

Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.

Formerly Nunawading & District Historical Society Inc.

1965 - 2006



NEWSLETTER



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Series 14 no 5

ABN 44 352 041 634
Sept Oct 2006

From the President

President's Report

October is a busy month with lots of activities to note in the diary. A big welcome home to all of our members who have been travelling far and wide, you have been missed!

Our Wisteria party is on the first Sunday in October details inside this newsletter. We also have the Whitehorse Spring festival a week later and we will need help for both events. If you can help with either of these days even if only for an hour or two please contact the Wednesday working group or one of the committee members. See back page for contact details.

On Tuesday 3rd of October a guided tour of historic sites around Mitcham will be conducted. If you would like to join the tour which starts at Britannia Mall please phone 9262 6555 to book a place. More dates for many other interesting heritage activities are listed inside this newsletter and in the *Victorian Seniors Festival 2006* booklet available at libraries and Council service centres.

At our August meeting the committee and office bearers for the Whitehorse Historical Society 2006/2007 were elected. All current contact details are listed on the back of this newsletter. A number of members brought in special treasures to share with us: A book on Blackburn, women's embroidery and

doyley presses, a collection of handbells and the recent donation of a "Red Moon" label in good condition were some of the highlights.

We send our best wishes to Joyce Suto for a speedy recovery from her hip operation.

Our next General Meeting will be on Saturday the 14th October. As our advertised speaker is unfortunately unable to attend, Jay Miller our editor, will talk about some of the remarkable historic sites visited on her recent trip to North Queensland and to Central Australia.

I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting and other heritage events.

Judith Fry

Conservation Grant.

We are grateful to the City of Whitehorse for assisting with a Community Grant of \$2,000 for a professional conservation assessment to guide us in the preservation of our 19th century costumes. We hope these garments will add to our significant textile collection.

Next meeting of the Society
Saturday 14th October 2006
1.30 pm

Guest Speaker: Jay Miller
The Underground Hospital & Museum
at Mt Isa and other places of interest in
the historic Australian outback

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.

The Vermont Mechanics Institute: memories of Frances Warren

Vermont Mechanics Institute was a large wooden hall that stood where the Scout Hall now stands in Canterbury Rd. Vermont. This large hall was unlined, had double doors at the front entrance facing Canterbury Rd with two small doors on the east and west side of the main door.

Inside on the northern end of the stage a set of steps led up to the dressing rooms on either side. A door at the back of the stage led to the supper room that was situated across the back of the hall. There was a kitchen to the east with a large open fireplace with a large hook for the "Kero tin" for the milk to make the coffee,real coffee, delicious!

Outside the back door to the left were stairs that led up to a room that was the library. I remember my grandfather, he would strap together some books and carry them over his shoulders and walk up to the library to change his *Mechanic's Institute* books. Also "out the back", down in the far corner were the lavatories, the horrible pan type.

This Mechanic's Hall built about 1919 was the main centre of use until the McKeon Hall was built in 1925. Both Halls saw much activity, dances with a three-piece orchestra, piano drums and saxophone, and card nights were also very popular. The [Mechanic's] Hall would be all decorated up for a footballer's ball. The floor would be polished with candlesticks using a sugar bag with a couple of bricks, pulled all over the floor to get a polish on it. The focal gymnasium classes were held there with a grand display at the end of the year. Flower shows too when everyone brought their choicest blooms and a variety of vegetables. At one time the supper room was used as a school room due to overcrowding in the school house. My memories go back to 1927 when I was in the "babies class" at the school and the school concert was held in the hall. I remember we were all dressed in white baby frocks and sang a song "How would you like to be a baby girl". For the encore we sang a song about Golliwogs. We all had a golliwog to brandish around.

We had lots of fun in this hall – we were still dancing there during the second World War. Later it was pulled down and the Boy Scouts bought it and erected the present day hall. There was an Honour Roll of Vermont men who had enlisted for the First World War. It seems to have disappeared unfortunately.
F.W. 5 Nov 2005

See back page for photo of the Mechanics Institute

Senior's Festival : Some local Heritage Week activities

Sunday 1st of October

Box Hill Cemetery Tour 2pm – 3.30pm
Middleborough Road entrance FREE
Bookings essential Phone: 9262 6555

Monday 2nd of October

Discovering Whitehorse On Line:
Heritage Database workshop at the Nunwading Library 7pm – 8.15pm FREE
Bookings essential Phone: 9873 5638

Footsteps in Whitehorse – Exhibition of Photographs by Peter Keesing, 1994.
Nunawading Library during Library opening hours FREE Phone: 9873 5638

Tuesday 3rd of October

Walkabout Whitehorse – Blackburn
9.30am-11.00am Blackburn Library FREE
Bookings essential Phone: 9262 6555

Walkabout Whitehorse – Box Hill
10am – 11.45am Box Hill Town Hall FREE
Bookings essential Phone: 9262 6555

Thursday 5th October

Burwood Cemetery Tour
10.00 – 11.30 am Burwood Cemetery,
Gilmour Road FREE
Booking Essential Phone: 9262 6555

*More information in Whitehorse News,
October Edition or www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au*

Whitehorse Heritage Assistance Fund

"This Fund aims to provide funding to individuals, community groups or organisations in their endeavours to maintain properties of heritage significance" This year a booklet including an application form explained funding eligibility. *Applications for this year closed on 1st September* but it may be worth finding out more ready for next year. Phone 9262 6558 or request information by email: fiona.stevens@whitehorse.

WHS Dates for your Diary

2006 meeting dates and guest speakers

Saturday 14 October

Jay Miller - Mt Isa's Underground Hospital
Established in World War 2

Saturday 11 November

Working bee - 9.30am - 12.30 pm.
Can you spare an hour.

Saturday 9 December

Christmas Celebration 12.30 pm

VALE

It is with regret that we note the death of George Henwood, who recently passed away after a long illness.

George and his wife Joan, former WHS committee members, have been long term residents of the City of Whitehorse.

We very much appreciate George's contribution to the Society and offer our sincere sympathy to Joan and family at this sad time.

News from the Wednesday Group

In response to the recent consultant's report we have started a comprehensive audit of our collection. At the same time we will review the items to ensure that we keep those items that meet our collection criteria.

WISTERIA GARDEN PARTY At SCHWERKOLT COTTAGE & MUSEUM COMPLEX

Deep Creek Rd (mel 49 D7)
2-4pm
Sunday October 1st 2006

A special day for Children at this historic site!

Attractions include:

- *Animals on the move Animal farm*
 - *Brumbies Bush Band*
 - *Face painting*
- *Old fashioned picnic races at 2.45pm*
 - *Ball games*
 - *Hula hoops*
 - *Skittles and Quoits*

Tea coffee and cordial available

Free admission

Enquiries 9874 6592

Membership news

Just a reminder that all members are welcome to come along to the Wednesday working group. This is also a good time for people to drop in for self directed research.

"Curly : A collection of poems"

First published in 2003 has recently been re-issued

By Joyce Suto
(WHS member)

Copies are available by contacting Joyce

*Space permitting have other WHS members any creative activities we can mention?
Forward details to the editor c/o WHS Wednesday working group or by email.*

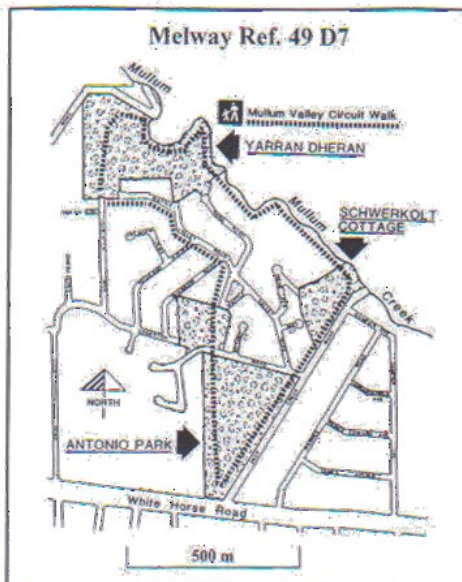
Cataloguing the Collection - Current Status

Artifacts	3870	Items catalogued
Documents	5529	Items catalogued
Photographs	3305	Items catalogued

REMEMBER

Whitehorse Historical Society
Local History Collection & Place of Deposit
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

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



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**From the Whitehorse
 Historical Society Image
 Archive**

*Two girls on what seems to be
 a windy summer's day in front
 of the
 Mechanics Hall,
 Canterbury Rd, Vermont
 Built circa 1919
 The hall was still in use during
 WW2 and later replaced with
 a Hall for use by the Boy
 Scouts.*



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



Sender: Whitehorse Historical Society Inc. & Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex.
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