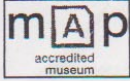


Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.

Formerly Nunawading & District Historical Society Inc.

1965 - 2006

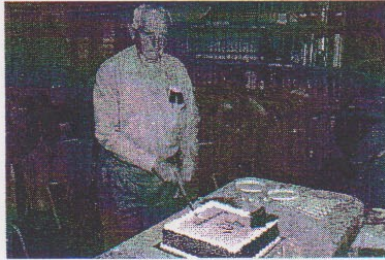


NEWSLETTER



A0012235J
Series 14 no 1

ABN 44 352 041 634
February 2006



Bill Gray (a former president) cuts the delicious cake

From the President

What a wonderful afternoon was our 40th anniversary celebrating the history of the Whitehorse Historical Society Inc (formerly the Nunawading & District Historical Society Inc). The comments from our special guests and members were complimentary and the cake from the Mitcham Cake Shop looked and tasted quite delicious. Various speakers told of their involvement in the Historical Society over the past 40 years. If you were unable to attend our celebration on the 10th December a special insert with an overview and photographs of the day has been provided with this issue.

In 2006 ongoing meetings are being held with a Consultancy Group employed by Council to consider and report on the Historical Society's needs and space requirements in the future.

Our next meeting, is on Saturday 11th February at 1.30pm where the speaker will be Lindsay McKirdy, who will tell us about the Deaf and Dumb Society (now known as the Victorian Deaf Society) in Central Road, Blackburn. I hope to see you there.

Judith Fry

Oral History Program – On track

We are pleased to report that the Oral History program targeting post war migrants and funded by the Department for Victorian Communities, late in 2005 is now under way.

In mid January Valda Arrowsmith, Peter Simmenauer, other members and Oral History expert and trainer, Ms Lesley Alves ran a workshop at the Museum for seven new interviewers. The workshop was used to introduce the principles, methods and code of ethics which constitute best practice in the recording and documenting of Oral History.

A warm welcome is due to the following, all of whom have become members of the Society:

- ◊ Liz Chapman, from Blackburn North
- ◊ Jan Harper of Mont Albert North
- ◊ Lee Howarth of Blackburn
- ◊ Lucie Baragwanath of Box Hill North
- ◊ Erica Sharpe of Box Hill North
- ◊ Sue Goodluck Blackburn South
- ◊ Melanie Farrow of Box Hill

We wish them well in their endeavours and hope they enjoy their involvement with the Society.

Next Meeting

Saturday 11th February 2006

1.30 pm

Speaker: *Mr Lindsay McKirdy*

Topic: *Deaf & Dumb Society**

Central Rd, Blackburn

(*now known as the Victorian Deaf Society)

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

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.

WILLIAM HENRY SLATER [b. c1828 – d.23 May 1894] (Part 1)

A summary of research by Yvonne Fitzmaurice 2005

WILLIAM HENRY SLATER the eldest son of Daniel and Elizabeth SLATER was born c1828 in Mitcham, Surrey. England. William's father, Daniel SLATER was described as 'being from' Blackfriars, London and his mother, 'from Mitcham', Surrey.

In 1864, at the age of about 39 years William married Mary Ann CRESSWELL. Her parent's names were not recorded on the certificate.

William Henry retired two years before his death. After being ill for six months, he died at his home in Barnes Road, Blackburn on 23 May 1894, aged 66 years. The cause of his death was stomach cancer. Mary Ann, his wife, died on the 12 August 1912 aged 88 years. Both are buried in the same plot in Box Hill Cemetery.

The obituary written for the *Australian Journal of Pharmacy*, June 1894, pgs 272-3, described Mr Slater as being a retiring contented and happy man with a homely disposition, and one who loved his work. It also stated 'Although he never craved for wealth or fame in the pursuit of his business, he still acquired a reputation in his own particular line, and at the same time gained modest competency,' When William Henry Slater became a prominent citizen he stood for the local council election in 1886. The position was tied. A coin was tossed and Slater lost.

It is thought that he was instrumental in changing the name of Air Hill to Mitcham*, its present name. Slater was also interested in sport and was a member of the Box Hill Cricket Club. To maintain this connection, a portion of Mr Slater's original orchard was retained for sporting activities and known as *The Slater Reserve*.

There is now a basketball stadium, a picnic area, a community garden and ample room for other sports facilities for the public to enjoy.

The 1846 English Tithe Commutation Survey showed that William's father, Daniel Slater rented two plots of land, totalling approximately one acre. One of his plots of land was in Love Lane, Mitcham, Surrey, England where he had a house and raised his family of ten children.

The 1851 English Census for Mitcham, Surrey, recorded that both Daniel and his eighteen year old son William were gardeners. 'Gardener' was the general term used for growers of physic herbs, either as small holders, or workers on the major herb farms.

William and his younger brother Benjamin both worked for James Moore, of Potter and Moore, England - the best known of all herb growers. It was here that William learnt his craft.

After completing his apprenticeship, aged 28 years and alone, William emigrated to Victoria on the 'Roxborough Castle', arriving late in the year of 1857.

He spent some time on the gold fields before returning to Melbourne and settling at Air Hill (Mitcham) as it was then known. Land on the south bank of the Koonung Creek was chosen to set up his physic garden and the access to this land was by two dirt tracks, now known as Surrey and Springfield Roads. Here he built a single storeyed house with a corrugated iron roof which he named 'Mitcham Grove' - after a grand house in Surrey.

* also known as Emery Hill*, see page 3 for references

Part 2 will be printed in the next issue of the newsletter

WHS Dates for your Diary

Next Working Bee

Normally 9.30 am – 12.30 pm –
1-3 hours assistance needed

Our next working bee and the first for the year will be held at the Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex – Saturday 11th of March 2006.

Any time you can spare, from half an hour to the whole morning is much appreciated Refreshments will be served.

With Autumn comes a period of high levels of insect activity – help us clear up the dust of summer and keep those pesky bugs in line.

After the extreme temperatures of Summer it is also a good time during clean up to check on the condition of artefacts and if need be take action before it is too late! As many eyes as possible are needed!

Cataloguing the Collection - Current Status

Artifacts 3775 Items catalogued

Documents 5408 Items catalogued

Photographs 3263 Items catalogued

MISSING IN ACTION RARE TRADES - The Video

I have mislaid a copy of this video , purchased in Canberra and borrowed by several members. It would be appreciated if members could check their video collections...someone has perhaps simply forgotten to return it. I feel the video would be a very interesting and useful addition to the Society's Collection. Many thanks.
Barbara Gardiner

from page 2- Main references:- William Slater

- ◇ Obituary ND7000
- ◇ Box Hill cemetery purchase of a family plot. ND 2000
- ◇ Site. Presbyterian West side, grave 6. Buried 25 May 1894
- ◇ Late resident of Barnes Road, Blackburn., Ref.'- Box Hill Cemetery records, including tombstone.
- ◇ Births Deaths & Marriages for Victoria.
- ◇ Photocopy of medallions won ND 2000
- ◇ Photocopies of photos of house ND2000

Copy of H. W.S. 'so evidence given before the 'Royal Commission on vegetable products, perfume plants and essential oils 1890' ND 3591

CONGRATULATIONS TED!

On the 24th January, Mr Ted Arrowsmith was made recipient of the Australia Day,

*Deakin Award
for Services to the Community*

The award was presented by
Mr Phillip Baressi M.L.A.

A very well deserved award!

A Walk on the Wild Side

On a spring morning 2005 while walking through the surrounds of the museum I was able to see the following native birds – Crimson Rosellas, Kookaburras, Rainbow Lorikeets, Wattle birds Blue Wrens and two ducks paddling serenely in Mullum Mullum Creek. All this wild life seemed completely normal with all the massive earthworks under way on the other side of the Creek. It was very reassuring to know that we can still observe our native birds around us without, as my granddaughter commented venturing to the "real bush" . I am sure many more wonderful native birds and animals could be seen if one was quiet and patient but not while in the company of a four and seven year old ! *Wendy Stanfield*

Did You Know?

In the 1600s lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock drinkers out for a couple of days . Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather round and eat and drink and wait to see if they would wake up – hence the custom "Holding a wake"

Contributed by Geoff Inkster

REMEMBER

Whitehorse Historical Society
Local History Collection

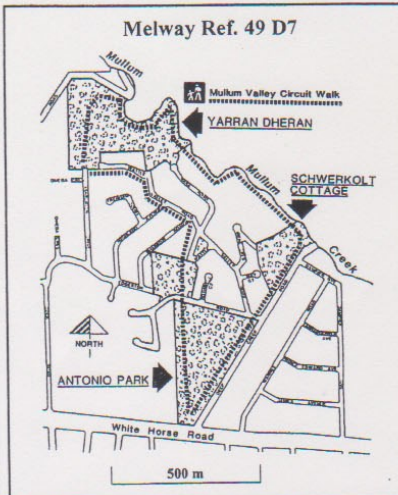
open 10.30 am to 2.30 pm Wednesdays. Visitors welcome.
Ring 9873 4946 for an appointment at other times.


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

THANKS!


Tremendous support has been given by
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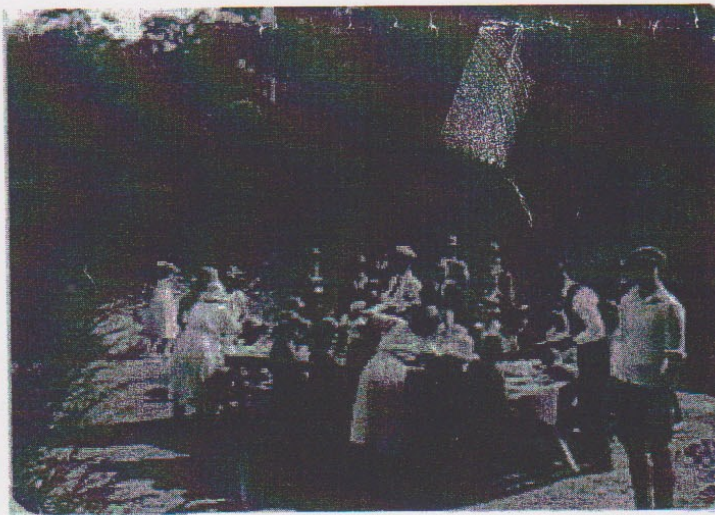
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CITY OF

 WHITEHORSE

Whitehorse Historical Society, Inc. acknowledge the support from the City of Whitehorse


 accredited museum
 ISSN 1328-2395



Blackburn Lake circa early 20th century .

Thought to be a picnic party from the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society, Central Rd, Blackburn.

Find out more about the Society at our next meeting in February.

Deadline for notices relating to heritage or any other activities for inclusion in the newsletter need to be supplied to the editor at the Society rooms or by email by the 12th of the month preceding the next meeting



Sender: Whitehorse 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

Our 40th Anniversary Celebrations – special supplement *For those who were there and those could not attend*

President's address

Why did I join the Historical Society? I would meet Shirley Jones and Phyl Johnson up the street and they would ask me when I was joining the Society, as my family had been in the district since 1886. In 1984, having finished with school committees and canteens I decided to join.

At that time the Society met in peoples' homes. The first meeting I attended was at Betty Muckleston's Home. Everybody seemed so efficient. The Archives were the held at Nancy Leach's home and stored in the basement of the Nunawading Municipal Offices.

When I went to a night meeting at the Mattingley's home in Lions Court, Forest Hill, not knowing the area and finding trees growing over the street signs, I kept getting out of the car and shining my torch on the signs. A police car drew up behind me and wanted to know what I was doing. I then had a police escort to the Mattingley home.

We worked on the archives at the Municipal Offices basement amongst the Council papers. The Council staff would move boxes for us to work. Ken Barelli, a former Councillor, was doing some family research and he was horrified at the inconvenient way we were working and decided it was time the Society had a work room attached to the Museum. Fortunately, Valda Arrowsmith was a Councillor at that time and together she and Ken lobbied for a Local History Room.

This building was opened on 24th July, 1988. A very wet day with mud everywhere. Nick Fry, my son, spread tarpaulins for members and guests to walk to the new building without being ankle deep in our lovely clay soil.

We were so proud of our new History Room. Ken Barelli gave us the carpet squares and some furniture as did the Council. We found that working and meeting at this new venue had its drawbacks. When you needed to go to the toilet in the pouring rain, you trekked up the hill, past the Cottage, to the Public Toilets situated beyond the Cottage entrance in Deep Creek Road. We kept asking John Brandenburg for a

toilet in the machine room adjacent to the kitchen. He would tell us it was too difficult. He came up on Council business one day and had to borrow Beryl Gray's umbrella to go to the toilet. After this experience, wheels were put in motion for a toilet in the machine room.

When Andrew Hillier, the then Secretary got a job on the other side of Melbourne I found myself secretary of the Society to Bill Gray, who had replaced Joan Rocznick as President. Bill Gray was a joy to work with. He had exceptional negotiating skills, enabling him to see the bigger picture. Beryl, his wife was a wonderful organizer, assistant Secretary and later took over the role of Archivist when Joan Rocznick retired.

One day Beryl and I were delighted to meet film star, Christopher Timothy alias James Herriot when he came to visit the cottage to film an advertisement for dog fleas. Bill was not impressed.

Shirley and Ian Barker were Treasurers for many years and were very careful with our hard earned money.

How did I become President?... Continuing on the Committee after 10 years as Secretary, I was happily doodling on my agenda at a meeting and heard someone say – what about Judith and found myself President

I have seen many changes over the years that I have been a member of the Historical Society. With a lot of hard work we became an accredited museum. In the early days and thanks to the help of Legal Aid in Blackburn we became incorporated.

A Wednesday working group has evolved and a core group of 10 or more volunteers can be found working here, changing displays, cataloguing, working on computers and enjoying each others company. We attend festivals, set up library displays, attend skills updating workshops and organize open days.

The support of members, Council and the wider community is very important to the Historical Society. This Complex is indeed a jewel in the heritage crown of the Whitehorse Council .

Judith Fry December 10th 2006.



A full House at our 40th Anniversary

Front row on the right (l-r)

Whitehorse Councillor Ms Hayley Weller

Joy Ogden

Betty Jones

Also present were very welcome guests from the Glen Waverley Historical Society

All photographs - Whitehorse Historical Society

*Current President,
Judith Fry takes the stand*



Four of our speakers – who shared their memories with us

from left to right

Jean Webster

Shirley Jones

George Cox

Bill Gray

*Tucking into
the Celebratory feast!*

