

ELTHAM DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Incorporated

No. A0016285F

728 MAIN ROAD (PO BOX 137) ELTHAM 3095

Website: www.tinyurl.com/elthamdhs

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NEWSLETTER

NO. 208 JANUARY 2013

NEXT MEETING

8-00 PM WEDNESDAY 13th FEBRUARY

"THE EDENDALE STORY"

PRESENTED BY JIM CONNOR

ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE

LIBRARY PLACE ELTHAM

(FORMERLY OLD SHIRE OFFICE DRIVEWAY)



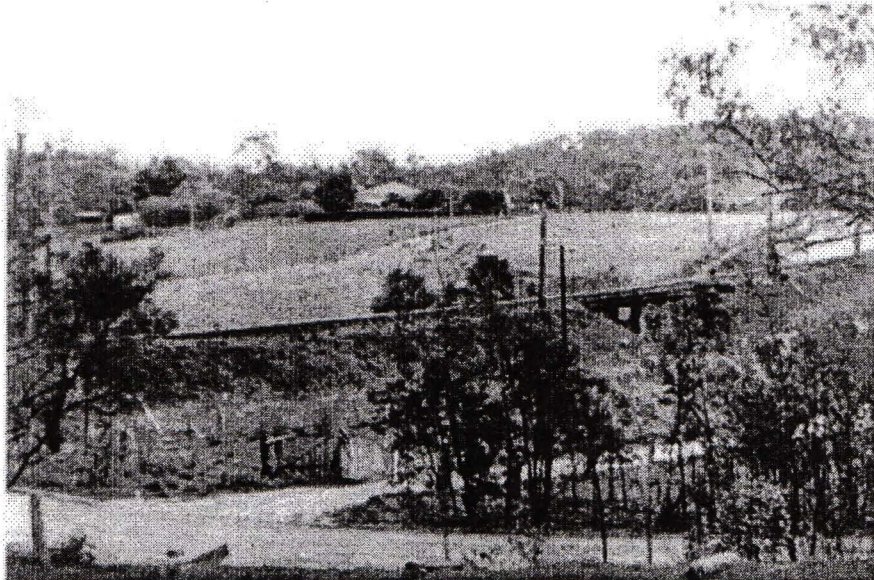
Edendale Homestead – Front (south) elevation – post 1933

"THE EDENDALE STORY"

The area known for many years as Edendale Farm was purchased from the Crown in 1852 by pioneer Eltham farmer Henry Stooke. He initially purchased 51 acres and later expanded his holdings by purchasing another three adjacent Crown allotments.

While he worked and cleared the land he did not actually reside on the site. The existing Edendale homestead was constructed in 1896 after the 51 acre holding was purchased by Thomas Cool, who used Edendale as his Eltham residence but did not farm the land. There has been an interesting history from the time Stooke established the property through to the current day.

At our next general meeting on 13th February Jim Connor will cover this story, as well as touch on the future plans for Edendale, which is now owned by the Nillumbik Shire Council.



View of Edendale from the South-East – post 1933

2013 PROGRAM

Attached to this Newsletter is the Society's program for this year. It is also available on the Society's website and extra copies are available if required.

It includes topics and speakers for each meeting as well as dates for other activities, committee meetings, records workshops and heritage excursions. Any changes through the year will be notified in the Newsletter.

A growing group of members continues to make progress with getting our records into systematic order but there remains much work to be done. Members are encouraged to come along to our records workshops to assist with this task. They are held on the first Tuesday (evenings) and third Monday (mornings) of most months. Dates are listed in the program with the 2013 workshops commencing from 5th February.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON PAST SOCIETY EXCURSIONS

In recent years our Society excursions have largely concentrated on the local area, usually short walks within Eltham and nearby areas. In the 1970s and 80s and into the 90s the Society conducted many excursions to other areas. They mainly comprised bus trips, although, some involved travel by members' own cars.

During the 1980s there were usually two bus trips each year – the autumn and spring excursions. Bruce Ness, at the time Society Vice-President, worked for Hurstbridge and Mees bus services and for some years these companies rented us a bus with Bruce as honorary driver. Later we enjoyed generous discounts provided by Bruce Nixon with his company Cobb & Co Coaches. This type of excursion was eventually discontinued because of falling participation numbers.

For some of these excursions we were guests of other local historical societies such as at Kyneton, Sorrento and Maryborough. In other cases we visited historic properties or simply arranged our own tour of places of historical interest. Some of the places visited were Walhalla, Queenscliff, historic gardens in the Castlemaine area, "Gulf Station" at Yarra Glen, as well as "The Briars" and "Coolart" on the Mornington Peninsula. On two trips we followed sections of explorers Hume and Hovell's 1824 route across Victoria.

Bettina Woodburn was a regular participant in these tours. She often provided interesting comments on tours for our Newsletters. In Newsletter No. 30, May 1983 Bettina wrote:

"Kyneton Trip

A group from the Society (28 adults, 3 children) visited Kyneton, a town of old world charm...bluestone buildings and English oaks and a population of almost 4,000, on Sunday March 20th.

Irene Turvey, a former resident of Greensborough and a member of our Society, now President of the Kyneton Historical Society, met us and arranged the guided tour of important buildings, places of interest, and lastly the 1982 award winning Historical Museum.

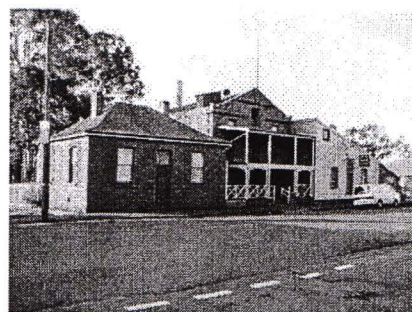
The Willis Bros. Flour Mills, Piper Street, being restored since 1977 by David Willis, provided a fascinating insight into wheat processing. Originally the many mills in the district were water, wind, or steam powered.

Electricity and a huge boiler from a Cornish tin mine is now providing reliable energy. The mysteries of "stone-ground" (the best grindstones are French), "whole meal", and "white flour" with the sifted off bran, semolina, wheat germ, and pollard, were explained.

Many colloquial terms "fitting the bill", "setting the Thames on fire" originated in the milling industry. We learnt the roles played by the farmer, miller and baker. The feel of the old building and the "smell" of freshly baked bread made history come alive!



Kyneton Historical Museum



Willis Bros. Flour Mill, Kyneton

Our guide, Phil, with an incredible memory for dates, then recounted the town's progress as we drove around past where Major Mitchell forded the Campaspe en route from Portland to Mt. Macedon, past Furphy's original machine shop, the 1857 third oldest country pharmacy, the 120 year old Butcher's Shop, and the Post Office Creek abattoirs. We saw the Courthouse (scene of an 1870 Ned Kelly trial), the old Market (later the School of Mines, then High School), the 1858 Mechanics' Institute, the 1862 Railway Station, the Shire Hall, and Post Office, and the 1868 Botanical Gardens. Hotels, Churches, the Hospital, old stores and the homes of merchants, the premises of coach builders, and livery stables, made the old times come alive.

The setting and the magnificent collection at the Kyneton Historical Centre reinforced the enjoyment of our own memories and Australia's past.

Even the sight of fire devastation on Ash Wednesday along the Highway near Gisborne could not spoil our pleasure; that was part of the Australian Experience too.

Our thanks to all concerned in the arrangements for such a successful outing, and to our "honorary" coach captain, Bruce Ness."

The following item appeared in Newsletter No. 109, July 1996

"On the Trail of Hume and Hovell
Bettina Woodburn's Report on the Autumn Excursion

On a green and fresh morning (Sunday 26th May 1996) the Cobb and Co coach (driven by the most obliging Peter Tampion) set off in a north-easterly direction from Eltham to connect with Hume and Hovell's route on their 1824 explorations of central Victoria.

The Society would follow a series of monuments erected for the 1924 centenary of the expedition from King Parrot Creek (Tuesday 7th December 1824), through Strath Creek, over Sunday Creek (Sunday 12th December 1824) at Broadford, Tullamarine, St Albans, Deer Park, through Werribee, skirting east of the You Yangs to Lara and Avalon Beach.

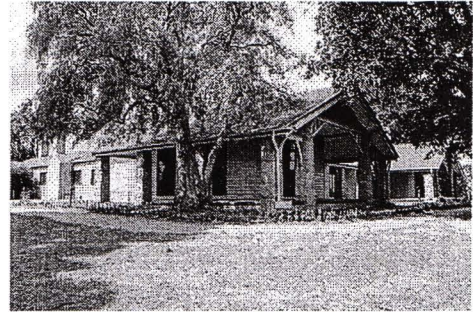
Because their distance-measuring wheel had broken and a one degree mistake was made in calculations, the two leaders of the original group of six convict-companions arrived at Corio Bay, instead of the expected Western Port, discovered earlier by Flinders.

From below Mt. Disappointment (Hume and Hovell's difficulties in "scrambling over brush and rock", "leeches in forest, as well as no water", "cutting grass 4-5 ft. high", "dreadful scrub", "devil flies") we took an easier route, saw the Strath Creek memorial in ground fog and a wonderful "field of dreams", the Hume-Hovell privately owned cricket ground with its white picket boundary fence.

Now, after a steep climb, in sunshine under gums we stretched and viewed magnificent rolling hills and fog-filled valleys – not "smoke from Aborigine's bush fires". After morning tea at Broadford we followed the Sunday Creek valley beside the Hume Freeway, passed the Wallan Wallan Rest Area (more appropriately Hume and Hovell Rest Area) to turn right at Beveridge.

In Gellibrand Hill Park, near the headwaters of the Moonee Ponds Creek, we experienced the landscape the first European settlers saw – huge river red gums and rolling pastures.

The gardens and sheltered courtyard of the 1840's, timber, brought from Britain, prefabricated Woodlands Homestead provided a pleasant lunch stop. We enjoyed a private tour, panoramic views over Melbourne and surroundings and the excitement of arriving and departing aircraft. Our next river crossing was at Werribee, "in a vast treeless plain", then we drove on by-ways no coach had previously travelled, to find "an immense sheet of water" salty Corio Bay, off-course to the west.



Woodlands Homestead

In late afternoon of a super, calm, late autumn day we headed homewards. Back in Eltham we were rather surprised to find that we had travelled a total of 347 km. What a wonderful day!"

STEEL SUPPORTS TIMBER BRIDGE

by Harry Gilham

The railway trestle bridge over the Diamond Creek at Panther Place Eltham is a major feature of the local landscape. It is classified by the National Trust and the Trust citation says that it is historically, scientifically, aesthetically and socially significant at State level. It is also covered by a Heritage Overlay under the Nillumbik Planning Scheme. The bridge is an integral component of our Society's logo.

The National Trust citation includes the following:

"Built in 1902, it is the only railway bridge of predominantly timber construction that is still in regular use as an integral part of Melbourne's metropolitan electric railway network, and one of extremely few timber rail bridges in the State that still carry trains.

The Eltham rail bridge is a unique and invaluable historical relic of an earlier steam-locomotive transport era in the Diamond Creek Valley, and has long formed an important part of a magnificent Eltham landscape. When built in 1902 it was close to the terminus point of the Heidelberg-Eltham rail extension, on the route of the proposed Diamond Valley Railway that was then planned to proceed much further up the valley towards Kinglake."



Eltham Trestle Bridge

The bridge is commonly referred to as a timber trestle bridge and in fact, all of the piers and most of the supporting beams are timber, but as you walk under the bridge on the Diamond Creek path if you look **UP** you will see that the beams for the main waterway spans are made of steel.

On 19th August 1901 the Heidelberg News reported as follows:

“Diamond Creek Bridge.

16 rolled steel beams 24”x7”x85lbs./lineal foot have arrived from New York on steamship ‘MIMIRO’ (ordered Feb.25, 1901)

Length is 29 feet 11½ inches.

9 have a camber of more than ¼”.

Calculated weight for 16 beams is 40743 lbs. weight.

i.e. 18 tons 3 cwt. 1 gr.

Costing at £13.12.0 per ton = £247.7.5

MILLIKEN BROTHERS Civil Engineers and Contractors in iron and steel construction, 11 Broadway, New York, U.S.A.,”

For travellers of today, 11 Broadway, New York is a property not related to the steel company. Stand across the Broadway, look over your **RIGHT** shoulder and the Statue of Liberty is across the water watching you.

If you are coming from Flinders Street Railway Station look **OUT** at 25.847km. when crossing the bridge and enjoy the valley views on both sides of your journey.

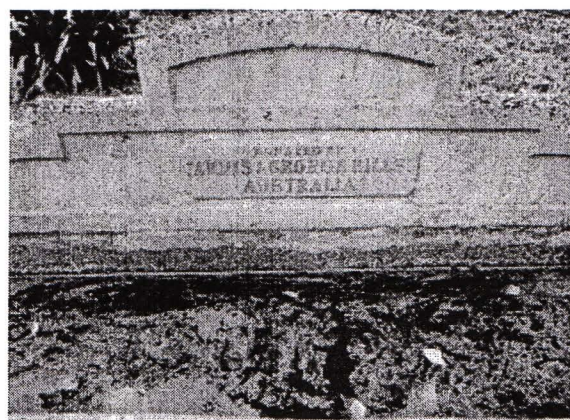
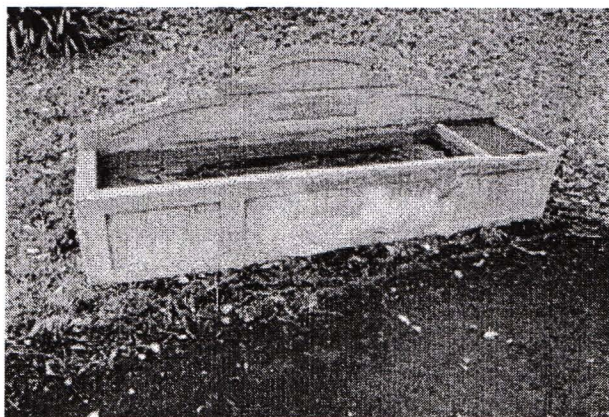
THE RESEARCH HORSE TROUGH

On a recent visit to Greensborough Historical Society, Harry Gilham picked up information on the worldwide program of provision of horse troughs by Annis and George Bills. Knowing of the Bills horse trough at Research, Harry was inspired to write a piece for our Newsletter. However, a check of our Newsletter index showed that an article appeared in Newsletter No. 95, March 1994 dealing with damage to the trough at Research. It included much of the same information as Harry’s item and so we repeat the 1994 article here.

“Those of you who regularly pass through Research may have noticed that the horse trough in Main Road near the corner of Warrandyte Road has been badly damaged. In trying to make a decision whether to repair it (still not decided), the Council sought information on its history. The inscription on the trough says “Donated by Annis and George Bills Australia”. It does not contain a date. Enquiries were made with local residents. Margaret Reynolds and Kevin Brinkkotter thought that the present concrete trough had been installed in the 1940s. It replaced an earlier iron trough, which was there from the 1910s and probably earlier. They did not know the origins of the trough and its inscription so Andrew Lemon, the local historian who wrote “Return to Research”, agreed to make some enquiries.

Andrew obtained information from the R.S.P.C.A. which shows that the trough was one of many donated by the Bills throughout Victoria and possibly in other areas. George Bills (1859-1927) was a successful manufacturer of mattresses and other woven wire products.

He had a great love of animals since childhood and this was shared by his wife Annis whom he married in 1885. They donated funds to many animal welfare causes probably world-wide. George's will bequeathed seventy thousand pounds to the R.S.P.C.A., a huge sum for the times. A family trust also provided for the erection of the horse troughs. It is not clear whether the Research trough was provided directly from the estate or was shifted from another location to replace the ageing iron trough."



The Research Horse Trough as it is today

The following additional information has been extracted from Harry's article:

"They (the Bills) were particularly concerned with the wellbeing of the all too often ill-treated and neglected horses, which were the mainstay of commercial transportation, in particular their inadequate watering facilities.

These concrete troughs were built with the simple geometric shapes of the Art Deco period and were not just for horses, as a few were also erected in Central Australia for camels. They also had a little section at one end for dogs and a fountain above for people to drink from.

The erection of the troughs in England and many other countries was handled by an organisation called "The Metropolitan Drinking-Fountain and Cattle Trough Association" which had been formed in 1859 to provide for the refreshment of animals and their drivers."

Following the 1995 damage the horse trough was repaired. It remains in good condition today and was visited on our Research walk last November. It is covered by a heritage overlay in the Nillumbik Planning Scheme.

Since 1995 the Society has collected information on Annis and George Bills that is now included in our files.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To satisfy the requirements of the Society's rules, notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Eltham District Historical Society Incorporated will be held at 8.00pm on Wednesday 13th March 2013 at the Eltham Senior Citizens' Centre.

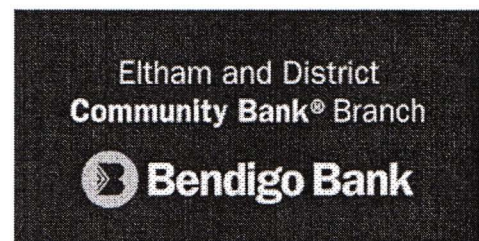
The agenda of the Annual General Meeting is set out below in accordance with the rules. Further details will be given in the March Newsletter.

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of 2012 Annual General Meeting
3. Reports
 - a. President's Report
 - b. Treasurer's Report
 - c. Any other reports
4. Election of office bearers and ordinary members of committee positions to be filled as follows:
 - President
 - Senior Vice President
 - Junior Vice President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer/Membership Secretary
 - Ordinary Committee Members (not less than three and not more than six)
5. Fixing of entrance fee (if any) and annual subscription
6. Any other business of which at least two weeks notice has been given to members

It should be noted that under the Society's rules nominations of office bearers should be made in writing to the Secretary not less than seven days before the meeting. Nominations should be signed by two members of the Society and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate. If insufficient nominations are received further nominations shall be received at the meeting. However, it should be noted that where a valid prior nomination is received it will have priority and no nomination for that position can be accepted at the meeting.

Each year we urge members to contribute to the operation of our Society by becoming an office bearer or committee member and we have the same message again this year. Please give the matter some consideration and, if in doubt, discuss it with one of our office bearers. The workload is not great. There are usually just six committee meetings each year, alternating with our general meetings. We warmly welcome fresh ideas to help us run a vibrant organisation and increase our membership.

*The Eltham District Historical Society
appreciates the financial support provided by the
Eltham and District branch of the Bendigo Bank*



Jim Connor
President

Phone - 9439 5916

Russell Yeoman
Secretary

Phone - 9439 9717

David Johns
Treasurer /
Membership Secretary
Phone - 9434 3357



Eltham District Historical Society

Incorporated - No. A0016285F

Local History Centre

728 Main Road (PO Box 137)
Eltham, Victoria 3095

Email

edhs1@bigpond.com

Website

www.tinyurl.com/elthamdhs

General Meetings

Are held at:

Eltham Senior Citizens' Centre
Library Place

Eltham

(Melway Map 21 ref. J5)

Program 2013

FEBRUARY

Tuesday 5th 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Wednesday 13th 8.00pm

General Meeting

Jim Connor

The Edendale Story

Monday 18th 9.30am

Records Workshop

Wednesday 27th 7.30pm

Committee Meeting

MARCH

Saturday 2nd 2.00pm

Heritage Excursion

Tuesday 5th 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Wednesday 13th 8.00pm

Annual General Meeting

Jane Woollard

The Laughing Water Project

Monday 18th 9.30am

Records Workshop

APRIL

Tuesday 2nd 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Wednesday 10th 7.30pm

Committee Meeting

Monday 15th 9.30am

Records Workshop

MAY

Saturday 4th 2.00pm

Heritage Excursion

MAY (continued)

Tuesday 7th 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Wednesday 8th 8.00pm

General Meeting

Samantha Westbrooke

Nillumbik Heritage Consultant

Monday 20th 9.30am

Records Workshop

JUNE

Tuesday 4th 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Wednesday 12th 7.30pm

Committee Meeting

Monday 17th 9.30am

Records Workshop

JULY

Tuesday 2nd 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Saturday 6th 2.00pm

Heritage Excursion

Wednesday 10th 8.00pm

General Meeting

The Eltham Library Story

Monday 15th 9.30am

Records Workshop

AUGUST

Tuesday 6th 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Wednesday 14th 7.30pm

Committee Meeting

Monday 19th 9.30am

Records Workshop

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 3rd 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Saturday 7th 2.00pm

Heritage Excursion

Wednesday 11th 8.00pm

General Meeting

Tim Burstall's Eltham Characters

Monday 16th 9.30am

Records Workshop

OCTOBER

Tuesday 1st 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Wednesday 9th 7.30pm

Committee Meeting

Monday 21st 9.30am

Records Workshop

NOVEMBER

Saturday 2nd 2.00pm

Heritage Excursion

Sunday 10th 2.00pm

Cemetery Excursion

Wednesday 13th 8.00pm

General Meeting

Local History Trivia Quiz

Monday 18th 9.30am

Records Workshop

DECEMBER

Tuesday 3rd 7.30pm

Records Workshop

Wednesday 4th 7.30pm

Committee Meeting

Wednesday 11th 6.30pm

Christmas Function Eltham Court House