

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. NEWSLETTER

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From the President

Dear Members

I am pleased to report the Open Day on 20th April was a great success. We had a record attendance and people were impressed with the Complex, the demonstrations by the lace makers, the wood turners and the blacksmiths.

There was a display of tiles made by the Australian. Tessellated Tile Co. in the foyer of the Whitehorse Civic Centre. We also had a temporary display of hand worked aprons loaned by Frances Warren in the Museum tile cabinet. They created much interest. Thanks to the members who worked hard to make the day the success it was.

Barbara Gardiner and I attended the Museums Australia (Victoria) celebration for International Museum Day on 16th May. Mr Graham Morris, Director, Museum of Victoria, presented the Society with a Certificate of Registration for Accreditation.

Barbara Rogalski has arranged for us to share a shop in the North Blackburn Shopping Centre with Mitcham Arts Society. We will promote our collection and the purposes of the Society. We are also going to have a promotion at the Nunawading Market on 22nd June. If you can give some time at either/both of these venues, just to be in attendance and hand out brochures it would be appreciated.

The Society has offered to collate the details of the plaques and memorials which are on the former City of Nunawading land and facilities. I would appreciate it if you would let me know the exact location and inscription of any plaques known to you.

In the previous newsletter I wrote that we needed to review our name of Nunawading. Since amalgamation the name does not signify the area covered by the Society or the collection of material. New residents and business could confuse us with the suburb of Nunawading. I am suggesting we give some time (say 20 minutes) at our General Meeting on 14th June for discussion and questions and then we can vote by secret ballot at the Annual meeting on 9th August to decide the wish of the majority of members.

- Valda Arrowsmith

STOP PRESS

- ♦ *14th June: General meeting with guest speaker Gary Vines of the "Living Museum of the West" who will speak on this fascinating museum and on his role as advisor to the Scoresby By-pass Authority*
- ♦ *16th -21st June: North Blackburn Square Shopping Centre.*
- ♦ *22nd June: Nunawading Market*
- ♦ *9th August: Annual General Meeting*

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From the Archives

The Nunawading Historical Society Archives are a rich assortment of original documents, maps, plans, photographs, newspaper cuttings, historical research ... the list goes on. Anyone wishing to help the dedicated group cataloguing the Archives should contact the Secretary. The group meets on a Wednesday. The Archives are available for those doing research. For an appointment please contact the Secretary.

1022 Vermont (State School)

In the early 1850's the land at Vermont sold at £1 per acre. Having to clear dense bush, early settlers became wood-cutters and charcoal burners until crops and orchards could be planted on the cleared ground. In 1865, these pioneers built their first chapel at Mt. Pleasant on Canterbury Rd and hoped that this might also be their school. In June 1865 an agreement was made with John Winter from Richmond for four hours teaching each day. The teacher received all fees paid by the children at the rate of 1s per week for one child, 1s 6d for two, 2s for three, 2s 6d for four, 3s for five. The school commenced with a NE of 30. However, the Board refused a grant for the teacher's salary, and Winter resigned. In 1869, the committee applied for a non-vested school. Early that year, John Brown had commenced teaching at the chapel. The Board of Education officially commenced the school on 1st of July 1869 as the Delany's Road Common School No. 1022. A site was purchased, the one-room school built and ready for use at the beginning of 1872. This room is still used. As this part of the district had been given the name Vermont so the school became the Vermont State School. By 1881, the wooden shingles on the roof had dried and cracked so the rain came in freely, the chimney smoked, the schoolground was unfenced; and wood-carters used all the water from the school tank for their horses. As NE by 1900 reached 90, a small closed school from Yarraburn was brought in. In 1906, with NE now 120 this room had to be discarded and a new room built on to the original. By 1917, with 174 pupils enrolled, the department had the original room widened by 4ft. Jubilee celebrations were held on 1st of November 1919, when many of the

Vermont

*Where once deep forest shadows hung
Now stretch green slopes and orchards trim.
Thro shaded glen and sunny plain
The rippling stream makes music sweet.
Round giant gum trees' mossy feet,
'Mong scented vine and ferny wreath.
The thrush and wren and magpie free.
Delight the ear and feast the eye.
Beneath the soil the plastic clay
Or rocky vein hide riches rare
For patient toil and skilful hand.
But richer still, O Vermont fair,
Thy human gold of brawn and brain.
True hearts in sturdy frames.*

-W. W.

(NHS Photograph Collection p313)

first scholars attended as well as representatives of most of the pioneer families. As the school stood at the junction of three roads, parents felt this to be too dangerous and prevailed on the Department to buy a larger area of land on the opposite side of Canterbury Rd with the aim of having the school shifted to the new site. Unfortunately, the depression years intervened and then the second World War came, so the shift was never made. The population increase following the war brought accommodation difficulties for the Vermont school and in 1954 a junior section was erected on the new site. Two more sections had to be added to cope with increase, one in 1957 and another in 1960. The school now operated in two separate parts divided



Mr. John Brown

by Canterbury Road. During 1963-65 parents raised £1,887 out of total cost of £4030 to erect a library which since then has been maintained by the Mothers' Club. In 1966 an art/craft room costing £10,000 was officially opened by the Hon. L. H. Thompson, Minister of Education. Vermont school has now 5 classrooms N of Canterbury Rd and fourteen classrooms, a library and an art/craft centre on the S side of the divided highway of Canterbury Rd, catering in all for 750 pupils. With the exception of the first two HTs, John Brown (18 years) and William Watchorn (26 years), the time spent by any HT has usually been from three to five years. According to all records, those first two were outstanding men and played a great part in the growth of the community in those early days. The school celebrated its centenary in July 1969.

References:

Education Department of Victoria, *Vision and Realisation, A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria*, Volume 3, The Government Printer, Melbourne, 1973, pp.318-319.

Photograph of John Brown, Nunawading Historical Society Photograph Collection 4c photo 314.

Notes From the Secretary

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome three new members to our society and trust they will enjoy the activities and the companionship of our members. They are **Helen St. John, of Mitcham, Jennifer Stulner of Wantirna and Gordon Bate of Forest Hill.**

CATALOGUING/DATABASE PROJECT

Gordon has been assisting Barbara Keene with the cataloguing, which has now reached the magnificent number of 1600 items completed, with more than 600 items now entered into the database (thanks to Anne Munro). Catriona Banks, one of our members and a professional archivist, is managing this project, which uses the Inmagic system recommended by Museums Australia (Victoria) and is used by most historical societies throughout Victoria. Some societies are now connected to the Internet. (This is really taking us into the 21st century.)

APRIL MEETING

Our thanks to Sarah Mirams and Jane Harrington for sharing their experiences working as archaeologists with Heritage Victoria. The colour slides demonstrated the important work done by this organisation.

OPEN DAY

Our Open Day for the Heritage Festival was a wonderful success with an attendance approximately six hundred. At times, the museum was so crowded, it was difficult to gain admittance. Our thanks to our popular lacemakers, blacksmiths and woodturners, and special thanks to those who assisted with serving the refreshments - a job well done!

Our displays at the Nunawading Library, the Vermont Library and in the foyer of the Civic Centre have proved to be of great interest to the local community, which makes our efforts worthwhile.

JUNE 14TH MEETING

Our guest speaker will be Gary Vines of the "Living Museum of the West" who will speak on this fascinating museum and on his role as advisor to the Scoresby By-pass Authority. This should prove to be an interesting afternoon for all members.

HELP WANTED!

The week of **June 16th to 21st** will be very busy week for the society and we need your help! We are sharing an empty shop at **North Blackburn Square** with Mitcham Arts Association, with the idea of promoting the society and hopefully recruiting some new members. The Mitcham Artists will be demonstrating their arts and crafts. We need to staff the shop every day from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and later on Thursdays and Fridays.

SUNDAY 22nd JUNE - NUNAWADING MARKET

We were fortunate to secure a booking for a stall on this day and will be promoting our society to the many visitors who attend this popular market.

Please ring the Secretary or the President to advise if you are able to help on any day during this week (an hour or so will be most helpful).

THANK YOU

Sincere thanks to **STATE OF THE ART FRAMING STUDIO**, of 510 Whitehorse Road, Mitcham, who did such an excellent job of framing our print of Tom Robert's "The Charcoal Burners". Members can inspect this new acquisition in the local history room at our next meeting.

- **Barbara Gardiner**

From the Museum

Since the cataloguing workshop in May 1995 there have been dedicated workers who have embrace the task and the cataloguing of the Museum and Cottage collection is going ahead at a great rate.

The Society continues to receive items (donations) for inclusion in the collection. The Acquisition Committee, of Valda Arrowsmith, Frances Warren, Catriona Banks, Anne Jones, and Barbara Keene meets on the fourth Monday of each month to determine if the donations that the Society has received should remain permanently in the collection.

The Society has a collection policy on which the Acquisition Committee bases its decision.

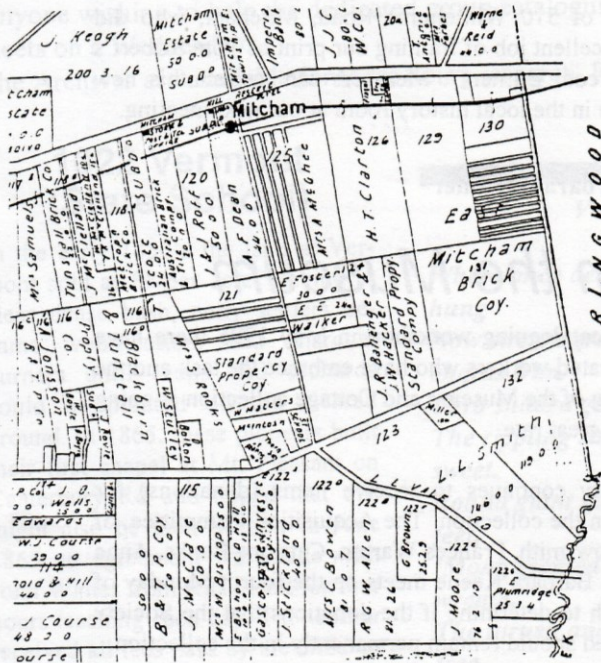
Some of the items recently acquisitioned:

- cheque printing block Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham
- small child's school case (green)
- kerosene lamp
- kerosene bottle
- 'Marchants' bottle with top
- battery tester circa 1915
- milk siphon for removing cream from bottles
- first aid kit (old -original/complete condition)
- Daniel Robertson roofing tile
- Murrays 'Erinmore' tobacco tin
- summer rug for use in buggy
- black lace shawl
- long half petticoat (cotton with pocket)
- glue pot
- childrens top (wooden)
- 'Rolls' razor
- ladies boudoir safety razor
- primitive chopper
- vaporiser
- bakelite serviette ring
- tobacco cutter
- egg scale

These are only some of the items recently acquisitioned. The Society also has a number of items that the Acquisition Committee members have been unable to identify and these will be on display at the general meeting.

Did You Know?

Boronia Road was once known as L L Vale Road and was named after Dr. L L Smith who owned the land bordered by Boronia Road, Canterbury Road.



Louis Lawrence Smith (1830-1910) was one of those larger than life figures of our Victorian era. A London-born medical man who had studied in Paris amid the revolutionary fervor of the late 1840s, he emigrated to Australia in 1852 along with thousands of other gold-seeking immigrants.

Smith became rich not by digging for gold but by practising his profession in the most flamboyant manner imaginable. Newspaper advertisements promoted his surgery, cure-all pills and mail-order consulting services. A medical museum in Bourke street was also a popular attraction.

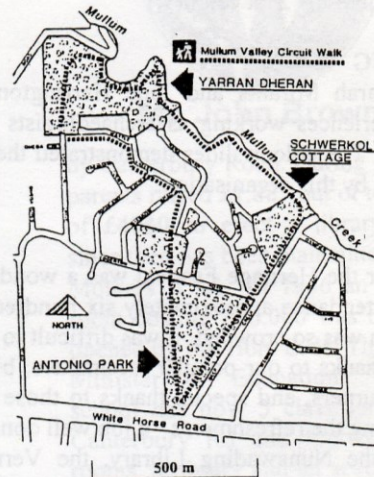
Smith denied that he was a "quack", rather that he rescued people from quacks. His popularity led to a political career. From 1859 he was a member of the Victorian Parliament and in the 1880s he became a minister. A strong supporter of native industry, Smith became the wine industry's unofficial figurehead. He was instrumental in promoting Victorian wine overseas and in developing Victoria's anti-phylloxera policies.

Grapes were grown and wine made on his property "L.L. Vale" at Nunawading, but Smith was best known for his champagne making expertise in the spacious cellars of the old Eastern Market.

- Map, Parish of Nunawading, copy NHS Archives D 54 Map Press.
- Age, Tuesday 21 July 1992, p. 25. copy NHS Archives G-PE 2(1) Smith, Dr. L.L.

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