

Nunawading and District Historical Society Inc. NEWSLETTER



A0012235J

Series 9. No.8

April 2001

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

From the President

The National Trust Heritage Festival from 30th March to 8th April is with us once again. Your Committee has organized some of the regular activities and added some new attractions. The City of Whitehorse has again waived the admission charge and again we thank them. This adds to the appreciation of the day by the visitors.

Barbara Gardiner and I have attended the Vic Roads meetings to inform about the air monitoring and management of the environment when the Eastern Freeway Extension and the bridge over Deep Creek Road are being constructed. The bridge design can be viewed at Vic Roads Office, 12/613 Whitehorse Road, Mitcham (enter from Cook Road) on Tuesday 27th March, until 9 pm. Discussion papers will be available at the April Meeting for interested members.

The City of Whitehorse Officers have met with us to discuss the works into the Cottage car park etc. This too is at the concept stage. A widened entry/exit with a stone surround - only one entry/exit as against two at present - the removal of the toilet to enable a turning circle, with a garden in the centre. There will be parking along Deep Creek Road as at present with perhaps additional parking on the original road, with the rest to be landscaped. Many changes afoot!

Thank you Joyce Suto for sharing the history of her grandparents and uncle. This is our tribute to the families who have suffered so much grief through war. As Anzac Day approaches we remember their sacrifice.

An outing is planned to the Jewish Museum, 26 Alma Road, St. Kilda, on 29th April. We will meet there at 1.30pm. Cost will be \$6.00 if ten or more people attend. They have a history of the "rag trade" in Flinders Lane which is reported as an excellent exhibition and well worth seeing.

Please note change of date for April and June Meeting.

Valda Arrowsmith

Don't Forget the Working Bee on Saturday 24th March - 9 30am onwards. An hour or so would be appreciated to spruce up the complex.



Open Day

Sunday 1st April, 2001

Noon to 5pm

Schwerkolt Cottage & Museum
Complex (free admission to Cottage).

The Re-enactment Society of Victoria
will perform
"Aspects of Federation"

Come and see:-

Blacksmiths Lacemakers
Hungarian Embroidery
Papermaker Wood Turners
Spinners & Weavers
Patchwork & Quilting Display
China Painting Tatting

Sausage Sizzle - Forest Hill Rotary

Activities for Children

NEXT MEETING

Saturday 7th April 2001 at 1.30 pm

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

Speaker - John Lahey, former "Age" feature
writer. He will speak on -

Scallywags of Federation

JUNE MEETING

Saturday 2nd June 2001 at 1.30pm

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE due to Queens
Birthday holiday week-end,

Speaker - Doug Watkins, his subject will be

Lighthouses

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Society is to foster historical interest and knowledge. To collect, document, research, preserve and exhibit items that show how people have lived and worked in the development of the Whitehorse area from human settlement to the present day.



VICTORIAN RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY

The Victorian Re-Enactment Society was formed on December 5th, 1993. Despite being a young group on the re-enactment scene, the members have many years of experience in re-enactments. They have been involved in Separation Day at Maldon; the Eureka Anniversary at Sovereign Hill Ballarat; New Year's Eve Sports Day at Nyah; the anniversary of Ned Kelly's capture at Glenrowan; activities at Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement, Coal Creek, Flagstaff Hill, Echuca, Werribee Park and Dunolly; the Bicentennial Celebrations, Beating the Retreat at Laverton, "Thanks for the Memories" Display openings, Australia Remembers Activities; the Geelong Vintage Steam Rally; the opening of Historical Displays; the Geelong Grammar School Hobby Expo; the annual Military Encampment at Taminick; '85 Military Tattoo; '87 Military Tattoo in Melbourne, Sydney & Brisbane; '95 RAS Melbourne Show and History Activities in Schools.

They are a group of people dedicated to keeping our heritage alive through living history, displays, research and re-enactments. Members range in age from only a few months to several decades.

Come along on "OPEN DAY" to see them perform "Aspects of Federation"

Federation Events

6th May - Our Nation on Parade - from Federation to the Future.

A spectacular street parade in central Melbourne, joining communities across the state in celebration of our history, diversity and future.

7th May - A sense of place - Multi-faith Celebration

An event celebrating the importance of faith and diversity in Australia. At the Royal Exhibition Building.

Women Shaping the Nation

An event celebrating the achievements of Women. At Victorian Parliament House.

8th May - Launch of the History of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party and the Unveiling of a Commemorative Plaque.

At Queens Hall, Parliament House, Melbourne.

9th May - A NATION UNITED - A Joint Commemorative Ceremonial Federation Sitting.

A commemoration and celebration of the opening of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901 - televised nationally. At the Royal Exhibition Building.

Exhibition: Belonging (until 22nd July)

An exhibition focusing on the effect of Federation on Australian life. At the State Library of Victoria.

10th May - Commemorative Federation Sitting of Commonwealth Parliament.

At Parliament House, Melbourne.

13th May - Federation Square - Open Day

An opportunity for the public to view this landmark building under construction.

**LOST IN PALESTINE -
A STORY OF WORLD WAR ONE**

Contributed by Joyce Suto

When at our June Meeting, Nicholas Fry spoke to us about some local men who served in World War I, it was coincidence that I had been poring over letters relating to an uncle, born in Wales, who had also served in that War. My mother, Mary, an only daughter, had one older brother, **GEORGE BENJAMIN ANSTEY**, and seven younger brothers, one of whom had died at two years old. My sisters and I grew up with the sad story of George's military service in Palestine, his capture by the Turks, and the long and fruitless attempt by so many to find him.

Our grandparents' farm, Manor Farm, Rogiet, was in the Welsh border County of Gwent (then called Monmouth), which is on the north side of the Bristol Channel. Close by is the Severn Railway Tunnel which runs beneath the Channel. Grandpa was the first person to transport his livestock on a train through the Tunnel. Farms like his played an important part in food production during the War, requiring hard work and long hours of labour by men and horses only. (No tractors, trucks or telephones!) Only three of his sons reached military age during the War and the third one Edward became a Naval Cadet. So the two eldest could have done war work at home. Grandfather, typical of his time, was a hard taskmaster to his boys. George opted for military service and joined the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry (R.G.H.Y.), a cavalry regiment.

When I last visited Wales in 1993, the family had a Memorial dedicated to our grandparents and their nine children in the Rogiet Church. A cousin had researched the family. She also had this collection of letters relating to George. I returned with photocopies. They include four from George, four from his mother which were returned, and many more by her and by others who helped her in her desperate search to find him. The latter make fascinating reading as so many claimed to know his whereabouts. Among these was an Australian who had known George and who sent to Grandma what must have been her last photo of him.

EXTRACTS FROM GEORGE'S LETTERS. (Three to his family and one to the Rector of Rogiet).

May 20, 1917. Received your letter dated 26 April ... also one from Miss Stead asking me for particulars of Trevor (soldier Killed in Action) which she asked me to forward to his mother... It is very sad & his mother was very fond of him but we must remember that he has died for his country... I am the only one left in the Regiment of the three of us that joined together as Jack has joined the Signal Service of the Royal Engineers ... He gets 2/4 a day instead of 1/4 when he has finished a six weeks course ... We have a good many sick ... The wind was blowing & it was like the heat coming out of the oven ... The Bedouins are bringing in their barley on the camels & donkeys ... I am quite fit barring a few septics ... I suppose Dad will be starting on the clover.. **'August 3, 1917.** We had a very hot heat wave which lasted three days but thank goodness there are a few trees around for shelter ... A lot of the land is barren but there are a few fresh sights to see ... The Bedouins look like the scum of the earth but they are of some interest. They take all their animals in the house at night, camels, donkeys, sheep, goats & fowls, so you can imagine what the house is like. We have been able to get a few eggs, apricots & oranges, a change from bully... Doing a bit of trench digging which does not go very well in this hot climate ... I am glad I am not in the Infantry...

November 27, 1917. (To the Rector, written the day before his capture). Rev. Sir, Your letter came as a great blessing after a fortnights operations & two days rest then to continue for another fortnight. The fighting & hardships have been hard to bear, but we gave the Turk a nasty surprise on his flank one bright morning which put him in a funny position. He fought hard in his trenches but our guns were too much for him so he started to go but we made him go further than he thought to go ... We have come across several Jewish villages where we have been able to buy bread & fruit, very useful when they could not keep up to us with rations ... I don't know where I shall be spending my Xmas but it will be somewhere where I never thought of spending it when I was enjoying one of your fine Xmas dinners with the Bible class four years ago ... We hope that next Xmas will see us all together again...

December 16, 1917. I expect by now you will have had the news that I am a Prisoner of War or Missing. I trust it was the first ... I am quite well & there are three more Glosters with me besides others so we are happy together... We are being looked after all right so there is no need to worry ... Do not let my being a prisoner interfere with anything you may wish to do... I shall spend my Xmas in Turkey. We trust the War will be over by next, so that I shall be able to spend it in England with you ... I send my best love & good wishes to you all. Your loving son, **GEORGE.** (That was the last letter which came from George).

December 12, 1917. I regret to have to tell you that your son no. 235732 Pte. Anstey, G.B. has now been missing since 28th Nov. He was on duty at a Relay Post with three others taking dispatches ... unfortunately the Turks got possession of the road where he was ... there was no firing heard ... he & the 3 others with him were surrounded & captured... I regret his loss very much as he was one of my Hotchkiss gunners...

A.H.S.Howard, O/C D Squadron.

Grandma wrote to George at various prison camps as suggested to her as his possible location by those who were helping in the search. She heard from the parents of soldiers who were prisoners and who had been with George at various times. Many named camps where they said he had been. Their letters reached their homes but no letter came from George. It was said that he had rheumatic fever, and was in a Hospital. Grandma went on hoping and writing, even after War ended. It is to be hoped that some of the letters reached him. Clearly many did not. His whereabouts were never confirmed. There were restrictions on what prisoners were permitted to write, such as names of those with them. Prisoners in a camp were not always able to communicate with one another. Families were advised to write carefully. And of course ships carrying mail were frequently lost. But Grandma could, and did, write to George, of his six young brothers down to Colin, the youngest, seven years old, of the work being done on the farm and other farms, of his sister's forthcoming marriage, of the people he knew, of his horse sick and awaiting his return...

April 12, 1918.. You will see by the date that this is our Silver Wedding Day, & instead of our having a happy time as I had hoped for, you are a prisoner & Edward is sick in the Royal Marine Infirmary (Edward, a Naval Cadet, survived being sunk twice), however I am thankful that you are both still alive... we will look forward to the happy time when the War is over ... I have written you twice. I am looking for your letter every day... Father sold two horses to Ernest Rhymer. The boys took two loads of straw, the knotter would not work when the corn was threshed. They could not tie up the straw ... Robert (15) is staying at The Cayo to help Uncle Roger (her brother) who has

staying at The Cayo to help Uncle Roger (her brother) who has so much extra ploughing. We still have old "Lofty" (George's horse) but her knees are a tremendous size; she will not

last much longer ... Dorothy Price of Trelenny is marrying Fred Price of Llancaut; they will live at The Livox (farm in the famous Horseshoe Bend of the River Wye).

July 11, 1918. I am wondering whether you omitted 'Mon.' when you wrote, that would be why letters have gone astray. (Grandma clutched at this straw to explain lack of letters. There are several Newport, the local town was Newport, Mon.) Father finished haymaking a fortnight ago and will commence the corn tomorrow. Owen (11,) is at St Brides helping George Baker (her future son-law) with his hay. He works the horse-rake & side-delivery-rake instead of a man...I mentioned in my last that the Wedding (of Mary Anstey & George Baker) is put off for a time: is it too much to hope that you will be here for the Ceremony? ... Father will aid the R.G.H. Prisoners of War Fund when we get your first letter... Colin (7) is growing a big strong boy, he will be tall like Robert (15) and Philip (21). Ernest (17) is of lighter build. Owen (11) is not very tall but very healthy & sturdy, also very sharp & observant. Edward (19) is not yet drafted to his fresh post; his head is full of "Wireless Telegraphy", he has written two books on the subject; as it comes into his head he writes it down. Mr Matthews took his threshing-machine to the Upper Grange. A spark from the engine caught the straw, the drum was burnt & several ricks. The Phillips must have been very upset...

September 5, 1918. The lack of news from you makes me sad sometimes, especially when I am not busy & start thinking of you; but do not let that trouble you, as I have great faith in God's care of his loved ones. I believe old "Lofty" is waiting for you to come back, her leg looks very bad now & must be painful. The boys are raising potatoes, we have about 1 ½ acres. Edward (19) is one of 6 chosen for training in Wireless at R.N.Barracks. He will be there 3 months so will be safe for that time. He had one test & headed the Class with 96%. We have had two Weddings at Rogiet this week (she gives names). Robert (15) has grown such a big boy & often reminds me of you. Colin (7) also, like Philip (21) is tall & broad. Ernest (17) & Owen (11) are smaller in the bone. Mary (23) is thinner than she used to be. The Wedding is delayed owing to George Baker's family arrangements not being settled. (His farmhouse was being divided between two generations as often happened). I am glad to have Mary a little longer but George (Baker) is

unhappy over it.

The War ended two months later but still no news of George. Other soldiers who had been Prisoners were returning home. Grandpa had been unwell for some time and in Nov. 1918 went to Bristol for an operation, fortunately successful, but in those days recovery was slow. Domestic help had disappeared, they were nine in family; no wonder she was 'glad to have Mary a little longer,. The work of farmers' sons did not generally extend indoors.

Her final letter was dated **June 7, 1919.**

My dear George, We have had only the one letter from you dated 12 Dec. 1917. I am writing to you now on the chance of your getting it as I cannot believe that you are not still alive. G.W.& W. have come home, but can tell us nothing about you except that they were parted from you at Aleppo as you went into Hospital with rheumatic fever ... Dad will be rousing us early tomorrow to start on the clover. Edward is invalided out of the Navy ... he hopes to join the Marconi Co. (he later settled in U.S.A.) Mary & George Baker were married on 26 Feb. They are living at Manor Farm, St Brides. All the boys are at home & well. Dad is much stronger Very much love to you dear boy.

This was addressed to

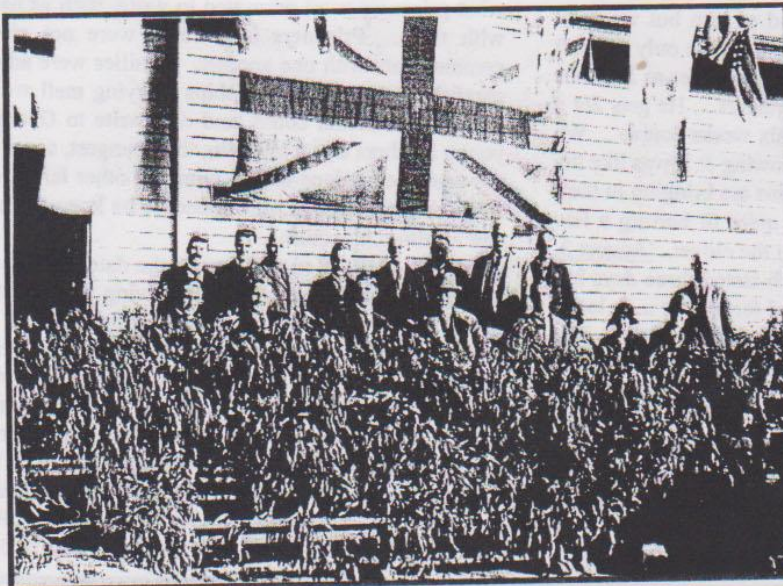
Pte. G.B.Anstey, 235732,
1/1 Royal Gloucestershire Hussars,
British Prisoner of War,
Aleppo. TURKEY.

The address was stamped over PRESENT LOCATION
UNCERTAIN (B.R.) A.P.27 Ju. 19

George Anstey's name is on a War Memorial at Basra (Basrah) which is a Port of Iraq.

In the next ten years, George and Mary Baker became the parents of six daughters, myself being the fourth. Manor Farm, St Brides Netherwent, 8 km. from Rogiet, was farmed by four generations of the **BAKER** family from the 1780's. It was sold on the death of my father in 1976.

W.P.ANSTEY farmed Manor Farm, Rogiet, from 1903. It is now occupied by one of his great-grandsons. Sadly, some of the land was lost to the Second Severn Crossing. His five sons, Philip, Ernest, Robert, Owen and Colin, all moved to farms of their own; most of these properties are now farmed by their descendants. Edward, the only non-farmer, was a pioneer in 'Wireless' (Radio). He moved to the U.S.A. to work for the Marconi Co. There he set



Mitcham State School (now the Coles site) decorated to welcome home servicemen from the 1914 - 1918 war. C1919.

The Mitcham Welcome Home Committee was formed in 1918 to greet our local servicemen and women on their return.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

You may already have noticed the Society's Federation Displays in the Nunawading, Vermont South and Blackburn Libraries. If not, we recommend them to you.

Barbara Rogalski has also mounted a great Federation Display in a shop front near the Coles store in Enterprise Way, Mitcham. We are certainly doing our best to make the Community aware of the Society and our activities.

The most important date for you to remember is our Open Day on 1st April, 2001, from 12noon to 5pm. We look forward to your company on this day. We are still looking for assistance on this day and if you can help please let one of the following know:-

Barbara Keene, 9874 4919.
Barbara Gardiner, 9874 6592.
Valda Arrowsmith, 9874 1414

The loan of card tables and small tablecloths would also be appreciated.

In order to 'be spic and span' for this day, a Working Bee has been arranged for Saturday, 24th March, at 9.30 am, and again we are asking for help on the basis of "**many hands make light work**".

Don't forget our General Meeting on Saturday 7th April (**note change of date**) at 1.30pm, when John Lahey, a former AGE journalist, will be speaking on "Scallywags of Federation".

Barbara Keene.

WANTED

Could you letterbox Flyers advertising our OPEN DAY in your area? If so, contact Barbara Keene on 9874 4919 or Barbara Gardiner on 9874 6592, and we will get the Flyers to you.

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>

Nunawading and District Historical Society Inc.

<http://vicnet.au/~ndhsinc/>

This will give you a link to the other local Historical Societies and to the Local History Database.

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 Museums.

<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	Items catalogued	2799
Documents	Items catalogued	3146
Photographs	Items catalogued	2280

THANKS:

for the provision to the Society of space to display our photographs.

John Cybula, Estate Agent, 108 Canterbury Road Blackburn South, and

Ian Armstrong of Drake & Co, Estate Agents
483 Whitehorse Mitcham

REMEMBER

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.

President

Valda Arrowsmith 9874 1414

Secretary

Barbara Keene 9874 4919

Treasurer

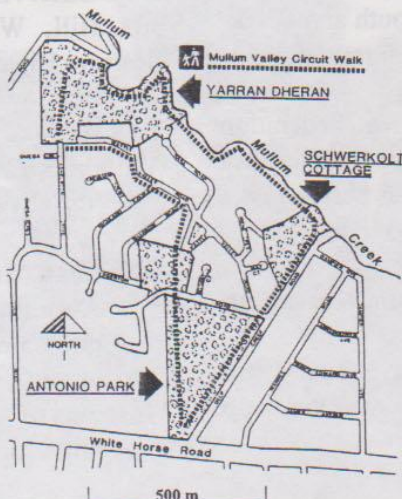
Barbara Rogalski 9874 4668

Editors Barbara Gardiner
Ted Arrowsmith

Distribution Val Riches

Our Society on the Internet.

www.vicnet.net.au/~ndhsinc/



Melway Ref. 49 D7

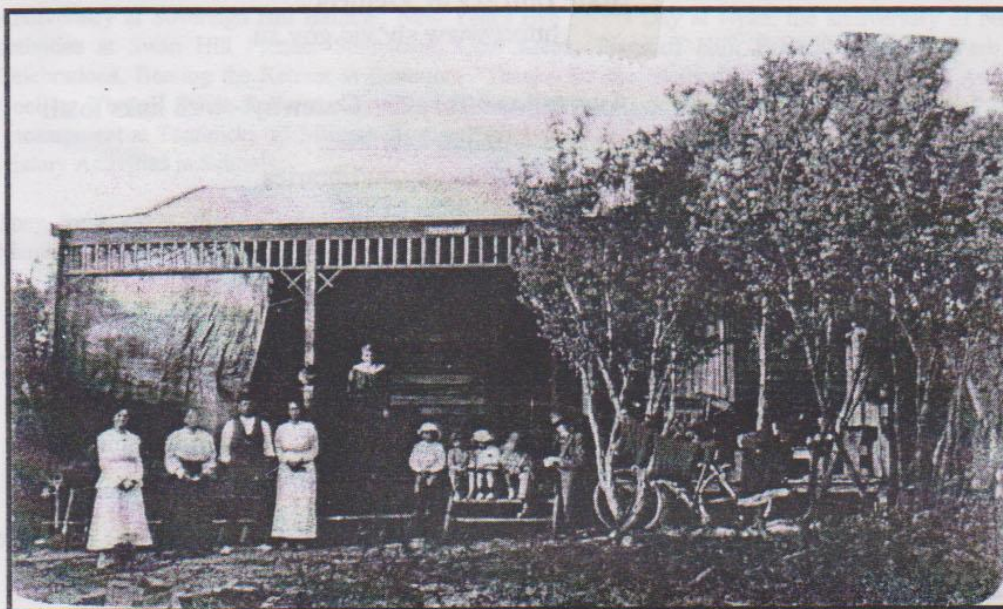


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from the
City of Whitehorse*

Museum Accreditation Program

MHP MHP MHP
Accredited Museum

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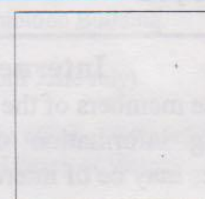


Can you identify the family, house or the time? The house name over the verandah is "Mitcham"

Please let us know the if you do.

***Nunawading and District Historical Society Inc.
Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex.***

Deep Creek Road, Mitcham, Vic, 3132 (Melway Ref. 49 D7)
if undeliverable please return to P.O.Box 272 Mitcham, 3132, Vic



Mr. Peter Simmenauer
6 Stewart Avenue,
Blackburn South
3130

