



# The WHS NEWSLETTER

Series 16 no 2

March – April 2008

## The Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.

Formerly Nunawading & District HS. Estab.1964

ABN 44 352 041 624  
450122351

### 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.



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### POD

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To celebrate 100 years of Women's Suffrage we have a new display of Women's Fashions of the 20th Century



Our Wednesday Display Group has been working very hard to mark the year of the 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage.

The completed display shows "Four decades of Women's Fashions of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century" featuring dresses and gowns from 1930's to the 1960's. Who remembers wearing a mini-skirt?

We have also displayed "From Pantaloon to G strings" which displays a range of women's undergarments from the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

One cannot help but be amazed at the lengths to which discomfort is tolerated for the sake of fashion and convention ! Our Volunteers have put much time and effort into this display and the result is yet another excellent set of displays. Please come and visit the museum.



The painting of the Museum gave us the opportunity to improve our displays. The gown on the right is from our 19th Century display. The corsets above are from our "Pantaloon to G Strings" display which is another tribute to Female Suffrage and emancipation.

Next meeting Saturday 14th of April 2008 1.30 pm  
Peter McPhee, President of Mitcham RSL

### **From the WHS President – Judith Fry**

It is always sad to say goodbye to our friends. In the last newsletter we saluted volunteer Val Riches who regularly folded and posted out the newsletter. Since then Joan Roczniok, and John Skey have passed away. We salute Joan below, but some people may not realise that John kept our antique clock ticking along beautifully in the cottage adding much to the atmosphere there. All of these people will be missed.

At the February meeting Pat Richardson told us of the Course family who lived in Husband Road, Forest Hill. Pat's talk was illustrated with large maps of the area. Her Grandmother was a beautiful painter and Pat is lucky enough to have some of her paintings, one especially was a hand-painted border of wattle which frames a treasured wedding photograph.

Although Heritage Day is scheduled for Sunday 14th of September, we are already in the early stages of planning. This event will begin Heritage Week which is organised by Whitehorse Council. Watch this newsletter for further details.

On page 4, we have listed the local women who signed a petition in 1891 supporting women's right to vote, and we ask that you to sound out friends and relatives who may know more about some of these names. It is important that we document these early supporters of womens' right to vote. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

### **Vale Joan Roczniok**

*We were saddened to hear of the death of Joan on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2008.*

*Joan's contribution to the Society has been much appreciated. At a time during the early days of the Society when the committee was considering going into recess Joan accepted the role of President and began rebuilding the membership.*

*Joan was a librarian and using her skills, she developed a card system to correctly catalogue the document collection. This has subsequently been transferred to the computer system. Her card system is still used periodically for additional searches of the records.*

*Joan was a very talented person who was a generous contributor to the Society. We are very grateful for her efforts and she will be missed.*

### **So Wendy what do you do at the WHS?**

It is a difficult question to answer because of all the varied activities I find myself involved in each Wednesday morning. The most frequent reply is "I enjoy myself."

Soon after joining I found I was part of a very knowledgeable, busy, caring and friendly group. This pleasant feeling of inclusion makes us all return each week to tackle the sometimes challenging tasks that present themselves.

I started by learning how to catalogue the artifacts that are donated to the Society from time to time. The varied nature of these things is quite amazing. I have handled everything from a full length fur coat to a rather dusty, dilapidated bag used by apple pickers. The apples were to put in these bags as they were picked in the many orchards that were in the area.

Changing one of the displays in the museum is also great fun and, at times, an involved operation. The items from the 'resting display' have to be carefully removed and put away. The new display is arranged, new information is gathered and put onto cards which explains to the visitors how the various items were used in the past. When all that is finished each article has to be documented to enable it to be easily relocated in its new position.

Several times each year the Society puts in a display at a local library or other venue. This is a great chance to show some of our very beautiful and interesting items as well as inviting local people to visit the museum and the Schwerkolt Cottage.

Visitors may be either local people who are researching the history of their homes (usually we can provide documentary and photographic information to fill the gaps), or family history enthusiasts who often find the 'missing link' when browsing through the old documents.

There are many other tasks such as cataloguing photographs, organizing our newsletter, updating our data into the computer database and some day to day housekeeping chores such as vacuuming!

When we sit down to enjoy morning tea or lunch there is always much chatter around the table. Often it is about Historical Society activities and upcoming events, but at other times, books and films. I would encourage anyone interested to join our Wednesday working group. Give it a go and see how interesting and rewarding it can be. It is a wonderful way to gain skills, learn about our heritage and meet new friends.

*Wendy Standfield*

## The WHS Photograph Collection

At present there are over 3,400 images in our photograph collection. The oldest photograph is dated 1876 and is a black and white image of the Blackburn Post Office [see photo on page 5] and our most recent was taken in 2007. Over that time-span photographs have evolved from black and white to colour formats, both of which have similar longevity.\*

In the main, the subjects are early settlement, orchards, transport, buildings and other industries. Also included are historic family groups, special events and Nunawading identities in both sport and local government.

The collection covers the area known previously as the Nunawading Shire which consisted of the suburbs of Mitcham, Vermont, Vermont South, Blackburn, Blackburn North, Blackburn South, Nunawading, Forest Hill and East Burwood. Of the first four mentioned we have a good representation of photographs until about 1940.

However, we are always looking for more images to fill the gaps, especially for Forest Hill and East Burwood which are not well represented. Overall, there are very few images of all areas between the years 1940 to 1980.

If you think you could fill gaps in our collection for these years please contact the society on (03) 9873 4946 with a description of your photographs, or bring them to our workroom on any Wednesday between 10am and 3 pm.

We do not need to keep the actual photograph, but we do need your written permission for a copy to be made and used by us. Please note we are legally unable to scan photographs of living children under 18 years of age.

I research the history of the photographs and write up a description, Ted Arrowsmith is in charge of scanning the photographs on to the computer and Chintin Paul adds my research and descriptions to Ted's scanned images. The result of our combined efforts appears on the computer screen whenever research is undertaken. *Continued back page*

## WHS Dates for your Diary

### 2008 Saturday meetings & guest speakers

**June 14.** 'Helen Hart Pioneer Suffragist.'  
Councillor Helen Harris O.A.M.

**August 9. AGM** speaker to be confirmed

*On alternate months our important Working Bees are co-ordinated by Ian Nethercote . Everyone welcome even if only for an hour or so, morning tea included! The next Working Bee will be held on Saturday May 10th at 9.30 am*

### Other activities

**3<sup>rd</sup> May Visit to Eltham Historical Society**  
Outer Eastern Regional Historical Societies Meeting: 10 am Talk on *The Centenary of the Royal Historical Society* ; Afternoon – historic walk of Eltham and activities for non walkers. **Cost \$12 includes lunch.**  
Reserve a place with June Ventouras on 98781659

Why not plan a visit to the newly refurbished **Whitehorse Art Space Box Hill Town Hall**  
**Open Tuesday to Friday. 10am -5pm.**

### Forthcoming exhibitions

**7<sup>th</sup> March to 11 April** *Top Dogs*  
Exceptional artwork by graduating students

For the potters and those who love ceramics  
**16<sup>th</sup> April to 23<sup>rd</sup> May** *From the Earth*  
Ceramics Victoria Collection,  
City of Whitehorse Art Collection  
Deakin University Art Collection

## Membership news

A warm welcome is extended to Tristan Davidson and we hope he enjoys his time with the Society.

## 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**



## The Vote for Women !

*To mark the Centenary of Women attaining the right to vote we are researching a list of signatories from the Whitehorse area who supported this right as early as 1891.*

*We are seeking the assistance of all readers of the WHS newsletter who may be able to assist us trace and link up with some of the families of the names listed below.*

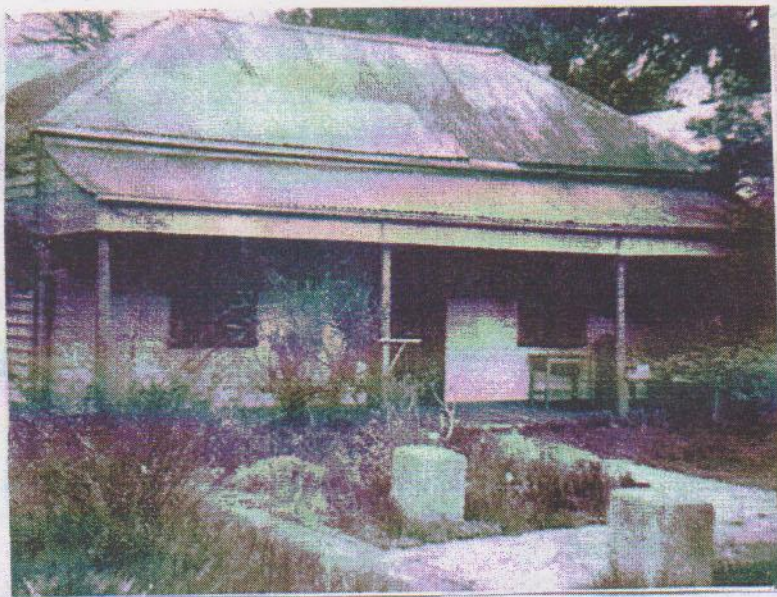
Ackland	B L	Mitcham
Baker	Jane Eliza	Forest Hill, Nunawading
Clair	L M	L L Vale, Vermont
Goldsworthy	Mary	Mitcham
Hawkings	Hannah	Canterbury Road, Blackburn
Hearne	Fleur	Mitcham
Joyner	E	Tunstall
Nally	M F	Forest Hill
Parsons	C M	Canterbury Road, Blackburn
Peacock	M	Canterbury Road, Blackburn
Peacock	M A	Canterbury Road, Mitcham
Roberts	Mary	Mitcham
Stafford	Elizabeth	Canterbury Road, Blackburn
Turner	Mary	Canterbury Road, Blackburn

*If you can assist with information about any of the people listed or, with their permission, put us in contact with any descendants that you know please contact us:*

Visit The Local History Museum at Deep Creek Rd Mitcham Wednesdays 10-2pm	Write to us at  P.O. Box 272 Mitcham 3132 or  Email: jmil@unimelb.edu.au	Telephone:  9873 4946



*George King's home, the first post office at Blackburn Creek, opened 10th January, 1876.*



#### POSTAL HISTORY – BLACKBURN

For seventeen years, the little community in the district was served by the Postmaster, Mr. George King, from his homestead on what is now Whitehorse Road, Blackburn. In 1893, James Minahan, who was the Stationmaster at Blackburn Station, became the Postmaster as well. The mail was delivered to the station where the locals would come to collect it on mail days. This practice continued for some years with various Stationmasters acting as Postmasters until 1913, when the position passed to Henry Poyntz. He had a small shop and residence adjacent to the railway crossing at what is now Blackburn Road Railway crossing, Blackburn. Henry was a Confectioner and ran "Refreshment Rooms" selling the "Best Confectionery", at the Post Office. It is fascinating that the shop and residence still stand near the same crossing, (modern version) It is now, and has been for years, "Rob's Cycle Shop", just over the line. The postal facilities moved to temporary accommodation in a fibro-cement building on the corner of Chapel Street. This temporary arrangement lasted some nine years, whilst the present brick building was constructed and opened in 1960. It is interesting that the fibro-cement building was moved to Vermont in 1961 where it still stands.

*Note: In recent times Rob's Cycle Shop and residence has been replaced by a modern two-story building.*



*The postal hand stamp for cancellation issued to Blackburn Creek, 10th January, 1876.*



Whitehorse Historical Society, Inc. acknowledges the support of  
the City of Whitehorse

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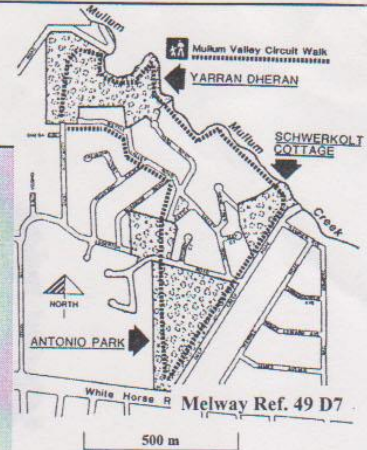
**Newsletter support group:**

Yvonne Fitzmaurice, Kaele Way  
Peter Simmenauer, Wendy Standfield.

**Internet:**

www.vicnet.net.au/~ndhsinc/

**Local History room: (03) 9873 4946**



\* (Some colour prints and negatives are less robust than B & W especially if exposed to sunlight or heat – Ed)

*Continued from page 3*

To reduce unnecessary handling of the originals and help preserve them it is initially preferable to use the computer. For example, we successfully used the computer to find the following;

- An image of an early settler for a lady who conducts tours of the Box Hill Cemetery.

- The orchard photographs used when we were gathering information for the new machine shed.

- For Barbara Gardiner, who has been making photocopies of the original councillors for each Riding to produce a display in our museum ready for '150 Years of Local Government'.

If an image is of special interest to a

researcher, usually a family historian or an author, the actual photograph or a high definition scanned image can be viewed. These are much clearer than the basic computer database image.

I really enjoy the researching part of the process especially when a photograph arrives with a story attached. This a great help and of enormous interest .It also helps that the people I work with each Wednesday are a keen, friendly and an informative group who happily and willingly share their knowledge.

Pat Richardson

**Copy deadline for WHS Newsletters is the first Saturday of the month preceding our meeting month.**

**Next deadline :  
Saturday 5th of May 2008**



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