

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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On Saturday 11th April, Mr. John Sharwood entertained us with his account of 'Pharmacy in Mitcham'.

His first recollections were of coming to visit here as a small child, when Mitcham seemed a small village between the larger settlements of Box Hill and Ringwood. In those times, the noteworthy scenes were the hotel, gumtrees, the Soldiers' Memorial and the imposing Tesselated Tile Works. In 1957, Mr. and Mrs. Sharwood purchased the chemist's shop and dwelling in Mitcham and became part of that 'village'. Being available night and day, they always had a great rapport with all the local people.

Mr. Sharwood pointed out one great difference now from earlier years when doctors prescribed medicines for chemists to prepare, and today so many medicines are readily available off the shelves. His no. 1 prescription book was of great interest to the audience.

As time passed, many more shops and houses appeared, and our speaker pointed out that living among changes like this really means taking part in living history.

Later still, with the Rooks Road Migrant Hostel and the arrival of many overseas migrants the atmosphere changed considerably.

However, Mr. Sharwood concluded on the note that the old friendly 'village' atmosphere still shows up at times - what a happy observation.

DATES TO NOTE:-

Next meeting: - Saturday 13th June, 1992 at the Archival Annexe, 1.30 pm.

As our new financial year begins 1/7/92, subscriptions are due:- \$8 family, \$5 individual, \$2 newsletter only.

Mr. Irvine Green, a Foundation member of Doncaster Historical Society, and well-known photographer, will speak on: 'The History of Photography over 150 years'.

Saturday 8th August, 1992 at the Archival Annexe, 1.30 pm.

Mrs. Marjorie Morgan, genealogist, lecturer and historical researcher, President and archivist of Box Hill Historical Society, will speak on Australia's worst shipwreck, the 'Cataraqui' of 1845. She and Andrew Lemon collaborated on this story and wrote 'Poor Souls, They Perished'.

Marjorie Morgan and Eleanor Finlay have written a book 'Prelude to Heidelberg - The Artists' Camp at Box Hill'. Copies can be purchased from Victoria College Press, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood, Vic 3125 at \$39.95 each plus postage and handling \$3.00

PLEASE NOTE: ANNUAL MEETING 10TH OCTOBER, 1992, 1.30pm.

Recently numbers of students have been attending the Archival Annexe for help in their research projects.

Bus trip to Blackwood. Once again, we are grateful to Nicholas Fry, our Bus Driver, and the Glenfern Secondary College for hiring us the school bus for our day trip to Blackwood on Sunday, 29th March. One of our members, Mrs. Jessie Barnes, was our gracious hostess and with members of the Blackwood Historical Society gave us a warm welcome to her home. After sharing a delicious morning tea, we visited the historic cemetery and the old Police stables where the Blackwood Society has a very interesting collection on display.

We returned to Jess's home for lunch, then visited the original 'Garlick's Lead' Primary School hidden in its bush setting. It is a very interesting and old wooden building with a high ceiling, unusual windows and an open fireplace for winter warmth. A good-sized cloakroom, still with its hooks around the walls (evoking memories of dripping rainwear) shielded the schoolroom from wintery blasts. It was heartening to hear that an interested group has taken responsibility for restoring the building. Following our inspection of the school, a friendly resident took us to see old mine sites on his property. A visit to the Jack Cann Reserve gave us a chance to explore the large open-cut of the old Crown mine, walk through a tunnel connecting two areas and also see the huge Monterey Pine tree which was planted to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1898.

During the 1860's Gold Rush, Blackwood boasted a population of 13,000.

From 1869 to 1900, eleven companies extracted gold from Simmons Reef. Nearly 15,000 oz. of gold worth £60,000 was recovered. When the region's alluvial gold was exhausted, the open cut mine was developed for quartz mining. It is interesting to note that the construction of many of the region's water races was supervised by a French woman.

It was good to renew our friendship with the folk from Blackwood and we thank them for their hospitality.

Shirley Baker.

The Victorian Heritage Week 1992. Approximately 170 people attended on Open Days 5th and 8th April. Thanks to all members who helped at Working Bee on open days. Special thank you to Mr. John Sharwood who spoke at the meeting on 11th April.

Beryl Gray

CEHS Annual Conference 2nd May 1992. The AGM for the CEHS was this year held in the Historic Church of St Stephen's, Mt Waverley. Twelve societies shared an enjoyable day hosted by the Waverley HS, 4 members from Nunawading attended.

It is pleasing to note local Government is acknowledging the care and attention Historical Societies give to precious records, and clearly from these annual reports we appreciate help and encouragement given.

General business completed, our hosts, as always on these occasions, made the day memorable with 5 excellent guest speakers. Dr. Foster advised us of the many ways RHSV can help its member societies.

The theme of this year's meeting appeared to say: Storytellers, artists, photographers. Praise be we have these people, and although changes and progress have to continue, we must also remember and recall the past. Thank you for the reminder Waverley and for a very good day.

Betty Muckleston

The Melbourne 'HERALD' 26/6/1935.

REAL ESTATE is reviving between Box Hill and Croydon. Undulating, high and well-drained, the district between Box Hill and Croydon is experiencing a real estate revival, and builders are operating on many sites. Orchards, flower farms and poultry runs testify to the quality of the soil, and during the last twelve months a number of new industries have started in Box Hill, Blackburn and Ringwood. The result is a great shortage of houses to let.

The Tramways Board had been asked to extend the present tramline along Whitehorse Road from Union Road to Middleborough Road to cater for the district's transport needs.

Blackburn may be described as the first of the eastern Suburbs, which combines the beauty of the country with handiness to the city. Native trees grow there in profusion, but cannot be found nearer the city.

There is a steady enquiry for land for the first time since the depression. Values run from £1 to £5 per foot near the station. Homes can be built for £390, including land.

Mitcham can look down on most suburbs by reason of its altitude of 500 feet, and the healthy surroundings have resulted in many persons being sent there by medical men. A little more than a mile away is Vermont where many fine homes have been built.

Before the land boom of 1908, Mitcham land was sold by enterprising agents as East Hawthorn. The land was cut up into tiny allotments and when the crash came, many houses were carted away.

Glazed tiles from Mitcham supply a touch of color to many shop fronts and the excellent shopping facilities in Mitcham make it a centre for many neighboring districts.

Forty years ago, Ringwood's interests were wholly industrial, the brick kiln and antimony mine were busy and what is now Ringwood East was the shopping centre, the railway station shifted the town's centre a mile to the west of old Ringwood, and shop sites which could not be sold in 1905 found ready buyers three years later.

PIONEERS. 15/3/92 was the occasion of a MASS for the deceased pioneers of the Parish in the Air Hill burying ground on the site of the present church and playgrounds (St. John's).

Because of inclement weather the Mass was celebrated in the church. About 150 people attended, including several descendants of pioneers - they were invited to light candles on the altar. Sid Wright, author of the Parish History, spoke briefly of what was known about some of those buried in the cemetery. After the Mass, celebrated by Father Dillon and Father Keith, the congregation gathered in the front drive where the plaque commemorating the pioneers was blessed. Afterwards, tea, coffee, scones and pieces of the Parish 40th Birthday Cake were served in the Narthex.

Note: The sun shone for the blessing of the plaque.
Joan Rocznik

'Mitcham Reporter' 20/4/1935. A local Industry

Proof of the ever-increasing recognition being won by Australian goods is given by the appearance in an American publication 'THE CERAMIC AGE', of an article on the Australian Tesselated Tile Company. In it is traced the history of the company from the time in 1886 when the Wiesman Brothers commenced operations, right up to the present. At the beginning only bricks and stoneware pipes were manufactured. The engagement of Mr. E.E. Walker as management works director is mentioned, thus accentuating the fact that he has been connected with the company for almost half a century. Good progress was made until 1893 when 'bank smashes' upset financial arrangements. This business was one of the survivors, however, and recovering from the setback, began to expand its operations. About the end of 1890, the manufacture of tiles was begun, these previously having been almost wholly imported. Curiously though, the locally made floor and wall tile was accepted without demur, but roofing tiles were still brought from abroad...Mention is made of several outstanding orders filled, such as 2,100,000 tiles for the floors and walls of Coles' new buildings in Bourke Street, and 1,000,000 for the Centenary Olympic Pool.

'PROGRESS OF MITCHAM' 11/1/1935.

New buildings intended for shops are in course of erection on the corner of Mitcham and Whitehorse Roads. These, combined with a number of houses also being constructed, would seem to indicate that Mitcham is on the upgrade. The general impression gathered by the traveller must be one of space, the great width of the street lending itself to this effect. The beautiful areas of lawn bordering or rather defining the roadway are restful to the eye of the unrelieved stretches.

The local 'Reporter' was happy to publish an account of the proclamation of the City of NUNAWADING, with the Governor of Victoria, Sir Winston Dugan, being present, on Wednesday 30th May, 1945.

All arrangements proceeded smoothly, but the organisers had had some worries beforehand. Application was still necessary then to the Director of Rationing for the necessary coupons to purchase 10lbs of tea and two bags of sugar for the sports afternoon, with 2000 children attending. Cakes for distribution unfortunately were not covered by any exemption and were taxable at the general rate of 12% percent, and the same conditions applied of course for the mayoral purchases of other food. A Vermont orchardist supplied the many apples needed for all the local children.

Postal History.

Philately is 'big business' today for numerous stamp collectors, with frequent new issues by Australia Post, as well as overseas contributions, but it is not just a recent hobby.

In 1861, the very first stamp catalogue was published and placed on sale to the public.

Publisher Monsieur POTIGUET listed 1200 stamps in a fairly elementary compilation, but the next year 'The Mount Brown Stamp Catalogue' appeared in Great Britain, similar in size and standard. Later the first stamp magazine called 'The Monthly Intelligence' was on sale, and soon afterwards, the 'HELLIER' stamp album. Unfortunately the publisher arranged spaces to fit stamp designs, and many collectors trimmed off perforations, even cutting down the octagonal of the first issues of countries such as Ceylon, resulting in many rare stamps being utterly ruined.

The first Philatelic Society or Stamp Club was founded in Paris in 1865, then in 1867 the New York Philatelic Society began, then the Philatelic Society of London, now known as the Royal Philatelic Society.

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