

# GRAPEVINE CUTTINGS (March 2002)

By Rob Upson

## Did you know that :

- \* Simcha Baevksi arrived in Australia, from Russia, in 1899 and established a drapery business in Bendigo. He then changed his name to Sidney Myer, later moved to Melbourne and in 1914 opened the Myer Emporium in Bourke St.
- \* 'Tweedside' in Crusoe Rd., Kangaroo Flat is reputed to be the oldest dwelling in Bendigo, built in 1855 for a sheep dealer named Archibald McColough. However, there is some doubt as to this date. If it were built a few years later as some suggest, then 'Specimen Cottage' in Hargreaves St. or 'Bramble Cottage' in Bramble St., both built in 1856, would have the honour.
- \* According to W.C.Harry, compiler of the 1980 Bendigo Street and Road Maps, View Street was originally known as Yew Street. An early drafting error was apparently responsible for the change to View St.
- \* When George Lansell came to the Bendigo goldfields he realised that very few diggers made any real fortunes. He and his brothers, William and Wooten, set up a butchery and a soap and candle factory at View Point. The business prospered until complaints about smells coming from the factory forced them to move. Soon after George began investing in quartz mining.
- \* Richard Larritt was Bendigo's first town surveyor, commencing survey work in 1854. His office at 60 View St. was built in 1858 for £1950. Since the 1890s this building has been known as Dudley House.
- \* In 1890 a battery operated tram system commenced in Bendigo, to be followed by steam driven trams in 1892 and then electric trams in 1903. Bendigo, unlike a lot of other Australian cities and towns, did not have horse-drawn trams as an initial public transport system. However, if you were around in the days of the battery trams you might have thought it was a horse-drawn system. The battery trams were a disaster, prone to frequent failure and breakdown. Horses were often sent out to tow the unfortunate trams back to the depot in Mollison St. (*Where Forty Winks is now located*).
- \* Wilhelm Karl Vahland was born in Germany in 1828 and arrived in Victoria in 1854. He wasn't much good at prospecting on the Bendigo goldfields so turned his hand to what he was trained in, namely engineering and building. Often working in partnership with other architects, his architectural legacy includes, the Town Hall, St. Kilian's Church, the second Shamrock Hotel, the City Family Hotel, the Alexandra Fountain, the Benevolent Asylum (Anne Caudle Centre), Masonic Hall (Capital Theatre) and the School of Mines.