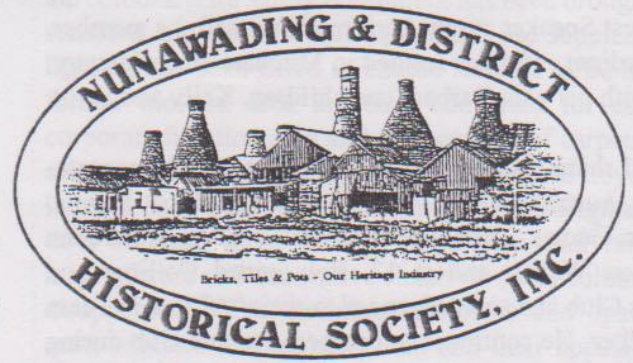


NUNAWADING & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. NEWSLETTER

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

The Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex Heritage Open Day was held on Sunday 26th March. Once again the weather was agreeable and a successful and happy day was enjoyed by all our visitors and Society members. My thanks go to all of you who made this success possible to all the people who showed us their skills in various crafts, the Council for sponsoring the wood chopping and for offering free admission to the Complex and specially to you, our members, for your contributions of time and effort. Without your support the event could not happen.

Our displays in the Nunawading and Vermont South Libraries have helped to promote our sporting heritage and thanks go to Barbara Gardiner and Bruce Reynolds for installing them. Don't forget to check out some of Bob Gardiner's Olympic collection on loan to the City of Whitehorse and installed in the foyer of the Civic Centre.

The State Member for Mitcham, Mr. Tony Robinson, launched the Whitehorse Manningham Library Heritage Project on 24th February, at a pleasant function in the Nunawading Library at which the four participating Societies were present. Some of the history holdings of our respective Societies are now on the Internet and this will be constantly added to.

We are receiving more research enquiries, which is great but very time consuming. Please don't forget our constant plea for volunteers and new members.

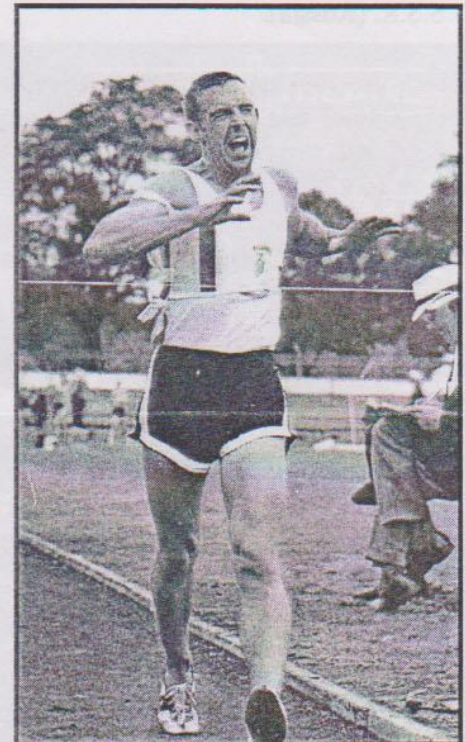
Rae Matthews is improving and called in on us last Wednesday. Bruce Reynolds is undergoing tests for cancer. Bruce has been a great help to the Society in display and in the valuation of many items in the collection. Our sincere best wishes go to him.

Ted Goode, a photographer (and a friend of Rae

Matthews) has begun to photograph the more valuable and unusual items in the Collection. This will do two things; give us an accurate record of the item and later allow us to make a copy available when some of the Society's Collection can be seen on the Internet.

I look forward to seeing you at our April 8th meeting when Bob Gardiner will talk on his Olympic experiences.

Valda Arrowsmith.



Bob Gardiner winning the Victorian Championship in the 60s

Bob Gardiner

**Our guest speaker on Saturday 8th April 1.30pm
Local History Room, Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum
Complex, Deep Creek Road, Mitcham. Bob will speak
on "Our Sporting Heritage".**

BOB GARDINER

Our Guest Speaker at our April meeting, will be member, Bob Gardiner, who has resided in Mitcham since January, 1962, with his wife Barbara and children, Kelly and Scott.

Bob will share his experiences as an Olympic Representative for Australia at the 1964 Tokyo and 1968 Mexico Olympic Games. Bob's father, Bert, was an Australian Champion Walker and at 17, Bob joined Collingwood Harriers Club and soon advanced to their "A" Grade Team as a walker. He continues to compete for this club during the track season and also enjoys the competition at the Victorian Race Walking Club and the Victorian Veterans Athletic Club. Over a long career, he has won many Victorian and Australian Championships in open and veteran athletics, including a world championship in the 20k. walk at the World Veteran's Championships in Melbourne in 1989.

Bob gained fifth place in the 50 kilometre Walk in Tokyo and was 19th in Mexico where he was one of the many athletes badly effected by the altitude. At the 1970 Edinburgh Commonwealth Games, Bob won a Silver Medal in the 20 mile Walk. In the early 70s, he was selected to represent the British Commonwealth in competition in Los Angeles against the U.S.A., and to represent "The Rest of the World" at San Francisco against U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. (Russia).

Bob and Barbara are looking forward to attending the Sydney Olympic Games this year and all the family are thrilled that Bob will carrying the Olympic Torch at Vermont South on July 30th.

Open Day - Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex

Our thanks must go to the generous people who gave their time to make our Open Day such a success -

To our members who worked so hard on the day, whether it be serving tea and coffee, helping the children with their artwork, papermaking, demonstrating patchwork and quilting, organizing the children's races or the many other tasks entailed in making such a successful day.

To the Blacksmith's, Bird Observers Club, Lacemakers, Box Hill Spinners and Weavers, Koonung Woodturners, the Forest Hill Rotary Club, and the Woodchoppers.

To the City of Whitehorse and staff for their contribution, especially the gardening staff who ensured that the Complex looked wonderful on the day.

We have received very favourable comments from many people and it was good to see members from other historical societies enjoying the day.

SECRETARY'S NOTES

We welcome new member, Kevin Abbot, former Nunawading and Whitehorse Councillor, who will be well known to many members. We look forward to seeing Kevin at our future activities and thank him for his contribution to the wider community.

Our thoughts go out to members who are not well at the moment, particularly Rae Matthews, Rupert Muckleston and Bruce Reynolds.

Our Display at the Blackburn Federation Celebrations was well received, especially our photographs of early Blackburn. A very successful celebration! Thanks to Bruce Reynolds for the interesting display and to members who were in attendance all day.

A big thank you to our Treasurer, Barbara Rogalski, for once again changing the display in the empty shop in Mitcham. This has created interest in our local history amongst shoppers, and regular changes will maintain this interest.

Barbara Gardiner

Dates For Your Diary

9th April, Sunday, Gulf Station- Scottish Settlers's Day. A celebration of Gulf Station's Scottish Settlers' heritage; food tasting, music and dancing, pioneer skills, local history, displays and stalls, working horses, Scottish and rare animal breeds.....

12th April, Wednesday, 8 pm in Phyllis Hore Room (behind Kew Library). Boroondara Historical Societies Association invites you to hear Peter Lovell of Allom Lovell & Associates talk on "History & the Suburbs: Valuing Historic Buildings".

15th Saturday and 16th Sunday April, 9 - 5pm **Yarra Valley EXPO** Yarra Glen Racecourse. Could be a good day out covering country living.

10th June, 1.30pm. Our Guest Speaker at the June 10th meeting, will be Nick Fry. Nick has researched the World War One experiences of family members (all of whom were Mitcham residents). This will be an interesting subject for local historians.

STREET NAMES

The Society has been gathering the origin of street names for many years but there remains many still unrecorded. Many members will remember areas being sub-divided and will recall the origin of the streets name. Please contact Anne Jones of the Society on 9893 5274 as all contributions are of great value.

CAPITOL THEATRE VISIT

One of Melbourne's true "Theatres Magnificent", the Capitol Theatre, was opened for inspection by RMIT through Museums Australia (Vic) on 9 March.

Designed by Walter Burley Griffin and his wife, Marion Mahony, the theatre opened in November 1924. A Paramount Pictures brochure published on its tenth anniversary described the auditorium in the following terms: "Since there is a complete absence of pillars, the designer applied his imagination to the novel decorations on the walls and ceilings, and not a square inch has been allowed to escape. The side walls are buttressed by arrays of square cut supports, and above these, the walls break into the ceiling in cubes, triangles and stalactites of fretted plaster... all broken into little cubicles through which thousands of unseen globes pour artificial light in a myriad of varied hues. The light effects are changeable at a touch, and a skilled operator is able to play them like a colour symphony... There is no other architecture or lighting scheme in the world like it. It is the work of a genius in resource and an artist in effects..." The design is thought to be influenced by Marion Mahony's knowledge of Aztec architecture, though examination of the original plans support the belief that Walter and Marion's work was an inseparable partnership, where one's contribution was indistinguishable from the other's.

It ran continuously until 1963, when Hoyts allowed the lease to lapse. It reopened in 1965, after substantial alterations, comprising the raising of its floor to the first level and demolition of the stalls, foyer and stairs to the circle, allowing the construction of a shopping arcade beneath running through to Howey Place. This reduced the seating to about 800, and isolated the upper lounge areas, which were subdivided for storage, but the famous ceiling remained unaltered. Under the control of Prudential Theatres, later Village, and then Walsh /Miller, it continued to operate in its reduced form until 1997, being sub-let for five years to the Melbourne Chinese Theatre Group, followed by two years of intermittent opening.

The theatre was strata titled and put up for sale in 1998. At the insistence of Heritage Victoria, the subdivided areas were included in the title. RMIT purchased the premises to provide lecture facilities for its business students located in the Tivoli building in Bourke Street, and employed architects Six Degrees, whose staff has previously been active in the preparation of plans for the refurbishment and economical use of the space, to get the auditorium functional as soon as possible, and to plan further refurbishments.

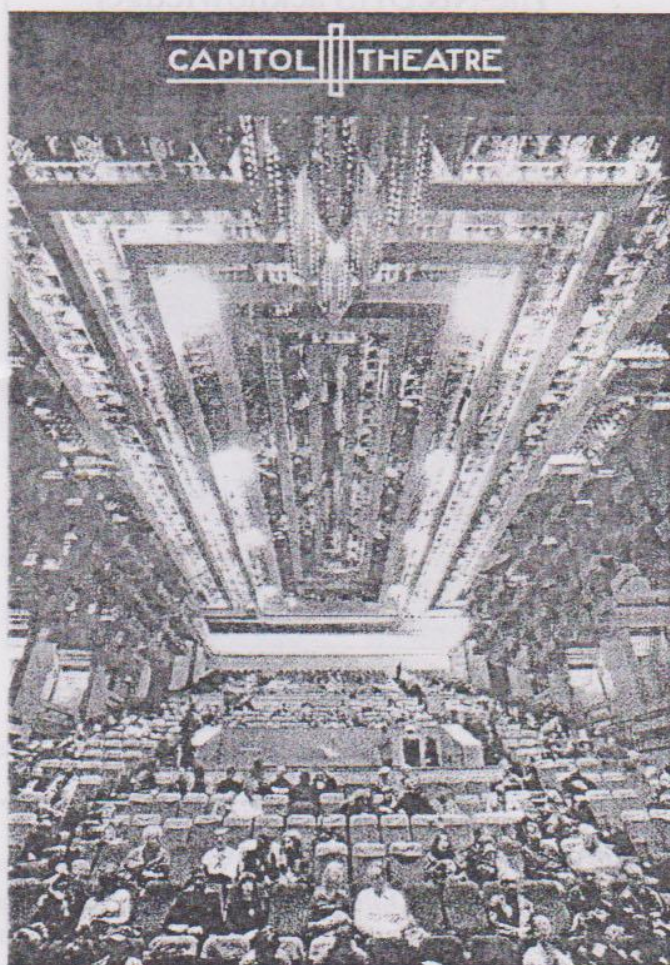
Craig Allchin, the architect most involved, and an RMIT representative, described work completed and ongoing planning directions. The famous ceiling has been re-lit, involving much re-wiring and replacement of period globes in appropri-

ate colours. Fire safety equipment has been brought up to standard and audio-visual equipment and supplementary lighting has been fitted to enable lectures to be held. A former bio-box area is being converted for use as a corporate function area and replacement of carpeting and seating will take place. The upper circle foyers and lounges have been re-opened, showing the original structure, although most fittings, apart from stair rails, two huge mirrors and decorative finish on some columns, has disappeared. The structural elements and spaces are quite massive and monumental, and their appearance is enhanced by the experience of entering them through relatively narrow curved staircases.

But the brilliant ceiling, particularly for those old enough to remember the kids' shows, complete with Dixies, Jaffas and Fantales, remain the highlight, contrasting but in harmony with the somewhat sombre but highly textured walls of the vast auditorium space.

Those interested in more detail can consult *The Architecture of Walter Burley Griffin*, by Donald Johnson (Melbourne, Macmillan, 1977) and keep up with progress at the Website, <http://www.capitol.rmit.edu.au>

Peter Simmenauer



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REMEMBER

Street Name Project - contact Anne Jones 9893 5274 with any details. Searches also Available.

Box Hill Cemetery Records and Nunawading Gazette for 1964-1974 available on microfiche for research.

Nunawading and District Historical Society Local History Collection - open from 10.30 am to 2.30 pm on Wednesday Visitors welcomed. Ring 9873 4946 for an appointment at other times.

Internet Addresses

For those members of the Society interested in accessing information on the Internet, the following addresses may be of interest.

Whitehorse Council.

<http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au>

Local History Database - that is the Nunawading and District Historical Society Inc together with the Box Hill, Warrandyte and the Doncaster/Templestowe Historical societies.

<http://www.tdm.com.au/localhistory.htm>

Whitehorse Manningham Library

<http://www.wev.vic.gov.au>

Australian Museums on Line - with links to all Australian Libraries.

<http://amol.org.au>

Museums of Victoria

<http://mov.vic.gov.au>

Royal Historical Society of Victoria

<http://avoca.vicnet.net.au/~rhsvic>

State Library of Victoria

<http://www.slv.vic.gov.au>

Australian Libraries Gateway - with links to all Australian Libraries.

<http://nla.gov.au/libraries>

Heritage Victoria

<http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au>

Cataloguing the Collection - Current Status

Artifacts	2712	Items catalogued
Documents	2174	Items catalogued
Photographs	2021	Items catalogued

Items for the Newsletter

Your editors are also busy on other Societies activities and would appreciate items from members for the Newsletter. Sometimes we have not the time to search for suitable items. Any member wishing to assist should have the item with the Editors by the 15th or with a suggested topic.