



NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 1987 - FEBRUARY 1988

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, 9th December - 8 p.m. at the home of Ian and Shirley Barker, 14 Tortice Avenue, Nunawading.

Please be prepared to show some interesting object or recount a story of Christmas interest. Also, a small plate of supper.

WEDNESDAY, 10th February, 1988. 6.30 p.m. at the MUSEUM. As usual, BYO tea, then we will hold our business meeting.

TUESDAY, 26th January, 1988. Remember our display at the Australia Day Family Festival on 'HOUSES AND HOMES'.

CORRECTION and apology for the misprint in the last newsletter:
MRS. MARGARET MAY was our speaker on 9th September in her role of REFERENCE LIBRARIAN.

ANNUAL MEETING on 14th October: Member and former Councillor, Mr. Ken Barelli, attended and conducted the election of office-bearers. He then delivered a short talk about future Council plans for our City.

Office-Bearers as follows:

President:	Mr. Bill Gray
Vice-President:	Mr. Andrew Hillier
Secretary:	Mrs. Judith Fry
Treasurer:	Mrs. Shirley Barker
Committee:	Mesdames Maureen Mason, Joan Rocznio, Betty Muckleston, Beryl Gray and Miss Chris Otterbach.
Newsletter Editor:	Mrs. Doris Mattingley
Newsletter Assistants:	Mrs. Beryl Gray and Mrs. Val Riches.

The Secretary reported on the recent ORAL HISTORY SEMINAR, three of our members having attended this. The experience was a valuable one, with much helpful advice for us all.

Ten representatives from our Society attended the EASTERN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES TOUR on the weekend 6th to 8th November. Two nights were spent at Foster and the group visited Foster Museum and Port Albert Maritime Museum. Representatives from local societies travelled on the bus, identifying local points of interest. We also visited Tidal River on Saturday, lunched at Yarram on Sunday. We came home via Korumburra where we viewed a museum displaying 3000 miniature shoes and boots. A perfect weekend.

A LOCAL BUSH-WALK of some decades ago

R.H. Croll, who died in 1947, was a well-known naturalist of wide experience and ability. From 1897, the Melbourne Walking Club 'was part of his life'. He wrote several books on bush-walking, and one suggested walk was from Ringwood to Burwood - obviously many years ago. [Slightly abridged version here].

'Leave the train at Ringwood, turn back along its main street towards Melbourne and follow the first road to the left. It dives under the railway line and reappears as a bush road, which obviously can be sticky under the provocation of winter...It is at once a bush road, only partially marked by traffic, and wearing openly little 'buttonholes' of heath, invariably white, and the pale yellow flowers of the correa or native Fuschia.

At a mile and a half, Canterbury Road is crossed, here a secluded byway running between hedges of native trees, so different from the bustling street of the inner suburb that one may imagine it has grown old in coming so far. In another half-mile of your bush road, you reach one of the many branches of the Dandenong Creek...Cootamundra wattles, silver wattles, tea-tree, native cherry trees, Christmas bush, bursaria and other shrubs are here.....

Passing higher along the hillside to avoid a chicken farm, you emerge on the L.L. Road about a mile to the south-east of Vermont.... More good stretches of the creek banks have scrub and trees, edged with thick fringes of maiden-hair fern. Presently you reach Burwood Road...

Each slope to the east, as you climb it, opens out views of the big blue hills; each western outlook embraces a wide stretch from the Bay past Macedon to the ranges beyond Whittlesea. A parallel ridge to the south has for its easterly end the well-known Wheeler's Hill. On the north are some well-wooded rises.

From the last hill but one, you catch a glimpse of Burwood. The road leads down a long gradual slope to a green valley, crossed first by Station Street and then by a branch of Gardiner's Creek. From the bridge the way is through a cutting with a church above it, the whole forming a picturesque scene. A few hundred yards ahead is the terminus of the electric tram and you are once more within touch of the city, after an enjoyable tramp of about nine miles.'

LOCAL HISTORY

On the site of the present reserve at the intersection of Canterbury and Blackburn Roads, Blackburn, blocks of land were surveyed and sold many years ago. When orchardists needed a road through from Burwood Road to Blackburn, a change was made. Bakers Road [later Blackburn Road], from Canterbury Road to Hawthorn Road [where the road curves], did not connect with Burwood Road, except by a lane nearby. About 1937, two orchardists gave sufficient land between them for this road to be continued to Burwood Road. At the same time, the creek was diverted in the present reserve and a new section of Blackburn Road was constructed - this is immediately north of the intersection, then it continues as before to Blackburn and the railway line. The Council had to buy the existing blocks of land to accomplish these changes, and that is why we now have this fine open space.

The City Council and the Blackburn & District Tree Preservation Society planted the reserve with native trees and shrubs, and the result is today a delightful spot, in keeping with Nunawading's reputation for trees and open spaces wherever possible.

When major works constructing this section of the road (and Canterbury Road after its widening) were carried out in the late nineteen sixties, the workmen were astonished and dismayed to find a layer of soft, oozy mud several feet down, this of course marking the original site of the creek, diverted many years previously. Much extra filling was necessary before the completion of the job.

Also located in this reserve is the historic Bills horse trough owned by the City Council. The late Mr. George Bills came to Australia as a young man and when he died many years later (1927) he left 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 overseas. The responsibility of the local Council in each area was to provide the foundation for the concrete trough, to keep it clean and to maintain a supply of water. The name of the wife of Mr. Bills, Annis, was directed by him to be placed with his on each trough provided.

Troughs were supplied until the outbreak of the 2nd World War, but with the later decline in horse traffic, the same need no longer existed.

A more recent project financed by this estate was the now well-known RSPCA Rescue Centre at East Burwood, opened in 1964 to provide a rescue service for injured and stray animals.

One may glimpse these troughs in various spots in Victorian country towns, preserved for posterity as is our own.

On the present site of the SAFEWAY (WOOLWORTHS) store in Canterbury Road, Blackburn South, there was in earlier times a daffodil farm. Later, a plaster works operated here for many years, and houses built in the district in the nineteen-fifties era invariably had their internal plaster walls supplied from here.

LOCAL & OTHER NEWS

Members will remember Rachel Faggetter of the CHILDREN'S MUSEUM, a speaker and Museums judge last year, and an interested onlooker because of her mother's involvement here in early years. She recently left to take up an appointment as Director of the National Wool Museum in Geelong, this to be developed in the historic bluestone Dennys Lascelles Woolstore, A fascinating project.

The R.H.S.V. is planning an exhibition to be held at H.M.A.S. Lonsdale to coincide with the visit of the Tall Ships to Melbourne from 31st December this year to 5th January 1988.
