

# Newsletter

No. 272 October 2023



## Vale - Sue Law - 27th September 1937 - 8th August 2023

Sue Law was an engagingly warm person with an easy smile, readily willing to help out where ever she could.

Sue was a constant contributor to the operations of our historical society, in different roles, for many years since becoming a member in 1984. Sue was not reluctant to initiate, volunteer and follow through with actions where necessary and was a stalwart in the support she provided during this time to our executive, committee and members in general.

Sue was President of our society between 1985 -1993, then Vice President during 1993-1998 and again during 2009-2015. In each of these roles Sue showed outstanding commitment to our society as a whole, and to our members in particular.

She could be relied upon to get the job done, which in the running of a volunteer group like EDHS was an important and valued attribute. In earlier days, before the availability of computers, Sue typed our newsletters, prepared by Russell Yeoman.

Many members will remember Sue arranging suppers at our society meetings, ensuring everyone was looked after. She was often the first person to greet visitors, or new members, and had a happy knack of making people feel welcome. Ever thoughtful, she was often the one organising celebrations, or gifts on special occasions.

Sue regularly helped people, not only within our organisation, but also throughout our local community and often visited community members, including when in hospital, or assisted with travel to a medical or personal appointment.

Sue is well remembered for being there, for her consistent contributions and for her fun approach to getting on with life, no matter what the challenges.

Sue is missed by many people.

### Next Society Meeting

7.30pm **Wednesday** 11th October 2023

Eltham Senior Citizen's Centre

Library Place, Eltham



Moving into our Local History Centre - July 1998  
Mark Gilham, Marg Ball, Sue Law and Harry Gilham  
Photograph - EDHS Collection

### Next Heritage Excursion

2.00pm **Saturday** 4th November 2023

Eltham Gateway Walk

See further details on page 2

## Our Next Meeting - 7.30pm Wednesday 11th October 2023

Our next meeting will be a special evening, if not a little unusual.

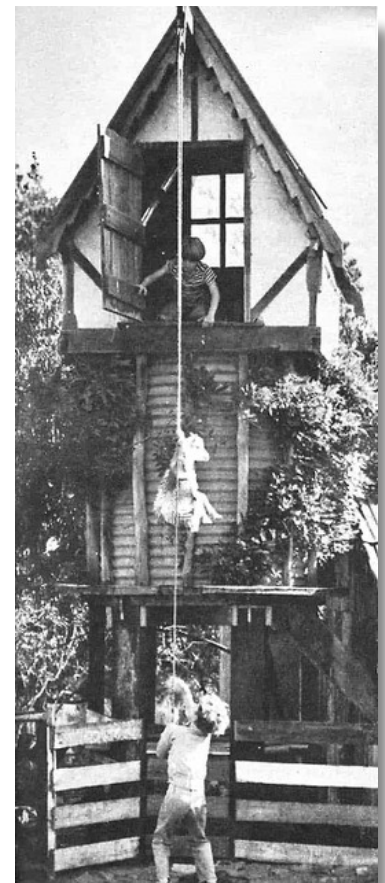
On pages 3 and 4 in this newsletter edition there are articles about Eltham Films, with particular reference to the film 'The Prize', made by Tim Burstall in 1958/59.

As Burstall had strong connections with Eltham it would have been an easy decision for him and his associates to use the local area as the setting for his first film. Following this film Burstall went on to make many more. He became a key figure in Australian postwar cinema and was instrumental in helping to rebuild the Australian film industry, at a time when it had been effectively dead for years.

At this EDHS meeting we will view this film, or should we say review this film, stopping at times to attempt to identify the main actors and where certain scenes were filmed around Eltham. Some locations may be more obvious than others. The actors are mainly children playing the characters in the film.

So this will be an exercise in identifying people and places, whilst enjoying the rare opportunity to view a valued example of early Eltham film history.

As always, Society members and visitors are most welcome to attend this meeting, at **7.30pm on Wednesday 11th October** in the Eltham Senior Citizens' Centre, Library Place, Eltham.



A scene from 'The Prize'  
....but where was this filmed?

## Heritage Excursion - Saturday 4th November 2023 - Eltham Gateway Walk

The Eltham Gateway is the name given the section of Main Road south of the Eltham town centre together with adjoining areas.

It contains many sites of historical interest including a number with heritage overlays under the Nillumbik Planning Scheme.

We intend to cover the section between Bridge Street and the Main Road bridge over the Diamond Creek including both Main Road and the creek environs.

This walk on Saturday 4th November will start at 2pm at the Eltham Local History Centre, 728 Main Road Eltham. The distance is about 3 km and it will take about 2 hours. At the conclusion there will be an inspection of the refurbished Court House.

This free walk is open to the general public as well as Society members. Dogs are not permitted on Society excursions. The phone number for contact on the day is 0409 021 063.



Jarrod's White Cloud cottage.

\* Photograph by J.H.Clark - EDHS Collection



Film-maker Tim Burstall came to prominence in 1971 with an ocker comedy "Stork", starring Bruce Spence in the title role. But his first film was a delightful children's adventure called "The Prize", made in Eltham in 1958-59. (Tim Burstall had wanted to be a novelist but thought that film-making would provide more opportunity.)

Much of the filming took place at various spots along the Yarra River: at the rapids below Killeavey, at the Laughing Water rapids, and at the Bend of Islands. Other scenes were filmed at the Brougham Street bridge, at Montsalvat, and along the unsealed back roads of Eltham. The main actors were all children: Tom Burstall (six), Lisa Jacka (sixish), Dan Burstall (eight) and Marcus Skipper (seven). Polly Boyd (twelve) had a minor role. The only adult actors were Matcham Skipper and Sidy Webster. The film was written and directed by Tim Burstall and produced by Patrick Ryan: they formed the production company "Eltham Films".

Music was written by local composer Dorian Le Gallienne. Cinematography was by Gerard Vandenberg, with tracking shots filmed from a Volkswagen driven by Alistair Knox. Margot Knox made a ragged cotton dress for Lisa.

Set in an era before motor vehicles, the film recalls an idyllic bygone Eltham, albeit one which probably never really existed. It opens with Snowy (Tom Burstall) at a country fair (filmed at Korumburra Show). He wins a prize at the hoop-la. The prize is a goat! He takes it home to show it to his friend Lisa, but it is stolen and suspicion falls on Dan and Marcus. A chase ensues, but the thieves elude Snowy and Lisa and hide the goat at Montsalvat.

The film's climax is very exciting, with the boys and the goat floating down the river in barrels, heading towards the rapids, while Lisa watches on anxiously. That scene was difficult to film and required several takes. Betty Burstall swam underwater to keep the barrels upright during filming.

The film won a bronze medal at the Venice Film Festival in 1960 and was sold to many countries. Tim Burstall's book based on the film came out in 1962. Interestingly, it contains quite a bit of dialogue although there is none in the film. Copies of the film are held by ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image) in Melbourne but they have not digitised it. However, Dorian Le Gallienne's music can be streamed online.

In 1961, Eltham Films (with music by George Dreyfus) made "The Adventures of Sebastian the Fox", a children's comedy drama series. The mischievous but likeable Sebastian is a string puppet who appears alongside various human actors, including Barry Humphries (with his wife Rosalind Hollinrake) and Tom Burstall. Its thirteen 10-minute episodes were screened on ABC television in 1962-63. Several episodes have been released on DVD and some are online.



Lisa with her pet goose



The goat in peril

Also, between 1960 and 1963, Tim Burstall (as Eltham Films) made a series of thirteen short documentaries on Australian artists (the likes of Arthur Boyd, Sidney Nolan, Tom Roberts and Clifton Pugh). One was about Matcham Skipper's work "The Crucifixion".

Tim Burstall died suddenly in 2004. He had a stroke while attending a screening in Eltham of some of his short films.

*Main sources:* Jane Woollard's excellent book "Laughing Waters Road" (2016); Alistair Knox's book "We Are What We Stand On"; Tim Burstall obituary at [milesago.com](https://milesago.com); Wikipedia article about Tim Burstall; article by Sarah Engledow in Portrait Magazine (2015).

## Serendipity In Eltham

Terry Beaton

The Collins Dictionary describes serendipity as "*the finding of articles of value or stumbling upon interesting discoveries in a casual manner*". That's exactly what happened during a recent EDHS workshop, when alphabetically sorting the file holder of surnames starting with "L", and the name Le Gallienne was discovered. Whereas back in 1983, after returning from studying in England, I moved into a rental property in the suburb of Melba in Canberra located on Le Gallienne Street. Always fascinated by this exotic street name, it was incredible to now discover that Dorian Le Gallienne was a highly acclaimed composer who had lived much of his short life in Eltham.

Born in 1915, as the only son of a French father and an Australian mother in a marriage that lasted until 1924, Dorian grew up with his mother, whose death in 1959 was a great loss to him. Dorian studied at Melbourne Grammar, but didn't graduate due to poor health from diabetes, but did gain admission to the Melbourne University Conservatorium. In 1938 Dorian went to London to study composition at the Royal College of Music.



Dorian Le Gallienne  
Photograph - internet source

With health issues, he spent WW2 working with the Department of Information and with the ABC. In late 1940's he gained acclaim for a series on the ABC called "Discovering Music". In 1948 he started to build a modest mud brick house in stages with Dick Downing in Yarra Braes Road, which became one of the notable examples of such construction in Eltham. He lived here until his death in 1963, aged 48.

Awarded a Commonwealth Jubilee Scholarship In 1951, he returned to London for further studies, where his individuality was actively encouraged, thereby surpassing many of his contemporaries. His Symphony established him as a leading Australian composer. Back in Australia he was a music critic for the "Argus" and later for "The Age", whilst also working with the artistic community at Montsalvat, which included Matcham Skipper and John Perceval.

In 1958 he became involved with Eltham Films and its writer/artistic director, Tim Burstall. Dorian wrote the score for a mainly silent film about a young lad that was set in Eltham called "The Prize", which relied on Dorian's score as the means to define dramatic and emotional situations on the screen. Reportedly, the music was both enchanting and dramatically flawless, whilst capturing the magic of the Eltham bush and followed every subtlety of feeling with unerring understanding. The film was awarded a Bronze Medal at the 1960 Venice Film Festival. Now living in Eltham and for somebody who has studied in England, it is strangely serendipitous to have lived for two years on a street named in recognition of this remarkable Eltham composer.

**Note** the articles by Richard Pinn and Terry Beaton were written for this newsletter, without each knowing about the others story.

Alan Marshall has a place in the hearts of all Australians, for he wrote about his fellow country people with a rare wit, humour, compassion and deep understanding.

He spent his lifetime living among them in the bush and in the cities. He travelled widely in Australia and overseas and was a storyteller, an acute observer of people, a skill he utilised in writing many books, short stories, newspaper columns and magazine articles. He received the Australian Literature Society Short Story Award three times, the first in 1933.

Alan was internationally recognised for his writings, including those related to children. He had an intimate knowledge of living with a disability, having contracted polio when six years old. His most famous book, 'I Can Jump Puddles' is based on his life story and the obstacles he faced as a child living with his disability. The book sold over three million copies, was translated into thirty languages, and was made into a film in Czechoslovakia and an ABC television series.

Alan collected and published Indigenous Australian stories and legends. Some of his stories relate to his experiences when travelling and living in Northern Australia, where he was given, by local Indigenous people, the name 'Gurrawilla' - translated as 'storyteller'.

Alan lived in Eltham from 1955, was engaged in local activities here and many of his stories were written while living in the district. He was involved as editor in the publication of "Pioneers and Painters", written to commemorate the centenary of Eltham and its shire in 1971. Many individuals contributed to this publication, including Russell Yeoman, our Eltham District Historical Society Secretary, who assisted Alan in assembling the content and photographs for this book. It is a valuable record of more than 100 years of the local history of the district.

In preparation for the publication of "Pioneers & Painters", the former Eltham Shire Council collected hundreds of photographs, which now form a substantial collection titled "Shire of Eltham Pioneers Photograph Collection", held in partnership between the Eltham District Historical Society and the Yarra Plenty Regional Library (Eltham Library).

So, not only did Alan Marshall leave a significant legacy of written words, he and associated individuals produced this valuable record of our local history, and a lasting photographic legacy, appreciated by generations.

There are also other strong connections with our area, including with the Alan Marshall Reserve and his popular sculpture by Marcus Skipper outside the Eltham Library.

On Thursday 28th September 2023 an event was held at the Eltham Library to officially unveil the recently conserved, favourite painting of Alan Marshall by Alan Martin. Alan Marshall's connection to the local community was acknowledged, and there was a short reading by local actor Dennis Coard, of Alan's short story 'Saving Dogs from Nervous Breakdowns'.

Alan Marshall died on 21st January 1984, and is buried in the Nillumbik Cemetery at Diamond Creek. The plaque on his grave simply says: 'Alan W. Marshall 'Gurrawilla' 1902 -1984.' It is intended that some commemorative activities will be arranged to acknowledge the 40th anniversary of his death, on 21st January 2024.



Alan Martin - portrait of Alan Marshall 1956  
Nillumbik Shire Council Art Collection  
Photograph - Jim Connor



Nillumbik Historical Society celebrated its 50th anniversary with an Open Day on Sunday 6th August 2023.



The program of events included a talk on the early history of Diamond Creek, an address by Cr. Peter Perkins about the history of the Society, a presentation to founding member Ron Gordon, Past President and ongoing Committee member, cutting of the anniversary cake, a recital by Irene Hayes on the historical Harmonium recently donated to the Society with local singers and a Q&A session and display about the history of local gold mining.

Ellis Cottage and the Society's Barn were open with historical displays and refreshments were available throughout the day for visitors to enjoy. It was a lovely day full of social connections and information sharing. Each visitor received a welcome bag full of interesting information to take home. Nillumbik Historical Society, established in 1973, continues to preserve and share the local history of Diamond Creek and District. Visit: <https://www.nillumbikhistory.org.au/>

### What else happened in 1973?

- Eltham's refuse tip located in Susan Street was closed. The land was landscaped to form the Eltham Town Park (later named Alistair Knox Park West).
- Shillinglaw Cottage was opened in Eltham Town Park by Governor Delacombe.
- The Kangaroo Ground refuse tip opened in Graham Road.
- St Andrews Market commenced.
- The State Government announced plans for Sugarloaf Reservoir at Christmas Hills.
- Rolling Stones toured Australia and are interviewed at Montsalvat.

### Eltham East Primary School 60th Anniversary

Eltham East Primary School, established in 1963, celebrated its 60th anniversary on Friday 4th August 2023 with a special school assembly. Past students, parents and friends were invited to attend the celebration. Vicki Ward MP opened the proceedings. The event included a brief slideshow history presented by Year 6 leaders and fun facts comparing life then and now.

Highlights of the event included reminiscences from two foundation students who recalled the small Grove Street school, with items of interest for the school students including drinking warm milk, walking home for lunch and catching tiger snakes in the yard.

The choir performed two pieces, one a lovely piece from the Torres Strait Islands. The String ensemble performed "Happy Birthday" and in addition to the National Anthem, everyone sang the school song "Purple and Gold".

Check out the EEPS Facebook page for some great photos of the event.

### What else happened in 1963?

- Shire of Eltham ratepayers voted in a referendum to borrow £60,000 to build new offices.
- Eltham Shire Council purchased Shillinglaw Cottage in Main Road for the site of new Shire Offices.
- A Memorial Garden is constructed along the Main Road entrance of the Eltham War Memorial Complex.

## The MEN behind the Names – *Eltham Roll of Honour Board (Part 2)* Terry Beaton

By 1914, the Shire of Eltham had a population of 3,243 according to the Census and stretched from Yarra Glen in the east, Kinglake in the north, Briar Hill in the south and excluded North Eltham in the west. Diamond Creek came under Heidelberg's governance. EDHS records indicate that 467 males and two females enlisted from the Shire of Eltham during WW1, which was 14.4% of its population. As such, the 26 names of WW1 fallen on the Eltham Roll of Honour Board (ERHB), represent 5.6% of those who enlisted, yet are not solely from the township of Eltham. Though 17 do have links, 5 are linked to Research, 1 to Kangaroo Ground, whilst 3 have links to places outside the shire. The total of fallen from the shire was 79, with 226 wounded and 164 returned home. Whereas 416,000 had enlisted, 61,172 died, 155,000 were wounded and 354,828 returned home nationally.

Interestingly, the Eltham Cenotaph has 27 names for the fallen in WW1, whilst the ERHB only has 26. 3797, Pte, Robert H. Davey, who evidently was one of three later additions to the Cenotaph, is the name missing from the ERHB. He was living in Greensborough as a farmer when he enlisted, aged only 18. He was killed in France on 26 August 1916, aged 19, with no known grave. As two others on the ERHB have also been linked to Greensborough, it is not known why Robert missed out.

Regardless of this anomaly, to bring life to the names of the fallen, the following table provides their service details, as well as their fate, date, location and where they are buried or commemorated.

**List of Eltham District Volunteers For WW1**

Rank	Surname	First Name	Svc/No	Fate	Date	Age	Location	Buried
Sgt	<b>SIMS</b> (?)	Reginald E	998	KIA	10/8/18	27	Proyart, Fr	Heath Cemetery, (V.D.15)
Sgt	<b>WILLIAMS</b>	George A.	70	DOW	17/9/18	22	Somme, Fr	Hancourt Cem (I.C.16)
L/Cpl	<b>BELL</b>	John C.	4976	KIA	04/10/17	29	Belgium	Passchendaele (III.C.9)
L/Cpl	<b>MOORE</b>	George F.	515	DOW	12/10/18	29	Peronne, Fr	Vandercourt Cm (II.B.4)
L/Cpl	<b>PHILIPS</b> (?)	Henry G.	R9925	KIA	01/07/15	22	St Eloi, Fr	Erquinghem-Lys, Lille
Pte	<b>BARRETT</b> (?)	Edward	76	RTA DOW	16/12/17 20/12/18	30 31	Died 11 AGH Caulfield	Coburg Cemetery D.9 253
Pte	<b>BIRD</b>	<i>Edwin</i>	4151	KIA	11/08/18	30	<b>No Known</b>	Villers-Bretonneux
Pte	<b>BOND</b>	William J.	3466	KIA	19/07/16	24	<b>No Known</b>	VC Corner, AMC, Panel 15
Pte	<b>BROMFIELD</b>	Charles F.	1339	DOD	07/11/18	21	Interlaken	Vavey Cem, Gv38 Switzer'ld
Pte	<b>BROWN</b>	George S.	802	DOW	05/08/16	31	Pozieres	Becourt Mil Cm, I.T.25
Pte	<b>BROWN</b>	John L.	4663	KIA	18/08/18	31	Vauvillers	Heath Cemetery, V.F.15
Pte	<b>BROWN</b>	Arthur W.	1844	KIA	09/08/18	38	<b>No Known</b>	Villers-Bretonneux
Pte	<b>CAMERON</b>	Thomas B.	4568	DOW	03/10/17	25	Ypres, Belg.	Lijssenthoek Mil XXXV.E.4A
Pte	<b>CASSELL(S)</b>	Alfred	234	KIA	21/10/17	26	Ypres, Belg.	Huts Cm, Dickebusch XIII.c.9
Pte	<b>CREED</b>	Herbert	4169	DOW	24/07/16	26	Pozieres, Fr	Becourt Mil Cm, I.R.110
Pte	<b>CRELLIN</b>	William	5080	KIA	07/05/17	38	<b>No Known</b>	Villers-Bretonneux
Pte	<b>GRANT</b>	Geoffrey	929	KIA	07/08/15	20	<b>No Known</b>	Lone Pine Mem, Panel 6
Pte	<b>McALARY</b>	Henry B.	1878	KIA	04/10/17	19	<b>No Known</b>	Menin Gate, Panel 23
Pte	<b>MEADOWS</b>	Robert /A	1883	KIA	19/07/16	28	<b>No Known</b>	VC Corner, AMC, Panel 20
Pte	<b>MOSELEY</b>	Walter J.	4165	DOW	14/08/16	25	Etaples, Fr	Etaples Mil Cm, IX.E.6
Pte	<b>NORMAN</b>	J. Henry A.	1814	KIA	05/08/16	23	<b>No Known</b>	Villers-Bretonneux
Pte	<b>PRIOR</b>	William J.	2239	KIA	26/08/16	23	Monquet Farm, France	Knightsbridge Cem Gv H.46, Martinsart, France
Pte	<b>PRYOR</b>	James	3958	KIA	25/04/15	19	<b>No Known</b>	Lone Pine Mem, Panel 27
Pte	<b>SHARP/E</b> (?)	Kenneth	2440	DOD	07/11/18	25	Pneu, Eng.	Fovant Ch, Wiltshire, I.H.5
Pte	<b>SOMERVILLE</b>	George	528	KIA	08/05/15	20	Cape Hellas	Cape Hellas Mem PI 203-6
<b>Engr</b>	<b>STEVENS</b> (?)	<i>Rozell N. T</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Drown</i>	07/12/16	25	At sea, <i>Conch</i>	Tower Hill Mem, London

## The MEN behind the Names – *Eltham Roll of Honour Board (Part 2)*

*Continued from page 7*

The two given names shown in *italics* are corrections to the spelling on the Cenotaph and the ERHB. The names marked with (?) initially did not appear to have an obvious locality entitlement to be on the ERHB, even though it wasn't compiled until in the 1950s.

**Pte Roslyn Stevens.** No such named veteran, was found during a search of the public accessible WW1 rolls. Instead his actual identity as **Rozell Newton T. Stevens**, was discovered by Peter Rickard using *Ancestry*. Rozell proved to be the son of Constable Isaac Newton Stevens, the officer in charge of the Eltham Police Station from 1904 -1911. Rozell is also listed on the Eltham Methodist Church's Roll of Honour, as Pte R. Stevens. As a 13 year old boy in 1904, Rozell would have either attended school or been employed locally. Early in WW1, he failed his medical for enlistment, but then having studied engineering, after his family had moved from Eltham to Williamstown, he jumped aboard a ship and joined the British Merchant Navy as an Engineering Officer. He died at sea when his ship, the oil tanker "**Conch**", was torpedoed whilst returning to England full of crude oil. It is not known if the listed name of Roslyn was a nickname or an error. He was never a Private in the 1st AIF, but is still entitled to be recognised due to his Eltham connection and the fact that all merchant mariners on wartime duties are officially entitled to be treated as war veterans.

**Kenneth Sharpe** was born in South Australia, but moved to North Fitzroy, where in 1911 he married Eunice Henderson, a girl from Greensborough in the next district. He enlisted on 4th July 1916 whilst living in North Fitzroy, but was working as a wood carter's assistant. It is therefore possible that he became known in Eltham when delivering firewood to local families or possibly played sport locally.

**Henry George Phillips** was born in Melbourne, but was visiting England in 1914 when he enlisted in the British Army, as indicated by his Army Number, R9925. His father was living in Albert Park, but apparently the *Eltham and Whittlesea Advertiser* had reported that a Mr Phillips had attended a "*Welcome Home*" ceremony held in Eltham, which also presented commemoration medals to parents of those who had been killed. Why this had be done by the local group is unknown and appears to have been the only known connection to Eltham.

**Pte Edward Barrett** is also listed on St Margaret's Roll of Honour, but with only one initial "**E**". In his book "*Valley Volunteers*", Peter Rickard proposed that he was Pte, 2951, Edward **John** Barrett. However, when tested for locality entitlement, things just didn't fit. A search of the Archives (NAA) discovered an alternative, No. **76, Pte, Edward** Barrett, amongst the 26 Barretts listed. Though born and was living in Collingwood when he enlisted, trolling through the 75 pages of his records found that after his medical discharge on 11th April 1918, he started to receive a disability pension addressed to **Pitt Street, Eltham**. He was living there with his wife, Emily May Barrett, and his two sons Edward Hector and Alfred. Edward's father was already living at Pitt Street, suggesting it had become the family home during Edward's wartime service. Also as his religion was Church of England, it follows that the family attended St Margaret's Church and why "Barrett E." is listed on it's Roll of Honour. A document found later in the EDHS archives confirmed that Pte, 76, Edward Barrett is the correct identity. So having returned home, why is he listed amongst the WW1 fallen? Because Edward was repatriated having suffered a GSW to the chest at Polygon Wood on 20th September 1917, plus had chronic dysentery from Gallipoli. He died at 11th AGH at Caulfield on 20th December 1918 due to heart failure and was buried the next day in an official War Grave at Coburg Cemetery.



## The MEN behind the Names – Eltham Roll of Honour Board (Part 2)

*Continued from page 8*

As he had therefore died of a war caused disability before 1920, he is fully entitled to be listed on local memorials.

**Reginald Sims** was born at Horsham and living in Greensborough as a Post Officer porter when he enlisted. His family were also all living in Greensborough. His name is on the Greensborough Memorial. It is therefore presumed that his postal duties included regular deliveries to the Eltham Post Office, or he may have played sport locally, as he is not listed on any local school or church Rolls of Honour.

### Terms used:

**KIA** – “Killed in Action” **DOD** – “Died of Disease” **DOW** – “Died of Wounds” (POW):- Prisoner of War **GSW** – “Gunshot Wound” **ME** – Middle East **RMS** – Royal Medical Ship (Hospital Ship) **No Known** – No Known Grave, remains not identified or found **HMAT** – His Majesty’s Australia Transport. **A14** – Ship’s Security Code Number **RTA** - “Returned to Australia” **AGH** – Army General Hospital **NOK** – Next of Kin

### Reference Sources:

UNSW/Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) Online WW1 Service Records;  
Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Online Nominal Rolls;  
National Archives Australia (NAA) Online Collection of Service Records;  
EDHS Archival Collection on WW1, with work by John and Bev Haines (Eltham RSL), Nicholas Pelling, Harry Gilham, Dean Stewart, Ken Eckersall and Kathleen Toal;  
“Valley Volunteers” by Peter Rickard, published in 2017. ISBN 978-0-646-86984-1.

## Local History Centre Room Names *This article is from our March 2011 newsletter*

The society’s committee has decided that names should be allocated to the rooms at our Local History Centre, 728 Main Road Eltham. The rooms need to be identified so that the locations of our records, furniture, equipment, etc. can be readily described. It has been decided to name these after important characters from Eltham’s history, rather than a more mundane numerical or alphabetical identification. The room names agreed to are as follows (proceeding clockwise from the front north corner):



**Barak Room** after William Barak (1824-1903) an important Aboriginal leader and member of the Wurundjeri Tribe.

Local History Centre  
Photograph - Jim Connor

**Wingrove Room** after Charles Symons Wingrove, Secretary and Engineer to the Eltham District Road Board and Eltham Shire Council from 1858 to 1904, his wife Katherine and other family members including daughter Bessie, who lived at Wingrove Cottage until her death in 1955.

**Lawlor Room** after Senior Constable Peter Lawlor, first Eltham police officer 1857 to 1872.

**Clark Room** after David Clark, first Headmaster of Eltham Primary School from 1855 for about 35 years and also his sister Catherine who also taught at the school.

The passageway which contains a number of photographic and other displays will be the **Withers Gallery** after Walter Withers an important painter of the Heidelberg School who lived in Eltham from 1903 until his death in 1914. It also recognises his wife Fanny whose writings are an important source of information about Withers and his art.

### Beatrice Wanliss Morrison, nee Irvine, 1899-1989, Naturalist and Community volunteer

Beatrice Wanliss Irvine was born in Armadale in 1899. She was the daughter of William Hill Irvine and Agnes Somerville Wanliss (See Newsletter no. 271).

Her father, later Sir William Irvine was a former Victorian Premier. From age 13 she lived at *Killeavey* on the Yarra River off Laughing Waters Road, Eltham, after her parents purchased the land in 1908. She was home schooled as a child and then attended boarding school.

Beatrice attended Melbourne University 1920-1924 where she studied a science degree. Beatrice married Tasmanian, James Morrison in 1923. She was 24.

The couple received *Killeavey* as a wedding gift. The property supported fruit and vegetable growing as well as an impressive botanical garden. Unfortunately, James died in 1936 after a period of ill health, leaving Beatrice to support their six children.

In January 1939, a bushfire, to later be known as Black Friday impacted the area. Fires burned almost 2,000,000 hectares of land in Victoria, where 71 people were killed, and several towns were burned out. Warrandyte was severely impacted.

The house at *Killeavey* was totally destroyed. But, as a testament to her continued fortitude she rebuilt the house – in the same spot with the original bricks.

Like her mother Agnes, Beatrice had a community spirit. In particular, she was an active member of the Eltham Women's Auxiliary, which was formed in 1945 to raise funds for the establishment of a War Memorial.

From the beginning, it was decided that this would take the form of a Baby Health Centre, a Pre-School and a Children's Library, set in a garden of remembrance.

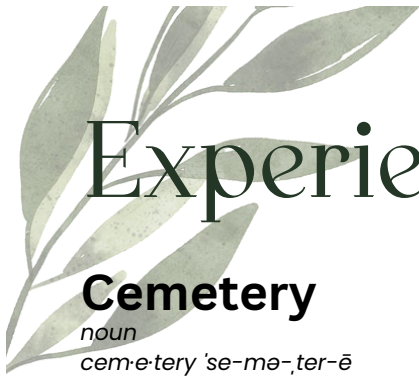
Thanks to tireless fund raising, the project came to fruition in the 1950s. Championed by local women, including Beatrice, the Eltham War Memorial complex is a living memorial specifically to honour those local servicemen who gave their lives in the Second World War.

Beatrice continued to live at *Killeavey* and became well regarded as a botanist and naturalist. She died peacefully in 1989, aged 90 and is buried with her husband and one of their sons – and around the corner from her parents in Eltham Cemetery.



Beatrice Wanliss Irvine and James Morrison  
at their marriage in 1923

Photograph - The Australasian 27 October 1923



# Experience Eltham Cemetery

Julia Drew

## Cemetery

noun

*cem-e-ter-y* 'se-mə-ter-ē

plural *cemeteries*

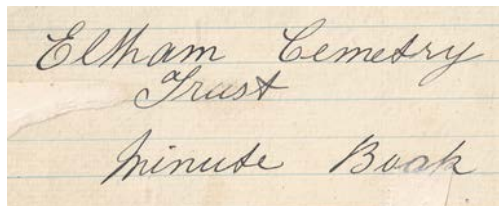
**synonyms** *graveyard, burial ground, necropolis, memorial park, God's acre*

The correct spelling, per Merriam-Webster is *cemetery* - however *cemetary* and *cemetry* were and are common mis-spellings of *cemetery* still used today.

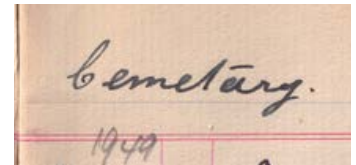
The variations appear in our historical records as well.



The front cover of the first minute book of the Eltham Cemetery Trust dated 1858, showing CEMETERY spelt correctly.



The inside cover of the third minute book of the Eltham Cemetery Trust dated 1929, cemetery spelt CEMETRY.



A page from the Trust account ledger dated 1949, with cemetery spelt CEMETARY.

## (Ce)Metry Road

Liz Pidgeon from the Yarra Plenty Regional Library sent me an email recently after reading a comment in the editorials of the Sydney Morning Herald on 17 August 2023, questioning the origins of "Metry Road".

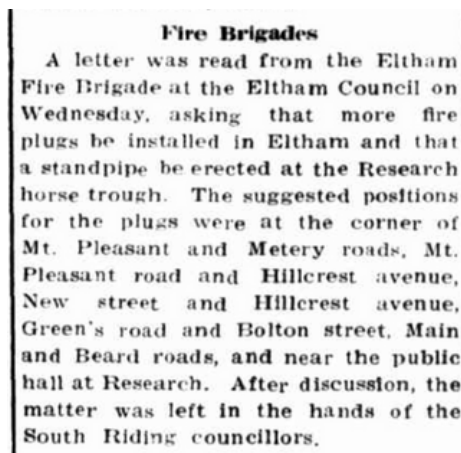
With cemeteries in place long before street names were necessary, a "Cemetery Road" exists in the history of many towns. There are close to 600 public cemeteries in Victoria, and more than 100 have an official address of Cemetery Road or a variation of (eg. Old Cemetery Road, Lane etc.).

Metry Road was once Cemetery Road; Fred Jones, a lifelong Eltham resident and 40+ year Cemetery Trust Member told us that as the area became more populated, people didn't like saying they lived on Cemetery Road.

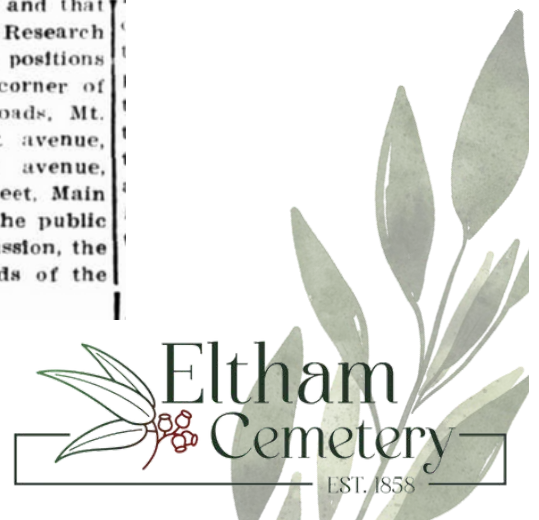
The transition to Metery Road began in mid-1939. When the first Melway was published in 1966; it was documented as "Metry Road", which continued in several editions before being corrected in 1971.



Reference to CEMETERY ROAD, the Evelyn Observer Friday 10 October 1890 Page 2 (Source: Trove)



Reference to METERY ROAD, the Advertiser Friday 23 June 1939 Page 3 (Source: Trove)





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State Member for Eltham**

We are always interested to consider local history stories or articles for publication in our newsletter