

# NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. NEWSLETTER

President - Valda Arrowsmith 9874 1414  
Secretary - Barbara Gardiner 9874 6592  
Treasurer - Barbara Rogalski 9874 4668



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All mail to be addressed to P.O. Box 272 Mitcham 3132 - Museum Telephone 9873 4946

## From the President

Dear Members,

Following our successful display of tiles at the Civic Centre, we received, from a descendant of a man who worked at the Australian Tessellated Tile Co., a most interesting group of tiles. When the tiles were returned to the Museum, we included these tiles and re-arranged the display. I hope you will take the time to "check it out" at the August meeting.

The week in the shop at North Blackburn Square was most successful. We received photos from Mr. Pearce of the orchard which occupied the land the shopping centre is now on and of his grandmother Mary Pearce (nee Slater). We also received details of the origin of several street names in North Blackburn. A thank you to members who gave their time to represent the society at the shop and to Barbara Rogalski who organised it.

On two consecutive Tuesdays in June I spoke to Grade 2 at the Old Orchard Primary School in Koonung Road. The children were studying a transport theme. They were taken to see the Eastern Freeway construction work and then, with the help of some photographs, they learnt how people settled in their own area. The children were very interested and responsive.

The community is becoming more interested in history and particularly of their own neighbourhood. The diligent collecting and cataloguing of historical items and information over the years is a valuable source for research. We need to continue this collecting so I urge you to give (or loan for copying) historical matters which will continue building this resource.

You will see on the agenda for the Annual General

Meeting an item to decide if a name change would be to the advantage or not for the Society. I do ask you to think seriously on this important matter and to contribute your viewpoint at the meeting.

With best wishes

Valda Arrowsmith

## STOP PRESS

- ◆ *9 August 1997: Annual General Meeting.*
- ◆ *Any members who require transport for the AGM should contact either the Secretary, Barbara Gardiner on 9874 6592 or the President, Valda Arrowsmith on 9874 1414.*
- ◆ *October meeting - Saturday 11th October 1997 at 1.30 pm.*
- ◆ *Wisteria Time Garden Party Sunday October 12th 1997.*
- ◆ *Local History Collection open for research Wednesdays from 10.30 am to 1.30 pm. Other times by appointment ph: 9874 6592.*

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## Aboriginal Reconciliation & History

In 1994 the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation issued a series of eight key issue papers which it believes need to be addressed in the reconciliation process. Number 4, entitled *Sharing History*, examined some of the problems in the portrayal of Australian history and heritage from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and suggested ways the whole community could resolve them.

The Federation of Australian Historical Societies devoted its Newsletter No. 8 to:

- 1 Summarising those aspects of *Sharing History* that relate to the work particularly of historical societies;
- 2 providing the Federation's response to the issues as a guide to the way historical societies may act.

The article in its entirety is too long to reproduce here, however a brief summary follows.

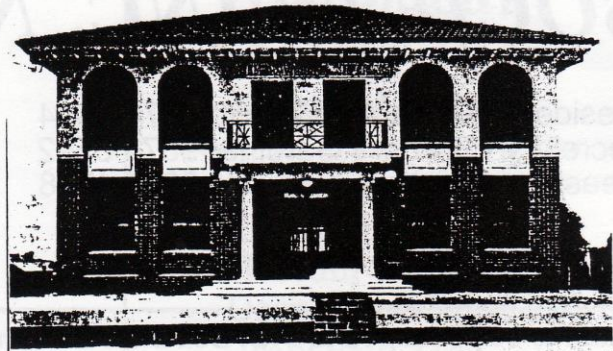
### Some of the themes explored in the summary of *Sharing History*:

- to encourage a sense of shared history between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-indigenous Australians, a common sense of time and place through various forms of historical record.
- the remembering of Australia's past must be honest to enable a constructive dialogue.
- local histories should, as a matter of course, make an effort to keep the Aboriginal component of the local experience in view right through the early days of contact and settlement to the present
- local history museums could include displays of the role that Aboriginals have played in local industries.
- communities today could erect memorials to all who suffered and died in the process of non indigenous settlement

### The Federations response:

- Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders have contributed significantly to the development of modern Australia.
- Aboriginal communities have continued to exist throughout Australia.
- their experience after early white settlement has been frequently ignored in local histories and museums
- local histories should include the history of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders;
- local history museums and other museums should in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, display their contribution to the history of localities and the nation;
- studies are needed of the part played by Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in the local community;
- historical societies should support the teaching of local Aboriginal history in the schools.

## Historic Buildings



1928 picture of the newly built offices of the Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham - 360 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading.

On the 27th May 1925 the Shire of Nunawading was divided into the Borough of Box Hill and the Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham. The severance came about largely due to issues regarding the council rate. The Shire of Nunawading had been a Box Hill based Shire that reached from Surrey Hills to Ringwood - being partly suburban and partly rural.

The Council of the new Shire first met at the Blackburn Recreation Hall, and had by November 1925 negotiated the purchase of a villa at Lot 2 Keoghs Estate, Whitehorse Road Tunstall as its Municipal Offices.

This building burnt down in September 1927 and plans went ahead quickly for a purpose built building (pictured above) on Whitehorse Road near the corner of Springvale Road.

The architect for the building was R.M. King of Melbourne and the builder Messrs J. Brett and Sons of Caulfield. Furnishings were supplied by Allen-Jenkyn Co., of Blackburn and Craig Williamson Pty. Ltd., supplied the carpets.

The Shire became the City of Nunawading in 1945, and these offices remained a focal point of the City until the building of the new Civic Centre and the sale of the building to the Country Roads Board in the 1960's.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The City of Whitehorse has prepared an amendment to rezone the land from public purpose to restricted business to **facilitate the sale and development of the site.**

Details of the amendment are available at the City of Whitehorse Nunawading Office, 379 Whitehorse Road Nunawading, the Box Hill Office 1022 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill or the Department of Infrastructure, Upper Plaza, Naru House 80 Collins Street, Melbourne.

**Submission will be received until 5 pm, 5th August 1997.**

#### *Editors note:*

**The conservation and enhancement of buildings, areas and other places of cultural value is one of the objectives of planning in Victoria. {Section 4(1)(d)} Planning and Environment Act 1987.**



# Notes From the Secretary

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, August 9th at 1.30 pm in the Local history Room at the Schwerkolt Cottage Museum Complex. **Any members who require transport should contact myself on 9874 6592 or the President on 9874 1414.**

After the meeting, members of the Acquisition Committee will show us some of the newly discovered treasures in our collection.

We welcome two new members, Edward Lowe of Blackburn and Norman Foun of Box Hill - we trust they will enjoy their membership with the society.

At our June meeting, members enjoyed the talk by Gary Vines, and his slides of the many industrial sites of historical importance in the western suburbs.

The Friends of Schwerkolt Cottage are planning the annual Wisteria Time Garden Party for Sunday October 12th. The theme this year will be "Talk to the Animals" as we have booked Simon's Mobile Menagerie, who bring along a great variety of animals which should delight the children - and the adults too! As usual, the Brumbies Bush Band will entertain in their inimitable style.

The Society has agreed to set up an historical display for the City of Whitehorse Winter Festival at the Arts Centre, Nunawading on Sunday 31st August. This is an opportunity to promote the society to the wider community.

## Travel tip from the Secretary.

Members who are travelling up the Hume Highway should allow time to visit Benalla to see its excellent art gallery, and the wonderful statue which commemorates the life of Sir Edward "Weary" Dunlop. Just across the bridge is the Benalla Historical Society's Costume and Pioneer Museum, which has an extensive collection of costumes as well as memorabilia of Sir Edward and of course, Ned Kelly. They will give you a free cuppa if you mention you are a member of this society. The Benalla Historical Society gained registration for their museum in March 1994 and are due for accreditation in July 1998. They are doing excellent work towards this goal and have just completed an extension to their museum.

## HISTORICAL SOCIETIES AND THE DISTRIBUTED NATIONAL COLLECTION

Material culture is the real or tangible evidence of the existence of culture. The term means every type of material from ephemera (e.g. train tickets) through to objects large and small, archives, documents, memorabilia and oral history tapes.

Material culture is held all over Australia in hundreds of museums and keeping places ranging from large and small, are described together as "the distributed national collection". A national committee known as the Heritage Collections Committee has been working since 1993 on a program to develop approaches to the conservation and electronic accessibility of the distributed national collection. The work of the Heritage Collections Committee has federal priority, and is supported by the Department of Communication and the Arts.

Historical society collections are typified by a plethora of objects, photographs and memorabilia, and are a significant component of the distributed national collection. Commonly, collections originated from the time of centenary celebrations of a town or region and locals donated the material. Thirty or so years later, these collections number in the thousands of individual items, and ... they are still growing.

People who work with such collections under the umbrella of an historical society have become the conservators, curators and managers of some of the distributed national collection. These people play a key role in conserving material culture for future Australians, although sometimes the only recognition of the many hours of (usually) voluntary work that each person undertakes comes only from within the society. It is an important role that these people play, and equally important is that such keepers know how to best care for the material culture under their management.

Assistance for voluntary "keepers" comes from a number of sources including Museums Australia. Museums Australia (Victoria) offers organisations and individuals low-cost training in a number of areas relating to collections and gives support for museum development, usually personally on the phone or through offering resource kits and a reference library in conjunction with the Museum Accreditation Program. The Museum Accreditation Program provides a set of standards for policy and best practice in museums, and volunteers are able to use these standards to apply to the development and care of their collections. General support is also offered to every one of the six hundred or so museums throughout Victoria, many which of which are managed by members of historical societies.

People who care for the distributed national collection do so on behalf of both their local community and the nation at large, and there are few accolades and big responsibilities. The whole nation now recognises the work that is done by people such as historical society volunteers, and the ongoing importance of continuing to care for the distributed national collection. Keepers of the future, it's in your hands.

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## Pioneer Portrait



H.T. Bishop, Municipal Clerk and the first secretary to the Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham.

### The role of Municipal Clerk (circa 1928)

The Municipal Clerk is responsible for the proper conduct of the business of the Municipality. He must attend all meetings of the Council, and is responsible for the correct recording of all business transacted and all inward and outward correspondence. He is also charged with the keeping of all the books of the municipality and the supervision of the clerical staff. It is his duty to see that the Council acts in all matters within the powers conferred upon it by law, and is responsible for the proper conduct of all meetings.

## Street Names

**Harris Street, Blackburn North** - named after Fred Harris, orchardist.

**Norway Avenue, Blackburn** - Eric Gill was a motor mechanic who traded as Norway Motors. There is a big shed still in Springfield Road which was his workshop.

**Kerr Street, Blackburn** - Mr Kerr was the Engineer of Box Hill City Council and when he sub-divided some land he owned he named one Kerr Street.

## Nunawading Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

Nunawading Historical Society Inc.

Schwerkolt Cottage  
Museum Complex

Deep Creek Road

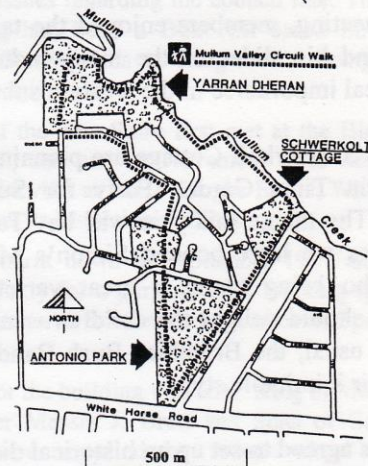
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