

# NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.



Series 3 No 3

September 1994 - January 1995

## NEXT MEETING

The 29th Annual Meeting and election of office bearers of the Society will be held in the Schwerkolt Cottage, Museum Annex, on Saturday, 8th October 1994 at 1.30 p.m. Members please find nomination form enclosed.

to bake scones for this occasion please phone Barbara Rogalski on 874 4668). We are planning activities for children and will be inviting them to come dressed as fairies. We may hire a "real fairy" for the day. We are looking forward to having lots of fun in the sun (we hope).

Barbara Gardiner.

## DECEMBER MEETING

The December meeting will be held on 10th December 1994 at 12 noon. Please bring a plate of food to share. After the meeting, members are invited to a Christmas break up organised by the Committee of Eastern Historical Societies at Schramms Cottage, Victoria Street, Doncaster at 2.30 pm.

## HERITAGE POSTCARDS

The City of Nunawading Library and Information Service has produced 2 sets of 6 heritage postcards. The Society has copies and these are available for \$5 a set.

## FRIENDS OF SCHWERKOLT COTTAGE

Our first working bee was very successful with a good attendance of members including two descendants of the Schwerkolt family. We managed to spruce up the forge and the farming equipment display area and have also begun an inventory of items within the cottage.

## DONATION

Following an enquiry from Mr Eric Montague of Merton Historical Society, United Kingdom, a request was placed in the *Nunawading Gazette* by Joan Rocznik and as a result, the Society has been given 3 sickles. These have been examined as to which type would have been used to cut lavender (similar to the type used by W. Slater on "Mitcham Grove", lavender and herb farm, Blackburn North).

## SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Family \$8  
Single \$5

Our next activity is to be a garden party on Saturday October 15th 2pm - 4pm in Schwerkolt Cottage grounds where we will be serving afternoon tea (anyone who would be kind enough

Just a reminder subscriptions were due from 1 July, 1994. Subscriptions can be paid to the Acting Treasurer, Mrs Shirley Barker, 14 Tortice Street, Nunawading, 3131.



## Extract of talk given by Mr John Sharwood to the Nunawading Historical Society on 11 April, 1992.

..."My memories of Mitcham go back to when I was only two or three, because my parents were very friendly with Orm White's mother and Orm White was the Hay and Corn Store proprietor, and my father used to play tennis at the house where the Nunawading High School is where it was owned by the parents of Ruth White, and he knew the wife very well and if ever we were coming up this way we would always go and see Aunty Ag and those of you who knew Aunty Ag will know what a formidable customer she was. So our association with Mitcham goes back a long way and always when we came up in the 1928 Standard or 24 Standard with the dickey seat it always seemed to be a little village between the great metropolis of Ringwood and the great metropolis Box Hill, which were pretty pathetic little towns then. But we thought they were big towns and Mitcham was this little, nice friendly town in the middle that had the weatherboard hotel and the lovely soldiers' memorial in the middle of the highway. It had the vast Maroondah Highway going up which had a single lane each way with a white line up the middle and with the beautiful gum trees.

We would go through Mitcham never thinking that in twenty years' time I would be in business there... In 1957, on the 1st of November, Pam and I took over the Mitcham Pharmacy from Mr Wellington. Now when we came to Mitcham in 1957, to live behind the pharmacy, Mitcham was a totally different centre than it is now. It was a very interesting centre - a very friendly centre. All the shops shut

for lunch; it was very relaxed. There were four grocers to choose from - we had Norman's Corner Store, we had Ken Herbert with his store which is now the scout Shop, we had George English on the corner of Station Street, and he had a little mixed grocery business, and we had the Staceys which was where the C.B. shop is now. We had at least four butchers - there were two almost next to each other where the Coles' Variety Store was and which is now a hideous video turn-out on the corner of Britannia Street, there was another butcher on the other side of Mitcham Road, and at that time Barelli's had just sold the bakery and the shop was being built in Britannia Street, and Nicholson's milk bar was pulled down in 1958 or 1959 and the Mirama edifice was built at that time, so there were changes happening in Mitcham then, but the changes were not really galloping changes. The State School was still in its lovely position where the Coles New World car park is, and those who can remember the architecture of the school - it was beautiful. I always suggested to the Council they should have made it the basis of the Nunawading Library because it was such a nice building and it had plenty of parking around it. The St John's School at that stage was up near the Bloom's timber yard. Where 602 is now was Bloom's yard and St John's school was next to that. The Catholic Fete in the first weekend in November was always a big day, and they used to hold that opposite our pharmacy, next to Claude Richards who had a little haberdashery shop where there is a Chinese greengrocer now, and there was a big block between the other video shop and the Commonwealth Bank where the Catholic people used to have their Fair. Also every year there was a circus there... During this time there was of course a lot of road work going on, because the C.R.B. was bound to have some work going on, particularly in the busy thoroughfares, and it would not be Mitcham if the road was not up for the Board of Works or Telecom or something because it would be very difficult for them to do it in a more systematic way; but there was always work going on. Now that is the picture of when we came to Mitcham, a totally different type of area than it is now....

The pharmacy in Mitcham was built about 1923 or 1924, and was opened by a Mr Allen, and I have

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*Mitcham Pharmacy - Wartime Photo*

the Number One Prescription Book which was commenced in May 1924. Mr and Mrs Wellington stayed in Mitcham until Pam and I purchased the pharmacy and during those 21 years before 1957 when they were in Mitcham, they saw the beginnings of some of the big changes. Some of the changes were brought about by the roads and the extension of the outer suburbs where people were looking for cheaper land after the Second World War...

Now in the late 40s or early 50s Mr Bob Dorian and his brother Burke who was not a pharmacist, but used to work in the pharmacy, purchased the freehold of the building between Norman's Corner Store and Claude Richards and opened a pharmacy there. They had an upstairs portion where they had Mr Berger, a tailor. He was a little German fellow who had to be interned in the Second World War. He had his tailoring business up there, and later on he moved further up Mitcham Road where the Ferrari men's wear is, the hire place. There were some little houses up there and he moved up there. Also at the back of Bob's was a steel garage, where Mr Les Steele used to produce the local paper. The local Advertiser was a great paper, it was a paper that was never proof read, because Les said "They'll just have to accept the errors", and it really did have

some whoppers in it. But it was a good little paper - cost one penny. Arthur Tinker had a shoe shop round in Station Street, Gordon Varley had his shoe shop down near the Anglican church. Mitcham was a nice little village, with lots of small shops, but all very viable. They also had quite a history with the medical profession, and that went right back to the early days, when Dr Stanley Cochrane built the house in Mitcham Road, which has since been demolished - where Dr Threlkeld used to live. He also was a legend in his life time, a very very interesting man. Before he got a motor car he used to do most of his house calls on a push bike.....

The practice of pharmacy over the 34 years that we were in Mitcham has changed immensely, in the methods of prescribing and in the forms of medication. In 1924 what we call extemporaneous preparations were widely used. There was nothing prescribed "Off the shelf". In the days up to the 50s if you were prescribed something off the shelf it was considered that doctor really didn't know his gamentas and he did that because it was the easiest way. The prescriptions were what we call extemporaneous and although the number of prescriptions is limited the time needed to prepare them was about twenty times what it is today. The doctors then obviously had the art of prescribing



and it is very interesting to note that Dr Threlkeld in 1949 or 1950, continued the practice and he would have been one of the last of the true prescribers. Many of the doctors now and many of the pharmacists coming out of pharmacy college have not had the expertise that the older ones had, because they are not seeing the prescriptions as they used to be written, and consequently the doctors still have to rely on the pharmacist who have to check their books etc, if they do, this is what we call extemporaneous prescribing...."

Extracts from the 'Ringwood Borough News'

#### BLACKBURN AND MITCHAM SHIRE COUNCIL 30/1/1931

##### Swimming Baths

The Engineer presented his report of preparation for a swimming basin, on the site of the old Shire Hall.

The cost of the work was estimated to be 2,500 pounds; this included construction of the basin, wire fencing, dressing sheds and conveniences, caretaker's office, laying on of water and provision of draining easement and paving of same for a short distance from the baths. This did not include filtration or treatment of water by mechanical process or tiling of interior basin.

After discussion, one councillor moved that the Government be approached for a grant, and the seconding councillor stated there was no doubt that baths were wanted in the municipality, and the work would relieve the unemployed to a certain extent.

Another councillor predicted that baths would be a 'white elephant' in the district. Finally the motion was lost on the count.

#### BLACKBURN 6/3/1931

##### Melba's Funeral

The residents of Blackburn assembled en masse to pay their last respects to Dame Nellie Melba, the world-famous singer, on Thursday last, when the funeral passed on its way along the Whitehorse Road to Lilydale Cemetery. The children of the

Blackburn School were gathered along the roadside, and as the cortege approached, the fife and drum band played 'Onward, Christian Soldiers'. Diminutive Gwen Saynor and Kathleen Gedye, kindergarten scholars, proffered a beautiful wreath, consisting of white dahlias, mauve asters and asparagus fern. A halt was made while it was accepted and placed in one of the many cars heavily laden with floral tributes.

#### CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Jan Plummer on achieving 20 years of service as a Councillor to the City of Nunawading. Our Society as well as the community have greatly appreciated her interest and support of many activities over the years.

#### EASTMONT PRIMARY SCHOOL

On 15 October 1994, the Eastmont Primary School, Paranda Court, Vermont will hold a combine fete and reunion from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. As part of the reunion, there will be a memorabilia display between 12.30 and 1.30 p.m.

The School opened on 16 March 1964 on the site of an old apple orchard with 136 pupils and 6 classrooms.

#### TILE PROJECT

Nineteen schools and 6000 students in the City of Nunawading have been working during the second and third terms of this year on a tile project tracing the City's history over the past 50 years. The schools have been assisted by Michael Cantor and Rick Prize - artists-in-residence.

The tiles have been donated by Daniel Robertson Australia Pty Ltd of Nunawading and are to be laid by the Italian Community in the amphitheatre to the rear of the Nunawading Library building and should be completed before Australia Day 1995.

#### CITY OF NUNAWADING FAREWELL

A festival of community events will mark the end of the Nunawading municipality and the major event will be a family picnic at the Civic Centre on Sunday November 13, 1994.