

# NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER—NOVEMBER 1970

Price 5 cents

Number 32

Registered at the General Post Office, Melbourne, for transmission by post as a periodical

Page 1

\*\*\*\*\*

**MEETINGS:** Wednesday, 14th October, 1970, in the Coffee Room, Civic Centre, Whitehorse Road, Nunawading. 8 p.m. sharp.

**FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING: AGENDA**

Confirmation of Minutes of Fourth Annual Meeting.

Presentation of Annual Report and Financial Report

Election of Office-bearers and Committee Members

To be followed by the presentation by members of brief histories of some local organisations.

**NOTE:** Each member to bring a plate of supper.

Wednesday, 11th November, 1970. Time and place as above.

**'STUMBLING THROUGH HISTORY'** is the title for the talk to be given by writer NANCE DONKIN.

'House by the Water', Mrs. Donkin's first full-length historical book for children, was published in March this year. She has written several titles for the Oxford University Press series EARLY AUSTRALIANS: 'An Orphan', 'A Currency Lass' and 'An Emancipist', all set in Australia in the first twenty years. The Mitchell and LaTrobe Libraries have been her hunting-ground for research material, and in June, she spent a week in Richmond, N.S.W. 'digging around' for material for the book which she has just completed.

**SEPTEMBER MEETING:** Rev. Denis Oakley presented a most interesting 'History of TallyHo Boys' Village', together with a film showing many of the activities of the past at this place.

Thanks to Mr. Chatwin for taping some of the addresses presented to the society and to Miss Back for transferring these into typescript for the Archives.

It is very pleasing to report that the newly established 'Nunawading News' in Mitcham is prepared to print any news from this society.

**SCHWERKOLT COTTAGE SMITHY.** This was officially opened on Sunday, 20th September by Mrs. Goble, M.L.A. A very large crowd of interested people watched Mr. Jack Collins of Ballarat demonstrate the craft of the blacksmith throughout the afternoon. Cr. Walsh and Mrs. Walsh deputised for the Mayor and Mayoress, Cr. Shepherd and Mrs. Shepherd. Also among the special guests were Mr. Jarman, M.H.R., Mr. Blake, President RHSV, representatives of the Blackburn & District Tree Preservation Society, Nunawading Historical Society and the Folk Lore Council of Australia, local Councillors and Council staff, and all who assisted in fitting up the smithy. Mitcham Rangers very ably assisted by acting as tea hostesses.

## **EASTERN SUBURBS REGIONAL MEETING**

In 1964, Ringwood Historical Research Group suggested regional meetings of eastern suburbs historical societies — Camberwell, Kew, Doncaster-Templestowe, Box Hill, Nunawading, Ringwood, Croydon, Knox. This area is regarded as a 'natural' region, the towns having grown up approximately along the early route towards Healesville — Woods Point gold-fields. These regional meetings have become specially significant, with the opportunity to demonstrate the liaison between small local historical societies and other larger groups with similar aims, and local Government organisations. Usually approximately 200 guests are present, including local Members of Parliament, local Councillors, and representatives from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, National Trust, Council of Adult Education, neighboring cities and other affiliated societies in the region.

In 1971, it will be the turn of Nunawading H.S. to be host society. The meeting will take place on Friday, 30th April, in Wesley Hall, Blackburn.

The society's brick and tile collection, a herb display relating to the former Slater herb garden in Blackburn and some Schwerkolt Cottage articles will form the display for the evening. Mitcham Repertory Group and Blackburn-Mitcham Film Society have undertaken to assist this society by providing a program relevant to the historical background of the meeting.

ALL MEMBERS will be needed to assist in entertaining the guests on this evening.

## **HORSE TROUGHS**

'Nunawading Gazette' 22/7/70 reported that Nunawading City Council had adopted the recommendation of Cr. Graham Walsh to retain the historic Bills horse trough on the reserve at the corner of Blackburn and Canterbury Roads, Blackburn. This is not the first time that Cr. Walsh has shown his interest in retaining historic objects when it is possible to do so.

The late Mr. George Bills was born at Brighton, England, in 1859 and came to Australia as a young man. He died in 1927, leaving a large sum of money to provide drinking troughs for horses, and for the purpose of preventing cruelty and for the alleviation of suffering of animals in any country. Subsequently, many hundreds of troughs were erected in Australia, and some in overseas countries. Where a trough was established, the responsibility of the local Council was to provide the foundation for the concrete trough, to keep the trough clean and to maintain a supply of water.

Troughs were supplied until the outbreak of the 2nd World War. Afterwards, with the decline of horse traffic, the same need no longer existed. In many places, troughs have been removed, especially where they have inadvertently become a traffic hazard.

A recent project financed by this estate was the RSPCA Rescue Centre at East Burwood, opened in 1964 by the Governor of Victoria, Sir Rohan Delacombe; this provides a rescue service for injured stray animals.

By his will, Mr. Bills directed that the name of his wife, Annis, who predeceased him, should be placed with his name on each of the troughs provided.

Two troughs remain in Ballarat, Clunes retains one and there is one at Bowenville, formerly Timor, in the Maryborough district. Doubtless others are still to be seen in various places.

**Extracts from the 'Blackburn & Mitcham Reporter', 12/8/1927**

*Blackburn – Mitcham Shire Council*

Ordinary Business: Cr. Stevens moved that, with a view to rendering the surface of Burwood Road less slippery for horses drawing heavy loads, at least two of the hills on that road be tested by placing on them material from the sides of the road. It was a serious matter for a man to have his horses injured, perhaps permanently, through slipping, and a light layer of rough material would perhaps obviate this. Cr. Bayley seconded, and the motion was carried.

*Whitehorse Road Tram Terminus*

Splendid progress is being made with the laying down of the double tramway in White Horse Road, from Wharton Street, Balwyn, to the junction at Union Road, Surrey Hills. A large gang of men has been employed for some weeks past, and the work is now nearing completion. This doubling of the line will obviate the necessity for the old system of loop-line shunting to allow of two trams passing, and should result in better service and added convenience.

*Cyclone Damage at East Burwood*

Sunday afternoon's cyclone cut a vicious track through East Burwood, with the result that the roofs of three large sheds and stables on Mr. Mullins' property were deposited, some in the tops of trees about a quarter of a mile away, and other pieces of iron miles further, nearly to Bayswater. Trees and bushes in the path were twisted and broken, and sheets of iron were also blown off roofs nearer to Burwood.

*Blackburn: Tree-planting in the Streets.*

The Blackburn – Mitcham Shire Council on Monday evening of last week adopted the report of the sub-committee that permission be given to plant Vine Street with Phoenix palms and Bottlebrush plants, alternately at approximately 25 feet apart, the residents to provide plants and guards; estimated cost £20 to £25. The council's engineer shall have sites for plants pegged, and holes dug and trees planted by council's workmen, so that everything may be uniform.

*Tunstall*

Walker's Road, at the side of the Tunstall store and post-office, at present resembles a morass, and during the past fortnight two large motor vehicles have been bogged there. The first one managed to manoeuvre its way out without assistance, but the second, on Monday was so imbedded that it had to be dug out, and then towed by another motor wagon. The local Progress Association applied to the Shire Council for several loads of broken tiles for the road, and offered to supply the labor, but this request was refused, and it seems as if such incidents will be a common occurrence while the wet weather lasts.

*Improved telephone service*

A direct line to the central exchange has now been installed at the public telephone office at Tunstall post-office, and irritating delays, it is anticipated, will now be a thing

of the past. Under the old system, Mitcham and Ringwood were using the same line as Tunstall and the public was greatly inconvenienced, often having to wait almost indefinitely to secure a call.

**'Blackburn & Mitcham Reporter' 12/8/1927**

**Station Street Level Crossing**

. . . . in response to the Council's agitation to bring about some scheme whereby the level crossing in Station Street could be abolished, the Railways Commissioners would visit Box Hill on Monday 15th August to confer with the Council on the matter. . . . Cr. Murphy moved that the Council urge upon the Commissioners the necessity of re-opening the whole question of level crossings, and formulating a policy of dealing satisfactorily with the problem throughout the metropolitan area.

**'Doncaster & Eastern Suburbs Mirror' 3/6/1970**

Box Hill City Council is expected to discuss next meeting the announcement made last meeting that steps are to be taken to remove the Station St. railway gates and bottleneck . . . . The Minister (Transport) in his letter, said it was acknowledged that the level crossing at Station St. should be abolished. This, he said, would be achieved by putting the rail tracks under the street.

**AIR POLLUTION – not a modern problem after all?**

John Evelyn (1620-1706) was diarist, author, patron of the arts and a prominent churchman.

In 1661, not long after the restoration of Charles II, Evelyn on his way to Whitehall, noted some columns of smoke 'which so filled and infested the buildings in Scotland Yard that men could hardly see each other.'

He thereupon wrote a tract on smoke abatement, presenting it to the King under the title 'Fumifugium'. His suggested remedy was firstly to move out of town all soap-makers and other obnoxious manufacturers and then to plant in every spare corner of London syringa and wild thyme and sweet-smelling willow, reminiscent of the orange groves above Genoa, the rosemary on the Spanish coast and the scent of roses near Paris.

The King asked Evelyn to draft a bill to lay before Parliament to mitigate the nuisances described in the tract. But no record remains of this in the Parliamentary annals today.

D. Mattingley  
(Editor)  
Telephone 878 4630