The wedding took place at St Peters Church of England (now St Stephens Anglican Church). Harriet Belzer was attended by four bridesmaids including her sister Eva and the two Misses Hutchinson.

The Rev Adney officiated at the service assisted by Mr Hollow. The bride wore a gown of cream cashmere trimmed with lace and orange blossoms, a long tulle veil and a wreath of orange blossoms and she arrived at the church on time. As nothing really changes, the Evelyn Observer made no mention of what the groom wore. The four bridesmaids "presented a very pleasing effect" dressed in cream and orange coloured gowns trimmed with lace.

About 100 guests attended the wedding reception which was held at the old Mechanics Institute Hall, which then stood on the north west corner of Yarra Street and Webb Street. The guests were entertained with dancing, singing and recitations and were well supplied with refreshments, the guests were unanimous in voting the evening one of the most enjoyable and pleasant evenings that they had spent, the reception lasted until daylight.

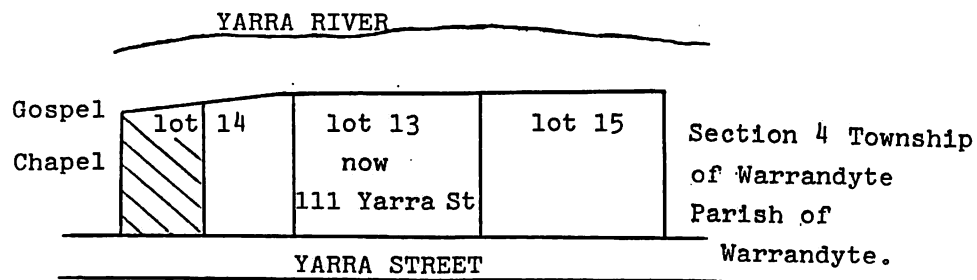
Ron Belzer, the grandson of Philip and Harriet Belzer, celebrated his 80th birthday at his home in Warrandyte on 25 January 1987. Ron and his older brother Len were both born at the historic Post Office which still stands at 111 Yarra Street. Ron and Len were the third generation of the Belzer family to live in Warrandyte.

Ron and Len's father, Robert, married into another local family when he married Ethel Speers on 15 October 1902. The wedding was held at the home of the bride's mother, Bathia Speers, widow of Alexander Speers, who had taken up land on the east side of Alexander Road, originally called Alexanders Lane after Ethel's father. The witnesses to the marriage (Folio No 6615/1902) were Samuel McAuley and Robert's sister, Eva Belzer who were themselves, to be married a fortnight later.

Robert Belzer's occupation at the time he was married was given as that of a miner while Ethel's occupation was Postmistress, they were both aged 23 years at the time of the wedding.

Ethel Belzer became the Postmistress at Warrandyte prior to her marriage on 22 October 1900 and was to hold this position until Miss Anna Moore took over on 1 February 1927. It was during Ethel's early years in the building that it was extended basically to its present state.

The Post Office is built on Lot 13 which was bought from the Crown on 27 December 1876 by Alexander Speers, Ethel's father. Alexander also bought Lot 14 on 24 September 1878 and Lot 15 on 6 January 1880. When Alexander died on 25 July 1889, the three properties were left to Ethel's mother, Bathia. Bathia gave part of Lot 14 to a group of trustees acting for the Baptist Church. The Baptists built the first church on the site and held services there for some years before discontinuing the building in 1924. The Presbyterians were certainly unlucky. In 1934 the church was flooded to the eaves and then was burnt down in the 1939 fires. As the Presbyterians could not get title to the land, they did not rebuild and in 1948, Ebenezer Burton, the last remaining trustee, transferred the land to the Gospel Chapel. Lots 13 and 15 and the remainder of Lot 14 were sold each time the Post Office changed hands over the years until finally the land reverted to the Crown on 6 December 1979. Ethel Belzer became the owner of the land after her mother died on 29 March 1910, the land being transferred to Ethel May



The land bought by Alexander Speers 1876-1880.

Ron and Len, like most children in Warrandyte, learned to swim at an early age. The boys were forbidden to go near the river until they could swim but by the time they were officially allowed to go swimming, they could swim like fish, as for some years they had been swimming in their birthday suits to avoid the necessity of explaining away wet clothes.

When Ron was a boy the swimming hole was down behind the Kia Ora Cafe (destroyed during the bush fire on Friday, 13 January 1939 - it stood just to the west of 207 Yarra Street). Later the swimming hole was shifted to the deep hole behind the Post Office where the remains of the stage and diving platforms can still be seen.

Ron, who attended the Warrandyte School No 12 as his father had done before him, left school at the age of 14 years as was usual for those days. With his school days behind him, Ron helped his father clear land that he owned in Victory Gully or Whipstick Gully as it appears on the early maps of the area. The wood that they cut in clearing the land was carted home for use in the fires to keep the house warm in the winter and for cooking, Ron staggering home under a load of firewood after a hard days work in the bush.

At the age of 16 years, Ron started work as a baker at the local bakery in Warrandyte and later travelled the country as far away as Griffiths (NSW), Hamilton, Dookie and many other places before settling into a job at Altona.

While working at Altona, Ron used to work all Friday night at the bakehouse then come home to play football for Warrandyte on Saturday afternoon. Ron played for Warrandyte for seven years, his A grade cricket career was much shorter; the Warrandyte team was a man short one day and Ron took his place in the team to make up the numbers.

Robert Belzer worked as a coal miner at Wonthaggi and on the gold mines at Kalgoorlie in Western Australia before he was married. Unlike many of the miners from Warrandyte who left the area to try their luck in the west, Robert returned to the area. On his return, Robert Belzer worked in the Caledonian Mine at Warrandyte earning six shillings a day and he passed on a number of stories of the mines, some of which were still working when Ron was a boy.

Ron Belzer married Kath Walsh who came from Castlemaine. They met when Ron worked for her brother Jim at the Warrandyte bakery. Their first home was in Port Melbourne, Ron was working at the Box Hill brickworks at the time, as were a number of other Warrandyte men. Ron used to get up at 4.45 am to catch a train to Box Hill in time to start work at 7.15 am. Knock off time was at 5 pm.

During the depression which started in the late 1920's and went through to the mid 30's, the brickworks closed down due to a lack of orders and Ron was laid off. He used to walk from his home in Port Melbourne to the Trades Hall every day looking for work. Those without jobs were given vouchers for essential specified items of food and a hundredweight (50.8 kg) of wood each week. Sometimes Ron was able to get a job baking on Friday nights, but as the depression tightened its grip, these jobs became scarcer and harder to get.

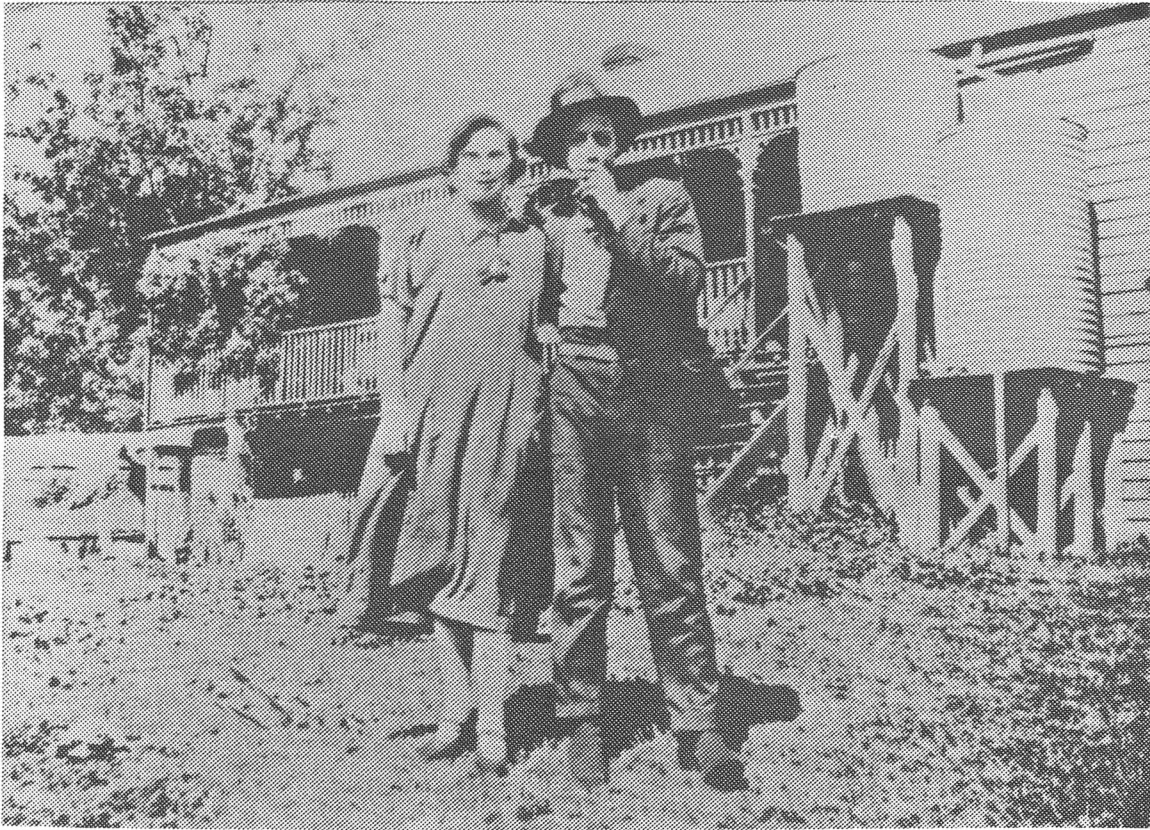
Ron and Kath moved back to Warrandyte and lived in a two roomed cottage on the main road shortly after their eldest daughter, Una, was born. Ron finally got work with the State Electricity Commission in the Eildon area and then moved to Bright where he worked on the construction of the road over the Toowonga Gap between Bright and Mount Beauty. Ron was working in the Bright area when the 1939 fires ripped through the district and he spent two days fighting fires, backburning and patrolling the area.



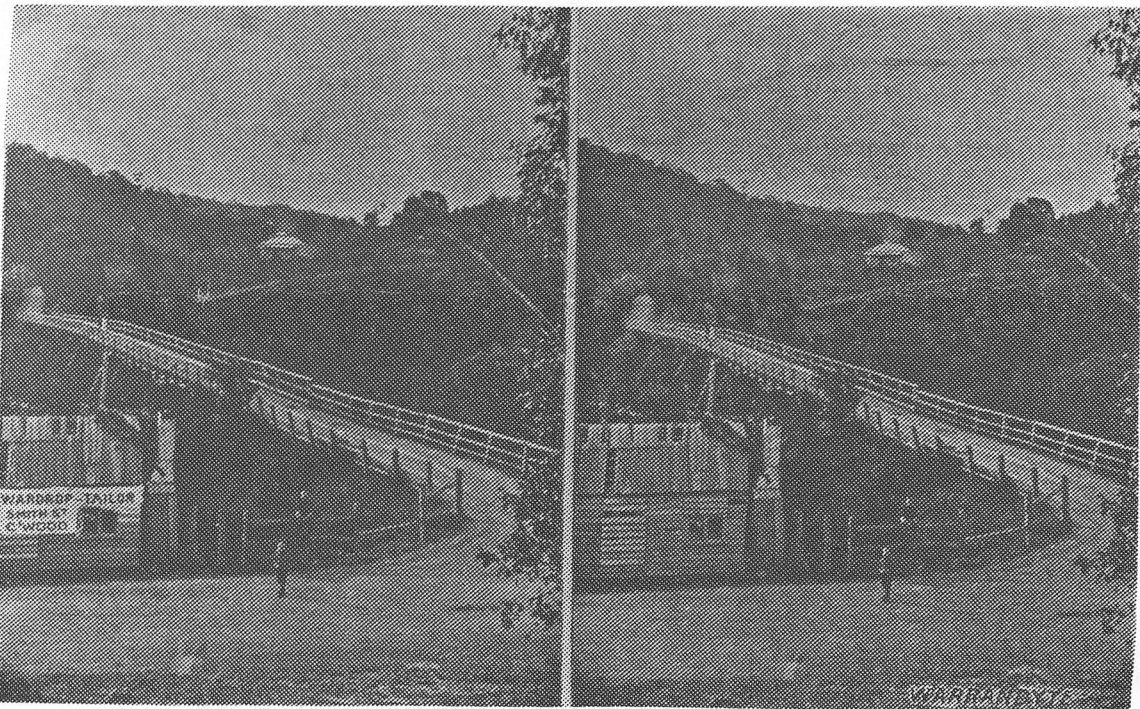
Len Belzer and his father negotiating the 1934 floods in Yarra Street, east of the bridge.

Ron moved back to Melbourne with the State Electricity Commission and was working on the Brunswick to Newport power line until 1949 when he was hospitalized for six months following an accident when he came in contact with the power lines. After recovering from the accident, which left him with permanent injuries but fortunate to be alive, Ron took over the taxi service in Warrandyte which had been started by Billy Moore. Ron and Kath ran the taxis for 14 years before retiring.

FROM THE ARCHIVES



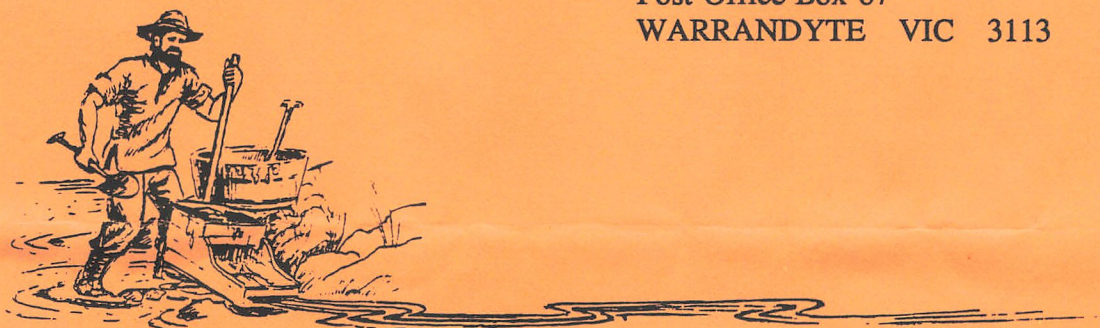
Alice (Pop) Stringer (nee Schneider) and Ron Belzer, 10 August 1920 at the rear of the historic Post Office. Pop Schneider was the first telephonist at the historic Post Office.



This picture comes from a postcard. Does anyone know the date or the history of the building on the left of the bridge?

Warrandyte Historical Society

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EDITORIAL

This month I have reproduced two items from the 1970's - the first ever Society Newsletter dated August 1977 and a complete copy of the first edition of the Warrandyte Diary dated December 1970. Whilst it is "only" about twenty years ago, it is interesting to note how little things have changed.

CHRISTMAS FUNCTION

The Society's annual Christmas function will be held at the Museum on Sunday, 13 December 1992 commencing at 12 noon. There will be a barbeque lunch and afternoon tea. All members are very welcome.

THE BULLETIN

In the last Newsletter, members will have received their copy of the Bulletin which has been produced by Gina Jones. The Bulletin is designed to complement the Newsletter and will bring you current items of interest and details of what is going on in the Society. If you have any contributions, please contact Gina Jones on 844 3662.

SOCIETY OFFICE BEARERS

President	Bruce Bence
Vice Presidents	Michael Willersdorf Ken Crook
Secretary	Gina Jones
Treasurer	Alan Alder
Committee	Ted Rotherham Andy Jones Joyce Bellingham Richard Warwick

It is extremely encouraging to know that so many people are now coming forward to contribute to our efforts to compile the first comprehensive "group effort" history of our area. Our efforts are aided tremendously by the fact that all information and material gathered belong to the Warrandyte Historical Society and not to any one individual. This is written into our Constitution and is a black and white assurance to all contributors that their long treasured memories and relics will be used solely for the furthering of the history of this area.

Our Own History:

We hope to bring out a newsletter at least once every two months, and one of the features of each will be a brief history of one of the many long established Warrandyte families or personalities. However, for this first issue, the history of the Warrandyte Historical Society is perhaps more appropriate.

In 1975 the Warrandyte State School was one hundred years old and, as part of the centenary celebrations, the Warrandyte Environment League searched Warrandyte for old photographs and relics of the past to use in an historical display. The display was most successful, and stirred up community interest in Warrandyte's nearly forgotten past. Two public meetings were held early in 1976 to consolidate this interest, the second of these being attended by the late Cr. Muriel Green, then President of Doncaster, Templestowe Historical Society. Finally on the 20th May 1976 the first meeting of the Warrandyte Historical Society was held. Eleven people attended and there were five apologies. Driving force behind the Society was, and still is, Mr. Ted Rotherham, whose love and appreciation of history is an inspiration to its members. Despite quite small membership, the Society has already achieved far more in the recording and preservation of Warrandyte's past than any other previous attempt, and will indeed take its own place in Warrandyte history.

At present our meetings are held at the Warrandyte State School and we would like to thank the Principal Mr. Ron Barkas very much for allowing us to use the facilities at the school.

This year's office bearers are:

President	Ted Rotherham	844-2438
Vice President	Ian Hodgson	844-3651
Secretary	Jo Laurence	844-3694
Treasurer	Alan Alder	844-32 37
Publicity and Newsletter	Brian Laurence	844-3694

Contributions to this newsletter will be most welcome. Phone Brian Laurence with your ideas.

We feel we should also remind you that the annual subscriptions became due at 1st June 1977, the fee is still the same - \$3.00 single, \$5.00 family and 50c. students.

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**WARRANTYTE'S
CLEARWATER REVIVAL**



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But there it was: the bottom of the bath. You could see it. The water was clear. The Board of Works had Taken Over! All those letters Mr. Croxford has been writing to himself have had results.

Which is really a shame, in some ways. I mean, all those old jokes are now redundant. About the river that flows upside down; and the water that's too thick to drink and too thin to plough, and about Warrantyte being the only place in the world with home brew coming through the taps.

And where does that leave the "we've-kept-our-tanks — look-at-the-lovely-rain-water — I-wouldn't-drink-that-river-muck" brigade? Personally, I've fished too many

native creatures from too many tanks to be convinced by their arguments.

Like the little boy I once taught who pulled his head out of the top of the tank and said, "There's no need to worry now, Mr. Green. There's only the bones and the fevers left."

If the rainwater romantics stick to their possum soup percolated through birds' nests now, they're welcome to it. Second-hand tanks will be a drug on the market. But we will miss that lovely heady chlorine smell and that delightfully delicate milky colour from the clay. It looked like the run-off from Potters' Cottage.

All gone now. Another link with Warrantyte's past washed down our non-existent drains. Did anyone think to put down a souvenir bottling of Warrantyte '70?

—Cliff Green

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PHOTOLAND

WEDDING AND CHILD
PHOTOGRAPHERS

RINGWOOD ROAD, WARRANTYTE
844 2082

Members of the Warrantyte Elderly Citizens' Club will be celebrating Christmas at a Christmas Luncheon to be held at Alfred's Homestead on Wednesday, December 16th, commencing at 12 noon.

**elderly
citizens**

**CHRISTMAS
AT ALFRED'S**

Mr. Bob Watson, secretary, writes:

"Our main club activities are carpet bowls, cards, scrabble, a handicraft group and sing-songs around the piano. We hope to be able to put on our own concerts soon as we have just formed a concert party under the leadership of Mrs. Kit Sargeant.

"At present we have 106 happy members but there is plenty of room for more, so if you are a prospective member why not drop in some Thursday for a 'cuppa' and a natter; you can be sure of a warm welcome and an enjoyable afternoon.

"Outings, picnics, tours, or what-have-you — are another major part of our

activities. Visiting and being visited by other clubs is also high on our list."

A general meeting of club members will be held in the Church of England Hall on Thursday, December 3rd, commencing at 1.00 p.m.

The Christmas Luncheon on December 16th will be the last Elderly Citizens' function for 1970. Club activities will resume on Thursday, January 21st, 1971.

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Jock's Warrandyte(for Sale).



Girl : Evelyn Kerkef...
 Dog : Caspar...
 Name of Warrandyte...
 Photo : Photoland...

PAGE 6 / THE WARRANDYTE DIARY / DECEMBER 1 1970

GRAND HOTEL

where its all happening
 MINE HOST
 KEN WATSON
 844-3202

Teacher Changes at Primary School

school rooms

New Room at South Warrandyte

A new classroom will be brought into use at the beginning of the 1971 school year to cater for steadily increasing enrolments at Warrandyte South Primary School.

The anticipated total enrolment at the school at the commencement of the new year will be between 145 and 150 pupils, including about 20 infants commencing in February.

Class numbers during 1970 have been around 38 children; rather too high a teaching load when it is remembered that all classes at the South school are composite grades.

However the new classroom, plus an additional infant teacher — still to be appointed — will allow for a reduction in class sizes to around 30 pupils.

The only other staff change is the departure of Mr. Geoff Cassin, who is resigning from the Education Department.

Mr. Cassin is being replaced by Mr. Graeme Whitty from Latrobe Teachers' College, who has been appointed to the school on a permanent basis.

End-of-year functions at South Warrandyte include an excursion for upper grade children to the Dandenong Ranges (organised, as usual by Mr. Oke de Yong, Secretary of the School Committee) and the infants' break-up party in the South hall, organised and catered for by the Mothers' Club.

Drastic changes of staff will mark the commencement of the new year at Warrandyte Primary School, however pressures on accommodation should be comparatively relaxed with classes of mostly 30-35 pupils.

Among those leaving the school is the principal, Mr. Alan Smith.

Mr. Smith, who has been at Warrandyte for three years is taking charge of a new primary school at Kilsyth East, close to his home.

He is being replaced by Mr. Len Mares from Boronia West.

Other staff members leaving the school on promotion or transfer include Mr. Alan Nuzum who is going to Bayswater, Mr. Murray Dale who goes to Melbourne Teachers' College to undertake a special teacher's course, and Mr. Peter Laurie who is going to Caldermeade near Frankston, where he has acquired a school residence. The sole remaining male teacher is Mr. Frank Myring.

Among new staff members will be Mr. Don Tinkler, who is coming to Warrandyte from Park Orchards Primary School.

It is predicted that staff changes among the female teachers will be minimal.

Projected enrolments for 1971 indicate the possibility of reducing class sizes to between 30 and 35 pupils in most cases.

So far, 62 children have been admitted to the prep. grades for February, 1971. Parents with children not yet enrolled are asked to do so without delay to allow for forward planning.

The swimming pool at the school is once more in use, with swimming in progress for Grades III to IV.

Fifty Grade VI pupils are leaving at the end of the year and have been placed in district secondary schools.

WARRANDYTE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The School Committee at Warrandyte Primary School reports that contract documents for the construction of the long-awaited library at the school have now been signed and the library will be in use in 1971.

The Committee is preparing an overall plan of playing areas so that the best possible use can be made of the school grounds.

First section to be designed is a "natural environment" playground area for the younger children.

RNL...

The Warrandyte Sub-Branch of the Returned Servicemen's League is holding a Dinner Dance on Saturday, December 12th.

Other activities over the next month or two include golf days, carpet bowls and social evenings.

All returned ex-servicemen and women are invited to join in these activities and become members of the local sub-branch. They should feel free to contact the secretary, Neil Pearson, 844 3546.

NEXT ISSUE IN FEBRUARY

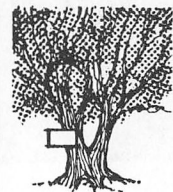
The next issue of "The Warrandyte Diary" will be published on February 1st, 1971.

All advertising and editorial copy must be in the hands of the Editor by Thursday, January 14th. Copy received prior to this date will receive preferential treatment as regards position, etc.

Publication after February will be on a monthly basis.

It would help if copy could be typed, double-spaced. It is suggested that club secretaries and publicity officers study the style of news items printed in this issue as regards an acceptable format for publication.

POST IT IN THE TREE!



You can post your Warrandyte Diary news items and advertisements in the old tree in Yarra Street, opposite McDonald's News-agency.

youth club

Wind-up functions are being planned as the Warrandyte Community Youth Club approaches the end of its first year of active life.

Break-up night for the senior group will be on Friday, December 11th, and will consist of a Big Band Dance.

The juniors break-up will be a bowling afternoon on Sunday, December 13th.

Club activities will resume on Friday, January 22nd.

Excursions being considered for 1971 include trips to the Australian Paper Mills, Russell Street police headquarters, Tullamarine Jetport and the Herald and Sun newspaper offices.

'DYTE ELECTRICAL SERVICES (ARTHUR DANN)

All types of
electrical work.
Quotes given
freely.

LORRAINE AVENUE
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TAHUNA MOTORS * 844 3192

For all Mechanical Repairs
CHAIN SAW & MOTOR MOWER
SALES & SERVICE

Brian's Plumbing Service

(BRIAN DAY & BRIAN TOMLINSON, L.I.C. MMBW)

GENERAL PLUMBING

:: MECHANICAL DIGGING :: SEPTIC TANKS
844 3147

W.C.Y.C. will be co-operating in a projected free expression play group project in Warrandyte during the January school holidays, being planned by the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs.

This play group will operate daily at the reserve during the week beginning Tuesday, January 26th, commencing at 10.00 a.m.

The club is in desperate need of leaders, money, facilities and ultimately its own permanent home.

Officials of the club want to thank all those people who are so generously assisting, sponsoring and contributing to the production of Warrandyte Diary, which we see as one step towards filling these needs.

Mechanics' Institute

HALL

AVAILABLE FOR HIRE
844 3076

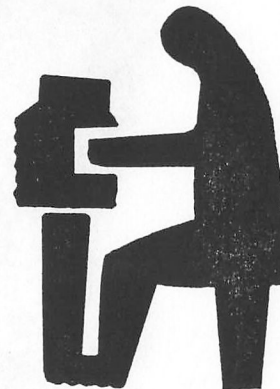
CRUDEN'S EXCAVATIONS

BULLDOZERS,
LOADERS, GRADERS,
TIPPERS

for Hire or Contract

L.I.C. TO USE EXPLOSIVES

844 3388



POTTERS COTTAGE WARRANDYTE

Internationally famous studio pottery centre.

Pots for collectors.

Pots for everyday use.

THE POTTERS SCHOOL

Professional tuition in all aspects of potting. Day & evening classes.

POTTERS RESTAURANT

Good food served from stoneware & earthenware dishes.

A pottery orientated atmosphere.

Licensed to bring your own wine.

Open for lunches & afternoon teas —

Tuesday to Sundays 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Dinners from 6.30 p.m. Fridays,

Saturdays & Sundays.

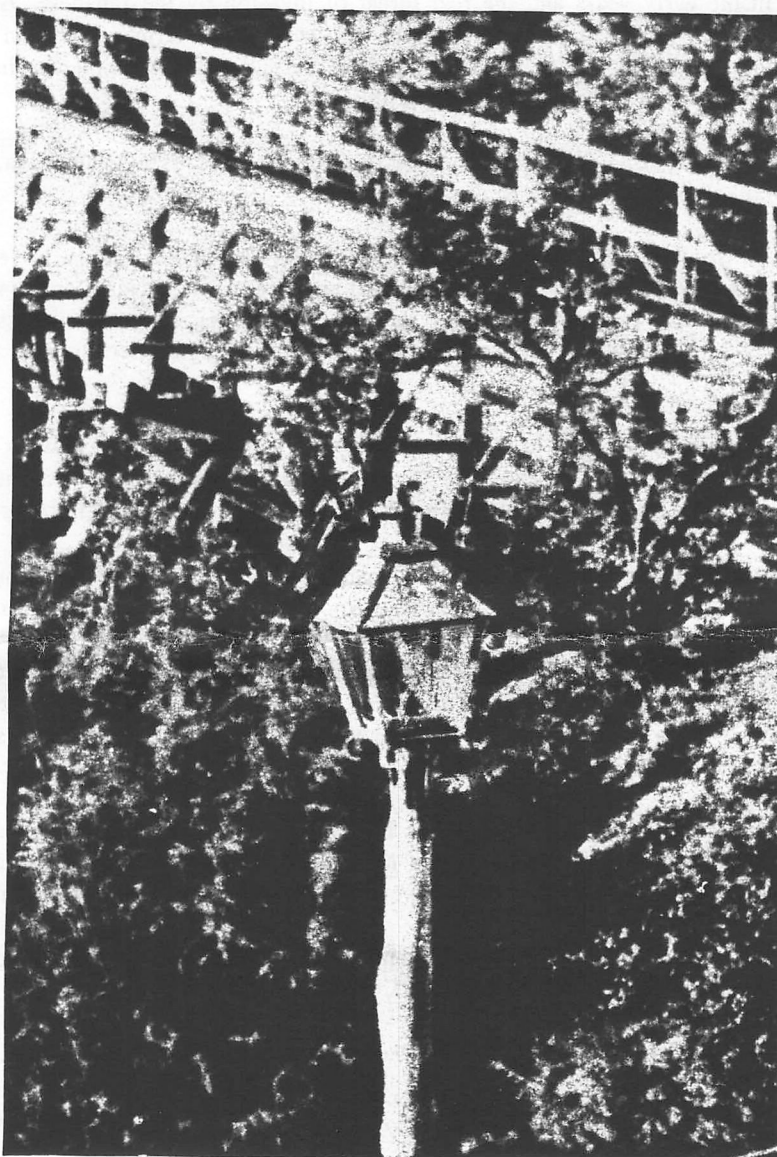
Booking is advised. Phone 844 3078.

A SPECIAL THANKS

A special thanks to the Lions Club of Warrandyte for their generous donation of \$400 to enable the Society to print the rest of our photograph collection. This donation will not only assist the Society but will be an asset to the Warrandyte community for all time.

ACQUISITION

Another long term project has been crowned with success. The society now has one of Warrandyte's old petrol street lamps after many years. We finally made a deal with Peter Norman for one of the lamps. At present the lamp is with David and Alex Hughes who are going to restore it. The photograph below shows the lamp near the old timber bridge - it was located at the south west corner.



Warrandyte Historical Society



Post Office Box 67
WARRANDYTE VIC 3113

NEWSLETTER

Recording the History of Warrandyte

Issue No 88 - December 1992

ISSN 01158-0493

Registered by Australia Post
Publication No VBH5874

THE WARRANDYTE NEWSLETTER

Vol 1 No 1 (April 1951)

The WARRANDYTE NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED FORTNIGHTLY

Vol. 1. No. 1

Wednesday, April 4th, 1951

Issued Free

EDITORIAL.

The object of the "Warrandyte Newsletter" is to convey to the Citizens of this progressive town the events and actions of all organisations in this area. In turn the success of the Newsletter depends entirely on the various organisations, as without their co-operation we cannot bring their news to you. So we ask you to see that your organisation appoints a Press correspondent at your next meeting. The selected correspondent is requested to have his report containing at least 250 words to the "Newsletter," c/o The Kiosk, Recreation Reserve, Warrandyte West. The next report should be in NOT LATER than April 15th, 1951. All sporting, educational and religious bodies are requested to correspond.

WARRANDYTE WEST PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

There was a good attendance when the Annual General Meeting was held at the Golden Gate Cafe on Tuesday, 20th March, the main business, of course, being the election of office-bearers for the ensuing year.

The retiring President, Mr. Les Adams, gave a resume of the progress for the year which is quite satisfactory in regard to postal facilities, telephones, electricity and will be in the near future, we hope, in regard to water.

He announced the resignation of Mr. Colin Drysdale, and spoke of the splendid services rendered to the Association by Mr. Drysdale — for the first year as President and the second as

Mr. Drysdale was one of the original founders of the Progress Association and he had given much time and energy to help to build it into the solid Association it is today.

On behalf of the members, Mrs. Moore presented Mr. Drysdale with an inscribed tray.

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

President.—Mr. Les Adams was elected for the second year.

Vice-Presidents.— Mr. Fixter and Mr. Bate. Mr. Rush was nominated but withdrew to avoid a ballot.

Treasurer.—Mr. Bill Morrison.

Secretary.— Mr. Gordon Parsons.

Asst. Secretary.— Mrs. Bate and a Committee of twelve.

ing Floral Art. All members and intending members are invited to come along and enjoy this demonstration.

WARRANDYTE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE.

The General Meeting of the above will be held in the Warrandyte Hall, tonight, Wednesday, April 4th. It is hoped a report will appear in our next issue.

CARD TOURNAMENT In Aid of Warrandyte Swimming Club

is to be held in the
WARRANDYTE HALL
Commencing 10th April, 1951,
(Next Tuesday)
at 8 p.m. sharp
Good Prize Each Night.
Winners of Tournament receive
£1/1/- each.
Admission 1/6

WARRANDYTE WEST CRICKET CLUB.

For our first season we did remarkably well. We finished up on top of the list and were beaten in the finals by Blackburn, a jolly good team, a good lot of sports, who played the game too well for us.

Jim Harris skippered our team. A hard job done very well, also carried the honors for the highest individual score.

The score for the finals were as follows:—

W.W.C.C., 1st Innings:—152.
Blackburn 262. W.W.C.C., 2nd Innings 154.

This left Blackburn only 25 runs to make for a win. We made them earn that 25 too. Next time I'll have more news.

Adios Creams,
(By Off Break).

The Golden Gate Cafe

(opposite Recreation Reserve)

Warrandyte West

Milk Bar, Grills, After-
noon Teas, & Groceries.

W. A. B. MORRISON, Prop.

BENSON BROS.

The Better Butchers

Yarra Street, Warrandyte

Phone: 71

MORE ON THE BELZER FAMILY

Further information on Philip Belzer has been supplied by his grandson Ralph McAuley. Ralph and his sister Lil Whitehead's mother was Eva Belzer, the daughter of Philip Belzer who married Sam McAuley at Warrandyte in October 1902.

Philip came from Germany and may have been born at Oberwesel according to Ralph. When she was about 12 years old Eva wrote to Philip's family to tell them of Philip's whereabouts, the letter was written in English.

It appears that Philip was one of many thousands of men who deserted their ships to try their luck at the gold fields. After the 1939 -1945 war Eva's letter was returned to her, addressed to "Eva Belzer Australia" - it found its way to her! Two female members of the family were destitute in Germany and Eva regularly sent them food parcels. Correspondence developed between the families and Ralph's sister Evelyn made arrangements to meet them on a trip to Europe. Unfortunately the arrangements went astray and the meeting did not take place.

Unfortunately Eva Belzer's letter written over 100 years ago has disappeared.



Eva Belzer's cousin from Germany. The photo was sent after Eva sent them food parcels when she received a letter from them. According to Ralph there is a family resemblance between the two cousins.

Rushworth this morning", he began, "it occurred to me that I was going from one old mining town to another. I told the people of Rushworth yesterday that I was going to a place where the first gold was found in Victoria. They seemed to be jealous about it. But if you had seen Rushworth as I saw it yesterday and the night before you would have been green with envy!. Its people have been working for the Back to Rushworth movement for six months and their magnificent work beggars description. They had miles of fairy lights, and built beautiful green plots in the centre of the streets. I thought of old Warrandyte and wondered what the people there were doing to beautify their town. My heart was in Warrandyte and when I received your kind invitation to open your hall I thought this was one of the first marks of progress I had seen in Warrandyte for some considerable time. As for the old bridge here, it is a disgrace to Victoria. It is the only bridge between Heidelberg and Yarra Glen and is in tottering condition. You have been offered 400 Pounds by the Government, not to build a new bridge, but to renovate the old one. Surely if the Government can spend hundreds of thousands of pounds on the Spencer Street Bridge it should not forget Warrandyte. You should approach the Minister again and see if he is willing to spend a little more than 400 pounds, which is a parsimonious offer, considering the bridge is so important. It is an extreme pleasure to see such a large hall, which reflects great credit on the committee and those who worked so well to bring the plan to consummation. I doubt whether there is more beautiful scenery anywhere in Victoria than in Warrandyte, and when you are improving the outlook of your town, you are improving the price of your property. It breaks my heart that dear old Warrandyte is lacking in many facilities that other places are giving the public.

"Before we go across the road to the bazaar, which the ladies have organised, I have much pleasure in declaring the hall open, and I hope that this forward step of the Warrandyte people will not be the last."

WARRANDYTE MECHANICS INSTITUTE

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held on THURSDAY, JULY 20, at 8:30 p.m., for the ELECTION of OFFICE BEARERS and COMMITTEE of MANAGEMENT of the above Institute; also to present the Annual Balance Sheet.

Nominations for vacancies must be lodged with the hon. Sec. seven clear days beforehand.

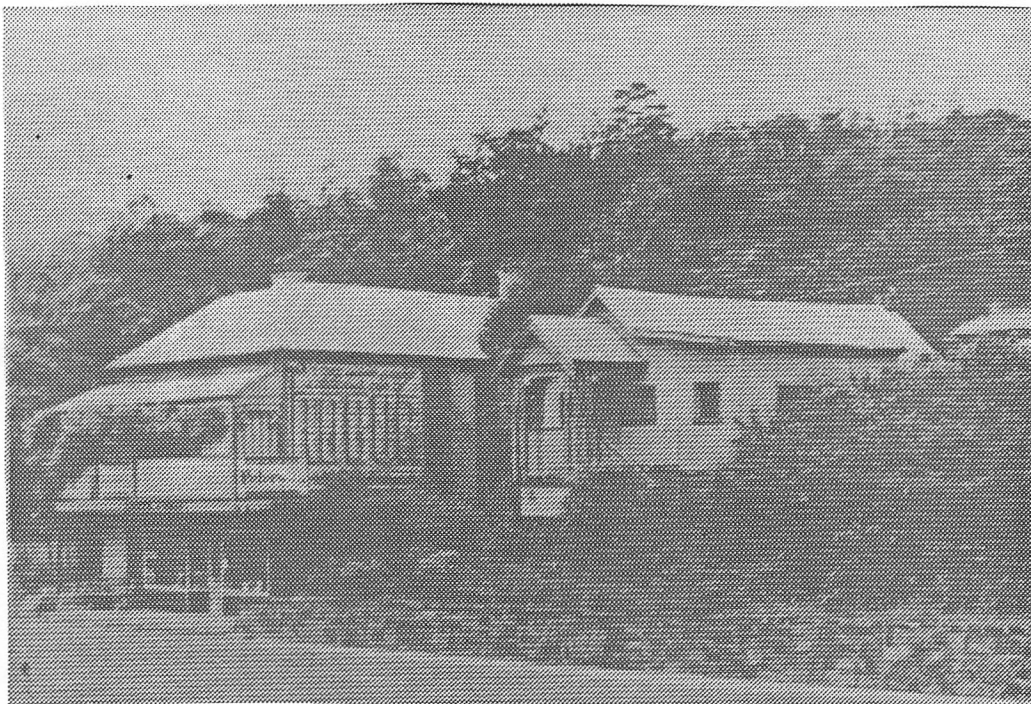
WILLIAM NORMAN, President.

RUTH NORMAN, Hon. Sec., Masonic avenue, Warrandyte.

FROM THE ARCHIVES



The old Warrandyte Hotel which was located on the corner of Yarra Street and Mitchell Ave. The Hotel served afternoon teas in the dining room and ladies were not allowed in the hotel itself. The photo was taken in about 1920.



An early view of the Folkart Store in Yarra Street. This photo is thought to have been taken in the 1940's when the store was used as a Milk Bar.

Warrandyte Historical Society



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WARRANDYTE VIC 3113

NEWSLETTER

Recording the History of Warrandyte

Issue No 89 - February 1993

ISSN 01158-0493

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SIR GEORGE OSWALD REID Q.C.

The Society lost one of its valued foundation members and long time supporter when Sir George Reid died at the Southern Cross Nursing Home on Thursday, 19 February 1993, aged 89 years. Sir George was a tower of strength to the Society in its development. Sir George and Lady Dorothy Reid gave great support to the the Society as they did to many other Warrandyte organisations.

Sir George had a distinguished career in the State Parliament being first elected as the Member for Box Hill in 1947 and representing Warrandyte between 1955 and his retirement in 1973.

He was Minister for Electrical Undertakings, Minister for Labour and Industry, Attorney General and in 1971 he was made Chief Secretary.

Sir George married Dorothy Rutledge in 1973 and they lived in their beautiful home "Nilja" in Alexander Road until they moved to East Doncaster in November 1988, where they continued their interest and support of the Warrandyte community.

The Society would like to express its deepest sympathy to Lady Reid and the family.

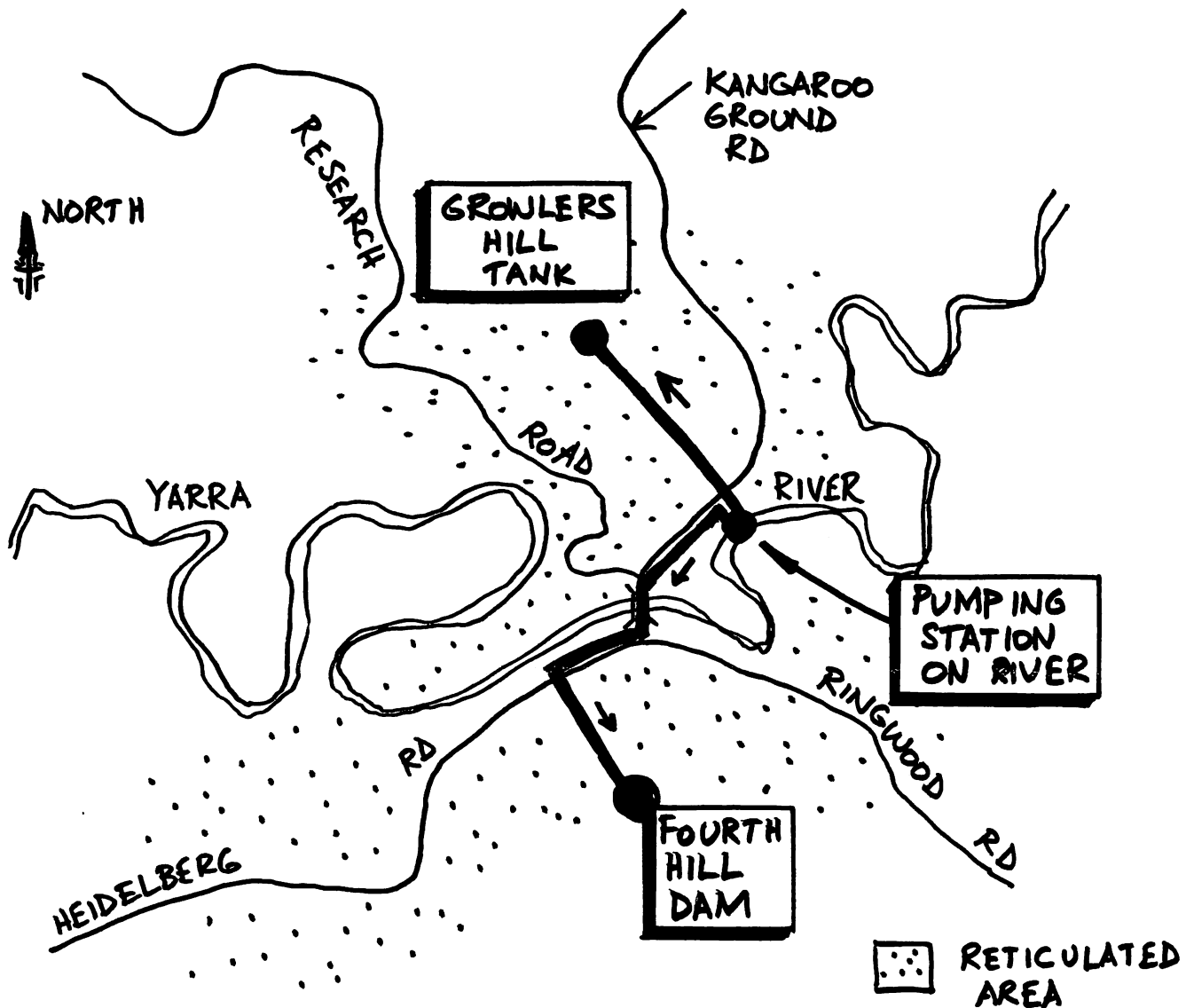


Sir George and Lady Reid on their Wedding Day in 1973

City of Doncaster and Templestowe:

Viv Rush
Percy Withers
Alan Croxford
Ken Buxton
Keith Wilson

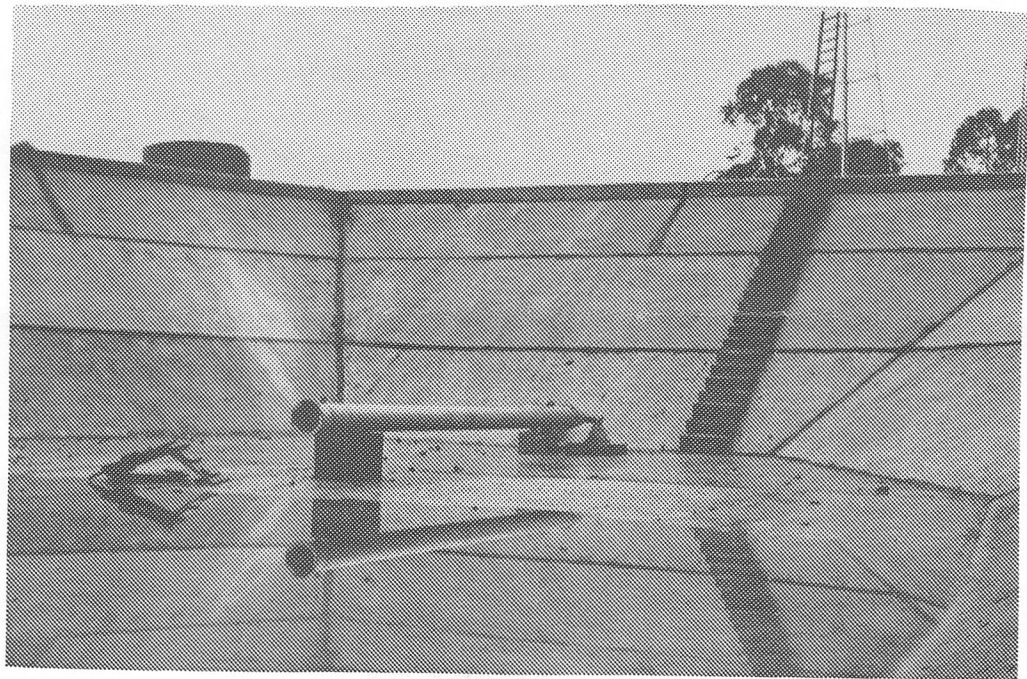
The original work included a storage tank on Fourth Hill which was fed from a pumping station above the Yarra in Kangaroo Ground Road near the Castle Road intersection. The water was then reticulated to the more settled areas of Warrandyte. The work was completed in December 1961 and the water, somewhat murky, started to flow to households just in time for the bushfires in January 1962. The system was later supplemented with another tank on Growlers Hill which was built some time after the 1962 bushfires. It is interesting to note that the amount of fluoride in the river water was equal to more than half the recommended dose for town water supplies!



Schematic plan of the Warrandyte Waterworks Trust system.



The excavation for the Warrandyte Waterworks Trust dam on Fourth Hill.



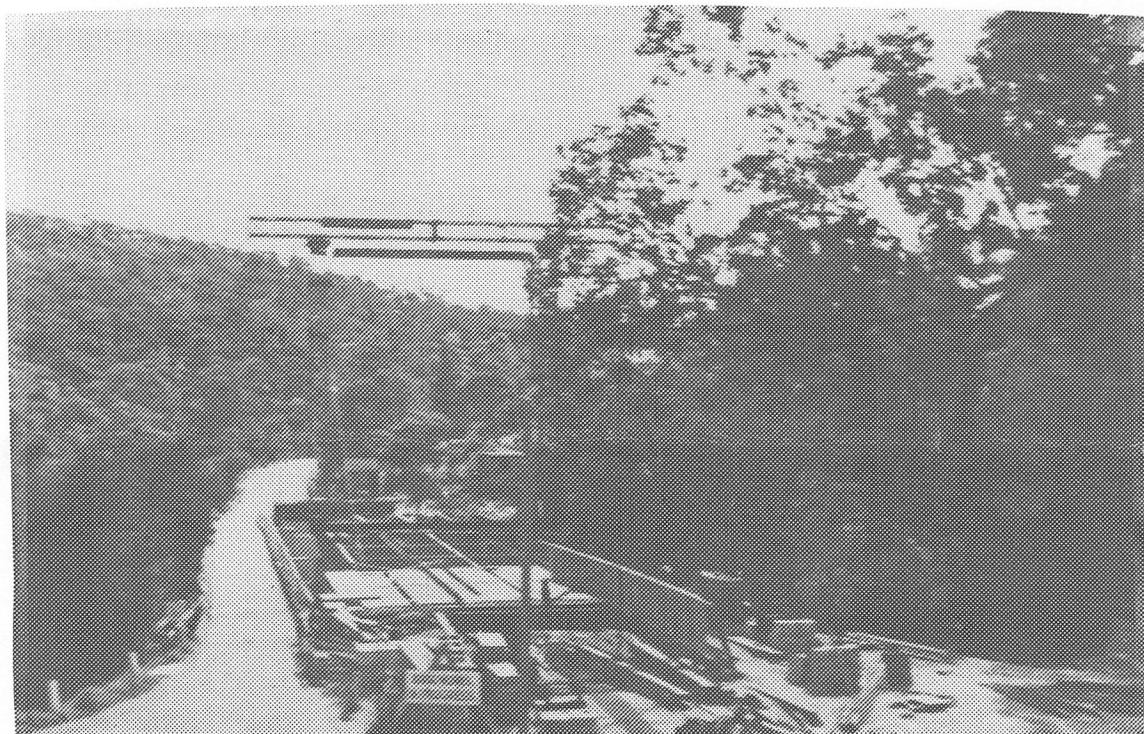
The dam before it was filled in 1961.

INDEX OF ARTICLES 1992

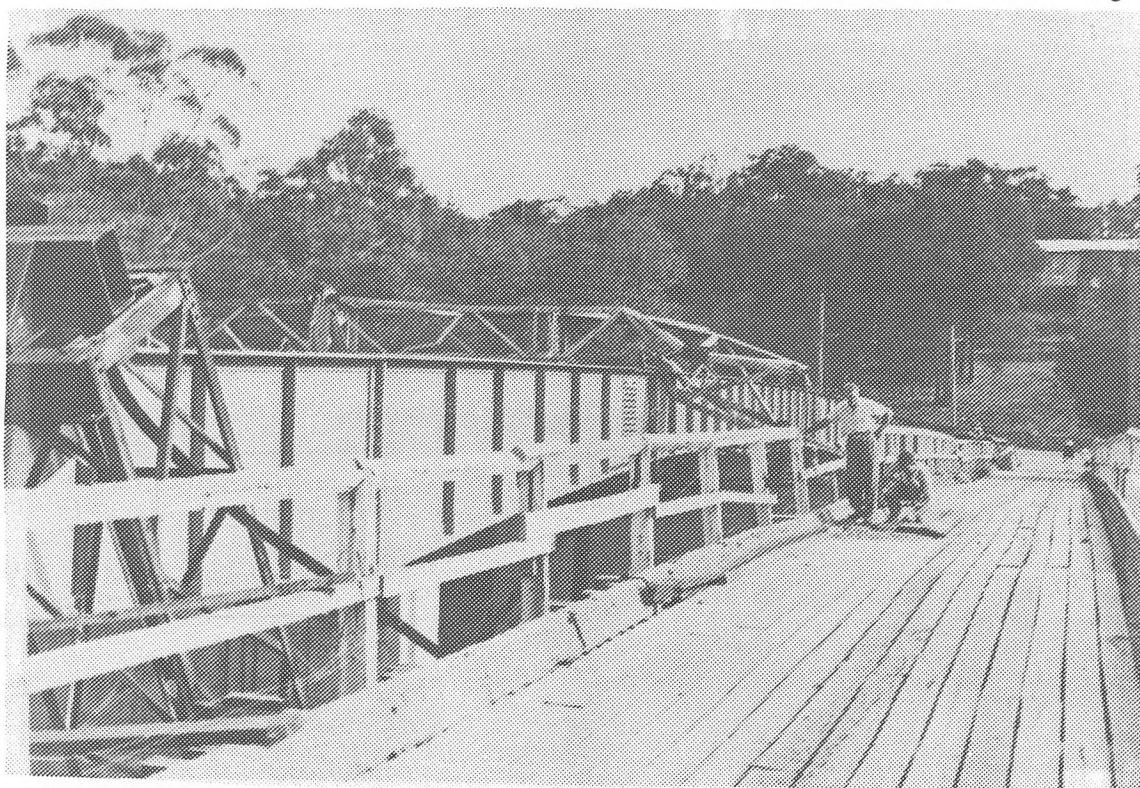
The following index gives details of the major articles included in the Newsletter during 1992. The reference numbers indicate the Newsletter number (left) followed by the page number (right), for example, 88/4 is an article in Newsletter No 88 commencing on Page 4.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES



The current bridge under construction in 1955 looking towards Kangaroo Ground. Note the overhead crane and the old timber bridge to the left which was retained during construction of the new bridge.



Another shot of the bridge under construction in 1955. This photo shows the crane after it had collapsed whilst lifting some of the components into position. The delapidated condition of the old timber bridge can be clearly seen. In the background is the war memorial and the RSL building.

Warrandyte Historical Society



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RUBY ARNAUD

We are sad to record the death of Ruby Arnaud, a very great lady who worked tirelessly for the Warrandyte community in all the years that she lived here.

Ruby and her family arrived in Warrandyte in 1967 and lived here till the family was grown up when she and husband Paul moved to the Harcourt area.

She was always busy helping other people and in 1970 she was one of the original committee that met to form the Meals on Wheels service for the aged and chronically ill in Warrandyte. She was elected to the committee and served as vice president for two years. She was a volunteer for 17 years and assisted with the roster and assessing the needs of new MOW recipients. In 1988 Ruby resigned and a presentation was made to her for 18 years of dedicated service.

During this time she became interested in Warrandyte's history and joined the Society. Because she never did things by halves she became very involved and was soon elected as Secretary which duty she carried out in a very conscientious and enthusiastic manner. Among other things she organised the Lilac Time Ball's held by the Society, and Paul's band provided the music. When it proved hard to get people along she cheerfully chased people up and the nights proved to be very good fund raisers for the Society.

Her children attended Warrandyte Primary School and she was a member of the Mothers Club and a delegate to the Victorian State Schools Mothers Clubs quarterly conferences for 3 years. She was a committee member of the first school canteen and helped there while her children were at school.

She also took an interest in other things her children were involved in like the Brownies and Girl Guides.

She was a devoted wife and mother and had a great love of gardening, she spent many happy times walking in the bush of Warrandyte. She leaves her husband, five children and eight grandchildren.

Written by Shirley Rotherham



NORTH WARRANDYTE FIRE BRIGADE

A Brief History

The North Warrandyte Rural Fire Brigade celebrates its 40th anniversary this year and to celebrate the occasion Richard Warwick has prepared this brief history.

EARLY BEGINNINGS

The brigade was originally constituted and registered with the CFA after a meeting was held on 12 October 1953. The brigade was registered as the Stony Creek Rural Fire Brigade and was separate from the Warrandyte Brigade.

It is thought that the brigade was not very active between 1953 and 1957 as no records exist of any meetings during this period. However, after a special General Meeting was called on 9 March 1957 and was attended by 25 people, the brigade became very active once again. Following this meeting it was agreed that the immediate aims should be as follows:

- * Organise an efficient fire spotting service
- * Obtain and erect some warning device such as a siren or fire bell
- * Build a small weir across Stony Creek to ensure a reasonable water supply
- * Keep the brigade alive and accumulate more equipment and manpower

At that stage the only equipment owned by the brigade was:

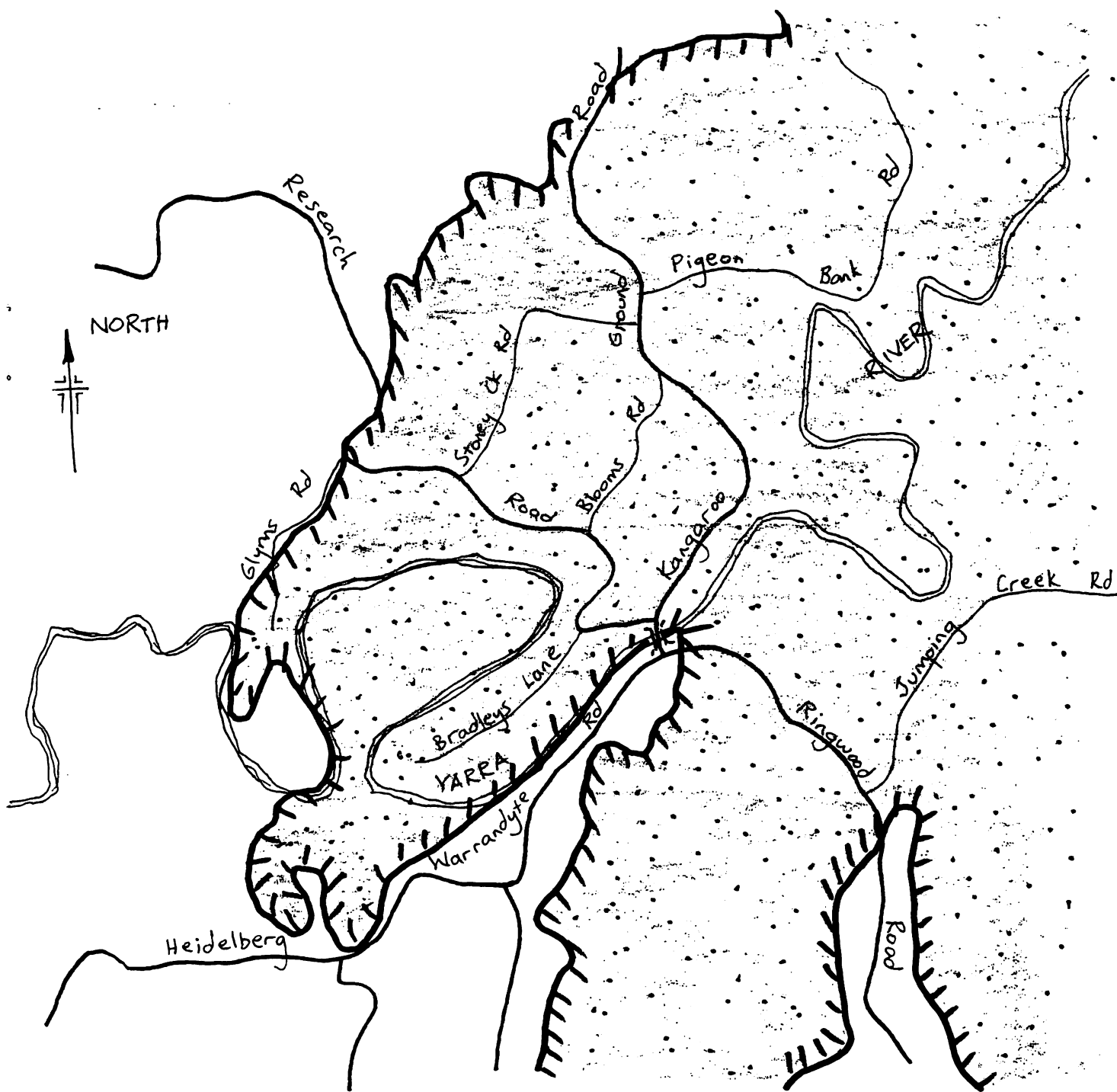
- * 12 Knapsack sprays
- * 3 Rakes
- * 90 Gallon water tank
- * 1 roll of old hose used for making beaters

This equipment was stored at various members houses, and when compared to the current brigade, it is hard to imagine how anything was ever achieved - no fire station, no fire truck, no radio equipment, and very basic firefighting equipment.

At this meeting an annual subscription for members was set at 5 shillings and the brigade had a sum total of 6 Pounds 15 Shillings from these subscriptions and from donations from the public.

The original fire reporting system consisted of a number of members nominated as "fire spotters" whose phone numbers were distributed to residents on small cards and when a fire was reported to a "spotter" they would contact the following:

- 1 Warrandyte Fire Brigade
- 2 Les Forward - 1st Lieutenant
- 3 Arch Du Lee - Communications Officer



Map showing the area of Warrandyte burned in the 1962 bushfires

The fire burned a total area of 22,520 hectares and was finally stopped at the Maroondah Highway in Mitcham on the evening of Tuesday 16 January 1962.

Because the fire was so large, there were several requests from brigades to the north of Warrandyte for assistance in fighting it. The Captain of St Andrews, Rex Dwight, who was Jack Stringer's brother in law, had requested the brigade to assist him. However, the CFA Regional Officer had already instructed Jack to keep the North Warrandyte brigade at home and had refused repeated requests from the brigade to leave the area and join the firefight that was taking place in the north.

On Tuesday, the brigade members stayed home as it was obvious that the fire would

50 Homes Go in One Hour at Warrandyte

FIRE destroyed at least 50 homes in one hour over four square miles at Warrandyte. After a lull, wind whipped up new fires about the surviving houses, and forced returning householders to flee again.

The fire roared into North Warrandyte in late afternoon, driven by a 30-mile wind.

Twelve houses in streets near Warrandyte bridge were razed in the first 10 minutes.

Late evacuees in cars clogged the road towards Melbourne, and as smoke rolled across the thoroughfare there were several minor collisions.

Mr. Gordon Kirkbride, of Everard Drive, Warrandyte, spotted the fire swinging towards his area from a rooftop, ladder and his telephone call brought two truckloads of men to the rescue.

"Fire teams drove in opposite directions as officials tried to keep pace with the changes of wind," Mr. Kirkbride said.

Mr. Kirkbride chased a sheep in the paddock behind his house and beat out its burning wool.

Burning debris swept

through the air to land and start new grass fires 300 yards further on.

Nearly every house in the town had grass fires right up to the porch, stamped out at the last moment by quick-moving volunteers with beaters and knapsacks.

Mr. Max Flagstaff, 32, piled his furniture in the drive of his ranch house before running down to the Yarra to sit on a rock in a damp blanket.

When he returned, the furniture had burned, but the house survived—one of few left in Albert Road.

Tramways buses ran through the streets evacuating elderly people before the fires swept through.

Two first-aid volunteers, Mr. Clem McPherson and Mr. Tom Peart, who had just come from a shift as waterside workers, treated 30 fire fighters for superficial burns and eye trouble.

While Yvonne Mitchell, 21, was serving drinks to fire fighters outside the Warrandyte Hotel, her family's stone house on the slopes of Albert Road was burned to the ground.

Told the house had caught fire, she went on serving drinks.

On Stony Creek Road, Mr. Wally Hess, 35, from Germany, stayed in the house he had built himself and beat off the flames while neighboring houses were engulfed.

One hundred yards away, Mr. Frank Tresize carried his daughter, Mary-Anne, five, to sit in Stony Creek in bikinis for an hour.

Their house survived—"third time lucky," according to Mr. Tresize, who had lost two previous houses in bushfires, one of them in the Black Friday, 1939, fires.

Mr. Lionel Cowden, garage proprietor, of Warrandyte, saw his two-story house destroyed in minutes.

Freak Escapes

Freak escapes were common as the fire weaved through gullies and winds kept changing.

Bearded Mr. Jack Jensen, a Dane who with his wife fought fires on The Boulevard, Warrandyte, learned two hours later that flames had raced completely under his residence, which is on stilts, and carried on without claiming the house.

Blackberries six feet high around his garage disappeared, but the garage was untouched.

A fire official said most fire trucks had trouble finding a way in on the dirt roads and often arrived too late.

"We could have saved one house, but a gas cylinder left on the outside wall exploded," he said.

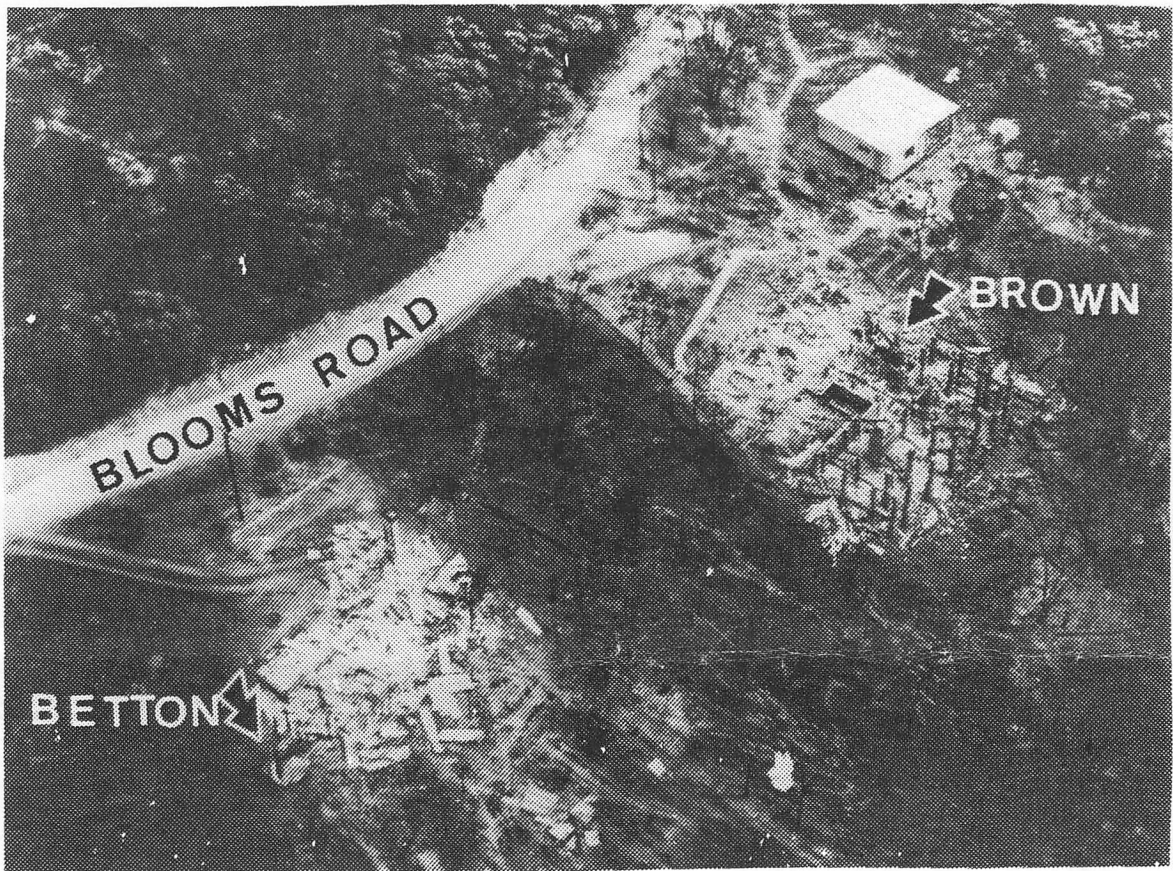
Goats Save Home

After fighting on another front, Mr. George Aston and his son Graham, 20, were ordered by police to leave their car when they tried to get to their own home on Stony Creek Road.

They were trudging down the last hill when they saw their house which had taken eight years to build, explode in flames.

Hundreds of people huddled after dark in the shallows of the Yarra River and Stony Creek.

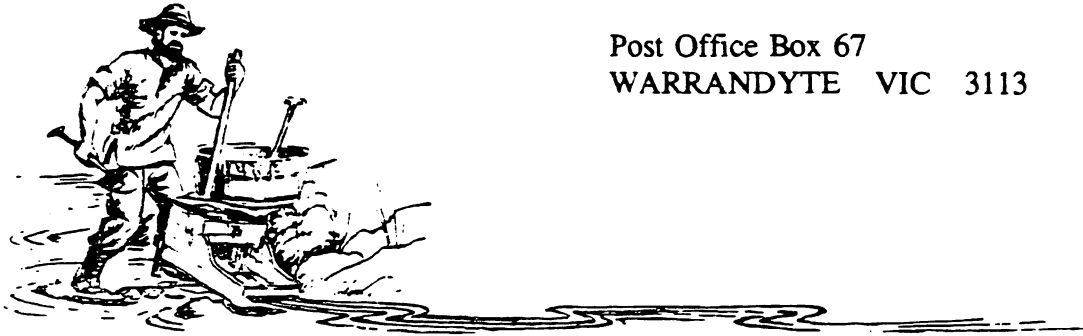
Article from The Sun, Thursday, 18 January 1962



Two photos showing the location of where Mr Brown and Mr Betton were killed in Blooms Road

to be continued ...

Warrandyte Historical Society



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NEWSLETTER

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SOCIETY NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society will hold its Annual General Meeting at the old Post Office on Tuesday 13 July 1993 starting at 8.00pm. All members are requested to attend this very important meeting. At the end of the formal meeting the new videotape "The Warrandyte Story" will be shown to all those present. The video has been produced by Greg Lawrence and consists of a series of photo montages together with a commentary - it lasts about 20 minutes.

BACK TO WARRANDYTE

The Society are organising a "Back to Warrandyte" celebration to be held over the weekend of 9 and 10 October 1993. Whilst full details are not yet available there are many activities planned across the weekend. If you would more details contact Bruce Bence on 844 3122.

EASTERN REGION HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bruce Bence was recently elected as the President of the Eastern Region Historical Society. This group represents a number of Society's like ours in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne.

The Society recently held their annual conference which was hosted by the Camberwell Society and was attended by Bruce.

The Society will be holding its annual luncheon at Alfreds Homestead on Sunday 4 July 1993 commencing at 12 noon. The cost is \$15.00 for all you can eat. The dinner will be followed by a speaker, our own Cliff Green. All members are welcome and you are requested to contact either Gina Jones on 844 3662 or Bruce Bence on 844 3122 so that a booking can be made.

GEORGE (BEATTIE) BEAVIS

Beattie Beavis was buried at the Andersons Creek Cemetery on Monday 3 May 1993. Beattie's incredible story appeared in the "Diary" in May 1990 and the Society has a monograph giving details of his experiences as a prisoner of war on the Burma Railway and the day he saw the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki.

The nickname Beattie was given to George as a baby by Kate Coleman. When Beattie was told that he had cancer and only a short time to live, he faced it with the same courage and determination which saw him survive his POW experiences and he lived long beyond the doctors deadline.

WANDERING WARRANDYTE

The Warrandyte area's first venture into local government was when it became part of the Upper Yarra Roads Board which was proclaimed in September 1856 at the same time that the Templestowe Roads Board was proclaimed.

The Roads Boards were the forerunner of the municipalities that we now know. Their role was to construct and maintain roads and bridges throughout an area. They financed this by setting up toll gates and charging road users a toll for passing through. Many a battle raged between the toll collectors and wiley road users - particularly owners of big herds of stock which were paid for per head.

Warrandyte became part of the Shire of Lillydale (spelt with two l's) and in June 1873 was attached to Templestowe Roads Board. In May 1875 when the Shire of Bulleen was proclaimed, Warrandyte was included and became part of the Shire of Templestowe when Bulleen was renamed in 1892.

The Warrandyte ward was established in 1876 and was electing ward councillors from that time.

The municipality was renamed the Shire of Doncaster and Templestowe in March 1926 and was declared a City in February 1967.

Despite recent moves from across the river to shanghai Warrandyte it remains part of Doncaster and Templestowe.

Submitted by Bruce Bence

special constables one teacher in an inner suburban school at the time used to relate how all the pupils turned up the next day wearing new clothes. In 1928 Hal moved to Canada and lived in a log cabin which he built himself. During his stay in Canada he was attacked by a bear which he shot in self defence, but was revolted when the locals skinned and ate it. In his last days Hal was suffering from severe pain from cancer of the pancreas but only let his nephew know when the pain became too great to bear.

Hal attended church and liked a good sermon. He tried all the churches in Warrandyte before settling on the Presbyterian Church at Donvale and liked to comment, question and offer corrections after the service.

Days before he died Hal chose a passage from the Bible, Corinthians 1:9 "In our hearts we feel the sentence of death, but this happens that we might not rely upon ourselves but on a god who raises the dead", such was his hope.

I have written of Hal and Aunty Adelaide as Warrandyte recluses, people who lived alone and liked to be alone, but they also loved to be with people. Whereas Adelaide would watch the Wyuna Pony Club each Sunday after church sitting in her battered VW with her battered desert boots and leather jacket ready to stride across the paddock, Hal sat with Aggie Moore comparing investments or discussed gold prospects in Warrandyte with Alice O'Leary's husband. Hal liked a good bargain from Joy Hook down at the Op Shop and enjoyed the hospitality of Ralph and Pat McAuley and he positively glowed when we gathered for his 90th birthday.

Hal's grandfather Edward Cherry of Gisborne was the maker of the Cherry butter churns which were an indispensable item in most households in the days when people made their own butter at home. The Society has one of these churns on display at the Museum.

sleeping in the early winter because, as the temperature fell through -22°, the fir trees gave out an almighty CRACK as their wood went through some change of state. Four months later he had the same problem, when the trees went UNCRACK as the temperature rose again. He knew all about the difference between the ruling grades on railways east and west of the Rockies, and he had his appendix removed under somewhat primitive conditions.

Hal returned from Canada in 1935 and, if hearsay is to be believed, had become a militant trade unionist to the dismay of his parents; certainly, he maintained his membership of the Amalgamated Engineering Union until at least 1954 - after had retired to Warrandyte. Between 1935 and World War II, he held a number of short-term positions. For example, he was employed by the Country Roads Board in 1936 and again in 1937 to supervise "...the construction of reinforced concrete culverts near Benalla..."; perhaps this is where he acquired the skills to build his Warrandyte home!

He joined the RAAF in 1940 and rose to Flight Sergeant (Fitter/Armourer). He appears to have been a "character", for an unknown hand has added unkempt spiky hair and the ubiquitous pipe to the photograph in his paybook.

My childhood recollections of Hal begin in the late 1930s, when the family had fallen on hard times. The old house was an idyllic playground for children. It still had an acre of derelict garden; it was full of knick-knacks from blackest Africa to Victoria's England; there were the remains of the dairy and workshop; the library contained more books than I have ever seen in a private home; at the head of the stairs was an enormous globe of the world circa 1860 - the middle of Australia was UNKNOWN; and, in the otherwise-deserted north wing lived the mysterious taciturn Uncle Hal.

Although Hal never married, I am sure he loved children. My earliest recollection of him is from 1939 when my elder brother and I, aged 5 and 3, filled an orange with horse manure and gave it to Hal. He returned after a moment, munching and with the orange empty, to the huge delight of his nephews.

The old home was sold in 1951 and, after a time in East Burwood, Hal moved to Warrandyte. He rented a room from a Mrs Anderson while he built the Betton Crescent house. I remember visiting him once, around 1953, when he was still making the bricks, two at a time, by ramming concrete into a mould. I remember his sad observation that, when he opened the mould, "...sometimes they bricks stay in one piece and sometimes they don't...".

The house that Hal finally moved into bears little relation to the plans approved by Warrandyte Council; the stair-case and balcony as built could never have passed safety regulations. With him he had his 1951 Armstrong-Siddley station wagon, his pipe, and a number of books from the old family home - various Bibles, the 1910 edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and a bound collection of the first 50 years of Punch 1841-1891. Hal's knowledge of the world and his humour in later years perhaps reflect these choices.

For about 15 years, beginning around the time from which Warrandyte residents will

FROM THE ARCHIVES



The Bridge Cafe in Yarra Street taken in the 1940's. It must have been a special occasion judging by the number of cars and people around the area.