

Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.

Formerly Nunawading & District Historical Society Inc.

NEWSLETTER



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Series 12. No 1. February 2004

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

From the President

The New Year is upon us and after a leisurely few weeks, it is time to ease ourselves into activity mode. The December Luncheon was a social success going by the amount of verbal exchange taking place. Following the luncheon and our meeting, Lyn Athan and her friends entertained us with Christmas songs and our members joined in heartily. They were generous with their programme and were much appreciated by their audience.

At the Historical Society, we are indeed blessed with our multi skilled members. Joyce Suto has written a book of poems with one referring to Halliday Park, Mitcham. Contact Joyce, if you would like a copy.

It is time to start planning for the Heritage Festival, which will be on Sunday 21st, March. We are joining with the Mullum Mullum Festival, which will compliment both groups. Walks from Yarran Dheran to Schwerkolt Cottage will be conducted. We will have our usual attractions—lace making, blacksmiths, etc. and we hope to have a model train display – this is awaiting confirmation. The railway theme will help us celebrate 150 years of Railways which were so important to our municipality.

At our next meeting on Saturday 14th February at 1.30 pm, our guest speaker will be the Mayor of City of Whitehorse, Cr. Jessie McCallum, which should be of interest to our Members.

We will be recruiting helpers for our Heritage Day and I know you will all enthusiastically offer your services – it is vital that we have plenty of helpers to make it a successful day.

We are grateful for the ongoing interest of the Schwerkolt family in their heritage and were delighted to receive a prayer book from descendants living in America.

A warm welcome to new member, Margaret Young of Vermont. We look forward to seeing her at our future activities.

Our congratulations go to Barbara Gardiner, our hard-working newsletter editor for her City of Whitehorse and Deakin Australia Day awards.

I look forward to seeing you all at the February meeting.

Judith Fry

Next Meeting –

Saturday, 14th February at 1.30 pm

Our guest speaker will be the Mayor of City of Whitehorse, Cr. Jessie McCallum, who will speak on her year as Mayor. Bring along your friends as this is an opportunity to hear from our local government representative.

Saturday March 13th – From 9.30 am

Our first Working Bee of 2004

If you can spare an hour or two, it will be much appreciated. “Many hands make light work” We need to spruce up everything for our Heritage Day.

Sunday 21st March - Noon to 5 pm

Our Heritage Open Day at Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex.

This year we will combine with the Mullum Mullum Festival who will be conducting a walk from Yarran Dheran in the morning. (more details in our next newsletter). We will have all the usual attractions and we hope to have a Model Railway display – this is still to be confirmed.

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.

150 years of Railways in Australia

To refresh our memories – George Stephenson built his “Rocket” in 1829 (this is now located at the British Science Museum in London). In 1831, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway opened using eight of Stephenson’s locomotives. Although, Australia was half a world away, in less than thirty years, railway lines were being built here.

Prior to the introduction of steam railways, in 1836, a passenger and goods service ran for eight kilometres on wooden rails across the Tasman Peninsular to Port Arthur and was pushed by convicts - four to each carriage. This line continued into the 1870’s.

In 1854, in South Australia, a horse drawn railway carried goods and passenger from Goolwa to Port Elliot and later extended to Victor Harbour. In 1884, steam trains took over this service.

The first steam railway in any of the Australian colonies was the Melbourne to Hobson’s Bay Railway which covered the 4.5 kilometres between Melbourne and Port Melbourne (then Sandridge).

Construction began in March 1853 and on 12th September 1854, the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Charles Hotham officiated at the opening ceremony with much rejoicing by the citizens of Melbourne. Regular services commenced about a month later with the first train on the line hauled by one of the first Australian built locomotives, owing to the delay in the arrival by sea of the British locomotives.

The Gold Rush was still bringing thousands of people to Victoria and the railway carried 151,036 passengers in its first six months. Previously, passengers arriving by ship (depending on their financial position), either had to walk to Melbourne or use a horse drawn carriage or wagon.

On 25th June, 1857, the track from Geelong to Williamstown was completed, with passengers changing to ferries for the journey to Melbourne. When the rail link between Melbourne and Williamstown was completed in January, 1859, it gave Victoria the first link between an Australian capital city and a provincial city, Geelong.

In Sydney on September, 26th, 1855, the first steam engine in New South Wales travelled the 21 kilometres from Redfern to Parramatta in forty minutes.

Construction of the railroad over the Blue Mountains was extremely difficult, and it was decided to use a zigzag line over the very steep mountains. This line reached Blacktown in July 1860, and the Goulburn line was completed in 1869.

The first steam train in Queensland ran from Ipswich to Grandchester (then Bigge’s Camp) on July 1865. The line continued on to Toowoomba in May 1867. Brisbane had no trains until July 1876, as a bridge had to be built over the Brisbane River.

In South Australia, the 27 kilometre line from North Terrace to Port Adelaide opened for public use on 21st April, 1856. Morgan, a riverport on the Murray River, was reached by a railway in 1878 and serviced the paddle steamers transporting wool.

In Western Australia, the first steam trains operated to carry the karri timber, at Yoganhup in 1871 and Jarrahdale in 1872. Lead and copper was brought from Northampton to Geraldton from 1879, and in 1881 the line from Fremantle was the first railway to reach Perth.

In Tasmania, the first steam train ran on 10th February 1871 from Launceston to Deloraine and in 1876, the first north-south line ran from Hobart to Evandale Road, near Launceston. Tasmania’s West Coast had eleven separate railway lines, which served the copper mines and their communities.

The recent opening of the new rail line from Alice Springs to Darwin has brought railways back in the spotlight and fulfilled a dream which governments and planners had a hundred years ago.

More on the history of railways in the next newsletter

Barbara Gardiner

Research Sources

A History of Rail Transport in Australia

David Morrissey

The Railways of Australia

Stephen Brooke

Romance of Australian Transport

Terry and Maree Gilltrap

Who’s Master? Who’s Man

Michael Cannon

History of Port Melbourne

Nancy U’ren and Noel Turnbull



Congratulations.....

to **Barbara Gardiner** who has worked hard for the advancement of our Society as Secretary, Newsletter Editor and as co-ordinator of the Annual Wisteria Festival, was awarded a Community Achievement Award by the City of Whitehorse in their Australia Day awards on 26th January 2004. The presentation of the award was held in the Whitehorse Arts

Centre. After the awards, Barbara and her guests were hosted at a reception by the Council.

A Deakin Community Australia Day Award was also awarded to Barbara in recognition of her contribution to the community, specifically to the heritage of the City of Whitehorse. Both awards were well earned Barbara.



to **Margaret Eklund**, who following her Deakin Community Australia Day Award in 2002, was, on 30th November 2003, recognized for her 60 years work in the guiding movement. The District Commissioner presented her with "60 years" badge, although her actual period of contact with the guiding began when she joined as the Brownies. To Margaret's

amazement the State Commissioner presented her with the "Banksia Award". These awards were recognized at a special "surprise" afternoon tea in the Mitcham Guide Hall where all of Margaret's family were present. Margaret capped off her year when she was awarded the "Super Veterans' Bowling Badge" by the Heatherdale Bowling Club.

Dates for your Dairy

This is the program for 2004 – All meetings at Local History Room, Schwerkolt Cottage Museum Complex, Deep Creek Road, Mitcham

Saturday 14th February – 1.30 pm

Guest Speaker Cr. Jessie McCallum
Mayor of City of Whitehorse

Saturday 3rd April – 1.30 pm.

Guest Speaker – Mr. Jock Ryan
Subject – Crooks, Cranks and Chaos
in Early Melbourne.

Saturday 5th June – 1.30 pm

Speaker – Mr. David Crowe
Subject – Parks of City of Whitehorse

Saturday 14th August

Speaker – Mr. Stephen Clifton
Subject- Wedgwood China

Saturday 9th October

Speaker – Mr. John Waghorn
Subject – Early Post Offices

*Note – April and June Meetings on 1st Saturdays
owing to holiday weekends on 2nd Saturdays.

City of Whitehorse Events for your Diary Twilight Jazz Concerts

**Blackburn Lake Picnic Area,
Central Road, Blackburn**

Sunday 8th February

3pm – 4.45pm Diversity Plus Jazz Group
5pm - 7 pm Society Syncopators with Nina Ferro

Sunday 22nd February

3pm – 4.45pm Whitehorse Musical Theatre
5pm – 7pm When Harry Met Frank

Box Hill Gardens

Station Street, Box Hill

Sunday 15th February

3pm – 4.45pm Box Hill Salvation Army Big Band
5pm - 7 pm Bob Valentine and the Corporate Raiders

Sunday 29th February

3pm – 3.45 pm City of Box Hill Band
5 pm – 7 pm Opus 21 Big Band

Cataloguing the Collection - Current Status

Artifacts	3225	Items catalogued
Documents	4180	Items catalogued
Photographs	2760	Items catalogued

THANKS:

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

John Cybula, Estate Agent, 108 Canterbury Road Blackburn South.
Stockdale & Leggo, South Parade, Blackburn

REMEMBER

Box Hill Cemetery Records and Nunawading Gazette for 1964-1974 available on microfiche for research.
Whitehorse Historical Society Local History Collection - open 10.30 am to 2.30 pm on Wednesday. Visitors welcomed. Ring 9873 4946 for an appointment at other times.

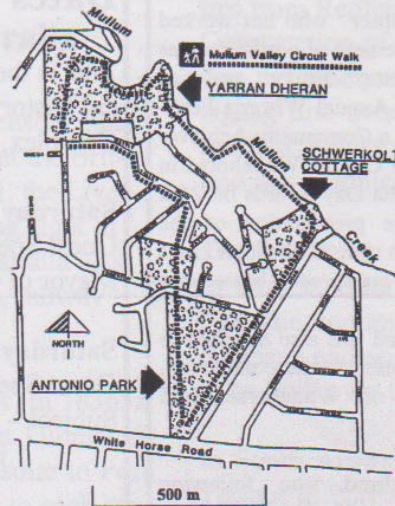
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Our Society on the Internet.

www.vicnet.net.au/~ndhsinc/



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This Photograph is a mystery.

Can anyone tell us the name of
 any of the players, the team and
 the era?

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