

*Inc.*

**NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**  
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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'.

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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.

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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 Rocznik, Betty Muckleston, Beryl Gray and Miss Chris Otterbach.
Newsletter Editor:	Mrs. Doris Mattingley
Newsletter Assistants:	Mrs. Beryl Gray and Mrs. Val Riches.

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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.

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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.

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Our first meeting for this year took place at the Museum on a very pleasant summer evening, with Dr. Dianne Sydenham speaking about the preparatory work on which she is engaged for our local history.

A small display is to be staged at NUNAWADING HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY from 1st March for one month, at the school's request. Some of our photographs will be used here.

BLACKBURN LIBRARY is to use some of our recent display on 'Houses and Homes' at the City Council's Family Day on 26th January.

At this very successful Family Day, our show had numerous viewers and more enquiries than usual. We were able to display many relevant small articles in our new show-cases, thanks to Rupert Muckleston, along with maps, photographs (one of an old log house of the 1880's) and other items. We are grateful to the Council for the space allotted to us in the Arts Centre - very pleasant for all concerned.

Another display for us at the centenary celebration of CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHRIST CHURCH, MITCHAM, on 16-17th April, together with historical records and memorabilia from other local churches. This is expected to create much interest in the City of Nunawading.

It is anticipated that the addition to our Museum will be completed very soon, which means that we will need: -

Steel shelving and cupboards, chairs, trestle work tables, photo-copier and typewriter. Can any members assist with these, or do you have any contacts where some help may be offered? This is very important for our society.

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#### A LOCAL SCHOOL - PAST AND PRESENT

Many local residents are unaware that Blackburn was the site of an interesting experiment, beginning more than seventy years ago.

In 1912, a committee was formed to raise money for an open-air school, where malnourished children could attend for a time in country air and receive wholesome food, as had been done in some overseas cities. The Education Department agreed to this special school project, accepted the sum of money raised, £312/16/9, and chose Blackburn as the appropriate site. Several blocks of land in Blackburn Township Estate, at the south end of Gardenia Street, were purchased and on 1st June, 1915, State School No. 3850, Blackburn Open-Air School was opened, with accommodation for 30.

Some years ago, a gentleman who had been one of the original pupils contacted our secretary after visiting his former school, and he was able to recount some of the details of the everyday routine. The pupils from Richmond and Burnley arrived on the 9.15 a.m. train and walked to the school. One boy's chore was to walk to a farm on the site of the present Blackburn South Post Office, and bring back a can of milk for the teacher to make cocoa for all pupils. Another boy went to the butcher's for meat which was then cooked for lunch by a teacher. After the meal, pupils had to rest in deck-chairs quietly for an hour. All were measured and weighed regularly, and every fortnight they walked to Blackburn Lake, where there were masses of wildflowers and still some small boats. Emphasis was definitely on a health promotion regime rather than book work, and our informant was very definite that the children all benefited in health and well-being.

The greatest change occurred in the twenty years after the 2nd World War. Extra rooms were added and amenities such as rubber mattresses and playground equipment, and there was a period of experimentation with various diets, including the Oslo Diet. Rail travel was superseded by free travel in a special bus through Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond. Various local groups assisted with amenities and the City Council also helped.

In 1964, in view of the increasing number of social welfare agencies and groups and various Council services being developed in all suburbs, the Education Department decided to discontinue this project. A Psychology and Guidance Centre was established, and in the early nineteen-seventies, an entirely new building replaced the old one.

Nowadays the Ministry of Education maintains here BLACKBURN STUDENT SERVICES, providing help for students, teachers and parents in Educational Psychology, Social work and Speech Therapy. Those attending come from the City of Nunawading, Ringwood and Croydon, with further expansion planned this year.

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A SUBDIVISION OF 62 YEARS AGO

AUCTION OF TUNSTALL TOWN ESTATE

Shop sites and residential allotments. 74 trains daily.  
MARCH 20th, 1926.

This is the centre of the prosperous new Shire. At the present rate of progress, it is reasonable to expect that soon part of the territory will be made a borough and then a town, so some day in the future will have to be built a Tunstall Town Hall and what better position could it have than the corner of Whitehorse Road and Springvale Road [south-west].

Mr. J. Kelly's residence was sited on the block of land between Whitehorse Road and Silver Grove, 130' by 255', and this was the suggested town hall site. On the corner of Railway Parade (now Oval Way) there were already shops and a picture theatre, then more shop sites were planned north to Silver Grove. The Post Office and store was to the east, on the corner of Walker's Road and Springvale Roads. Oval Way was then Railway Parade and stretched further west to meet Glendale Road, which then continued south across the present-day Nunawading Community Centre property. The nearest State school was in Springvale Road, just north of Whitehorse Road.

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R O A D S

Historians have stated that we owe our first definite knowledge of road-making to the Romans; it is also interesting to remember that the Spanish invaders of Peru reported on the many well-made and serviceable roads in that country. It was said that as late as the 18th century, some of the worst roads in Europe were in England - Fortunately Telfer and Macadam rescued the country from this parlous state of affairs. Since then, road-making in many parts of the world and often in very difficult terrain has far surpassed the wildest dreams of the earlier engineers.

A few months ago, the longest paved highway in the world celebrated its 25th birthday. The TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY, which stretches 7,821 kilometres from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Victoria, British Columbia was declared officially open on Sept. 3rd, 1962 in the Rogers Pass in Glacier National Park, B.C., after taking 20 years to complete and costing more than \$1-billion.

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LACE - what is it? The simplest definition apparently is 'a lot of holes surrounded with thread'.

In our museum, we have some pieces of very attractive machine-made lace [donor unknown] which appear to have been commercial travellers' samples. Small labels on these give the town of origin, PLAUEN, in East Germany.

Plauen has been well-known for its lace production since the 13th century, and, despite much damage from bombing during the 2nd World War, this industry still flourishes there. However, 13th century "lace" to us today would be termed drawn-thread work and broderie anglaise. Hand-made bobbin lace was invented in the mid-16th century and needle lace perhaps a little earlier.

A letter of enquiry [with photostats of lace] to the address nominated by the German Democratic Republic centre in Melbourne brought no reply, but later, a second letter did produce a reply - in German! Happily, Joan Rocznick was able to translate for us.

It was confirmed that our samples must have come from the business connections of a lace agent here, and that this trading took place in the nineteen-twenties. At that time, the lace firm Eichhon existed in Plauen, and the laces were the product of an industry which in 1859 consisted of embroidery machines, the later 1880 machines making lace under the name of PLAUEN-SPITZE, these being sold world-wide in retail business.

A prospectus was enclosed for us of a Plauener-Spitze Lace Display section, opened in 1984, and which is also a technical museum.

This firm was pleased to learn that the Plauen lace industry has a place in Australian historical circles !!!

In the world of hand-made lace, a local lace-maker has told us that it can take about one hour to produce one inch of lace about two inches wide!

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Any complaints of slow mail deliveries today?

In 1660, King Charles II sold the office of Post-Master General to Henry Bishop, who described the use of the post-mark - one of the developments by which he improved the efficiency of the service during his three-year tenure:

"A stamp is invented that is putt upon every letter shewing the day of the moneth that every letter comes to the office so that no Letter Carryer may dare detain a letter from post to post; which before was usual."

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