

GRAPEVINE CUTTINGS (June 2007)

By Rob Upson

Bendigo Street Names

Have you noticed how some of the names of Bendigo's streets are grouped together in various themes?

The first and probably the most obvious group, starting from the CBD and heading south towards Kangaroo Flat are flowers and trees. Mostly of European origin, they are Acacia, Wattle, Broom, Vine, Olive, Lilac, Myrtle, Violet, Honeysuckle, Lily, Shamrock, Thistle, Rose, Rowan, Cedar, Laurel, Maple, Beech, Fir, Bay, Poplar, Oak, Elm, Ash, Mimosa, Mistletoe and Alder. And don't forget Forest St. In keeping with the theme, it has been suggested that View St. was originally designated as Yew St. but a drafting error on one of the earlier maps resulted in View St. The current name is more appropriate.

We now add a bit of culture to the streets by moving out to Spring Gully. Here we encounter Poets' Corner with the well known Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley, Lawson, Byron, Tennyson and Paterson.

Strathfieldsaye is named after the Hampshire estate of John Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington. So it's not surprising that in this township there are streets named Wellesley and Duke plus the shopping centre of Wellington Way. Then there is Blucher St. named after General Gebhard Leberecht von Blucher who with his Prussian Army arrived just in time to help Wellington defeat Napoleon at Waterloo. (There is a Waterloo St. but it runs off Barnard St. with Drought St. and Flood St. nearby) Here is a bit of trivia for you. I read somewhere, but can't recall where, that Strathfieldsaye, with 15 letters, is the longest single word town name in Australia. I haven't checked it so I could stand corrected.

Moving out to the Strathdale/Kennington area we encounter several groups. Where the drive-in cinema used to be are four Courts named Hollywood, Metro, Goldwyn and Mayer. Beyond Harley St. we come to a series of native plants, Bottlebrush, Blue Gum, Tea Tree, Snowgum, Paperbark, Stringybark, Pepper Tree and Gum Nut. Nearby are the mountaineering Courts of Hilary, Sherpa and Tenzing.

Australia's Prime Ministers from the first half of the 20th Century get a mention. Names such as Watson, Hughes, Bruce, Lyons and Curtin are widely spread, but at Kangaroo Flat, Menzies, Page and Chifley are grouped together just south of the Lockwood Road. At Spring Gully, east of Retreat Rd., Barton, Deakin and Cook are grouped.

If you are a Gilbert and Sullivan opera fan, then just off Kronk St., Golden Square, you'll find Mikado Crt., Gondolier Tce. and Penzance Tce. Some birds congregate adjacent to the Showgrounds, namely Kookaburra, Swan, Magpie and Emu. Out at Maiden Gully there is a rural theme in Settlers Place, Shearers Run and Stockmans Rest.

Between the years 1856 and 1993 (just prior to amalgamation) there was a total of 88 Mayors of Bendigo, some serving more than one 12-month term. All but a few of these have a street, drive, terrace or court named after them, scattered all over the place. No doubt there are a few Councillor's names that have qualified for such recognition, but I am not about to find out.

Finally, if you fancy a siege or a massacre, then off St. Aiden's Rd. there is a Mafeking St. and a Glencoe St. And, nearby, in the same area you will also find Vickers Crt., Owen St. and Thompson Cr. See the connection?

As an after thought, what could be a collective noun for a group of streets? What about a *strip of streets*, a *stratagem of streets* or a *strangle of streets*. Have fun making up your own.