



The Whitehorse Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Series 17 no 6 December 2009

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The Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.

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.

Contents

- ♦ *Elmore houses*1,3-4
- ♦ *Presidents report*.....2
- ♦ *Whitehorse spring festival*.....2
- ♦ *Diary dates*.....5
- ♦ *Member news*.....5
- ♦ *Can you help?*.....5
- ♦ *From the Collection*....6



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

History Week Celebrations 2009

Open Day at the Local History Room

On Wednesday 28th October members of the Wednesday Working group provided an insight into the many and varied activities associated with the operation of a Local History Room.

In celebration of History Week 2009 the WHS offered an invitation to visit the Local History Room and see what goes on each week.

Special Guests on the day (see right) included City of Whitehorse Councillors Raylene Carr and Phil Daw. The new Whitehorse Historical Society banner acquired with the support of a Royal Historical Society of Victoria Grant was on display. This banner will be a great asset to the various WHS activities in the year ahead.



The Elmore Heritage Houses of Blackburn

see pages 3 & 4



The home of Andrew & Emma Lyell built by Algernon Elmore in Laurel Grove Blackburn.

The house was named "Gulpha". The person in photo is presumed to be Emma Lyell.

NP3516b

Next meeting : Saturday
12 December 1.30pm

Special Guest Speaker
Don Horsburgh

on

A History of the Puffing Billy

***Join us for our last meeting of the year,
you are invited to dress with
a festive touch!***



From the President

Dear Members,

Our very busy year has continued with the outstanding success of our sausage sizzle at Bunnings in early October. The WHS banner, courtesy of a grant from the RHSV, arrived in time for the unofficial unveiling on the day. Our thanks go to Kaele & Bob in particular for organising the event as well as their hard work on the day. Thanks also to the members who volunteered on the day.

Our new banner had its official unveiling with the visit of Councillors Philip Daw & Raylene Carr to our celebration of History Week. On the Open day our Wednesday Working Group demonstrated and discussed the valuable skills that are gained through their participation as active members.

Following through on the volunteer theme at our last public event this year we participated in the Whitehorse Volunteer Expo at the Box Hill Town Hall on the 18th November.

The talk by a charming Ray Galloway on Ventura Buses made for an entertaining October meeting. The Whitehorse Spring Festival in October also kept us busy with creating a display and manning a stand. The Mayor Cr. Helen Harris, among others, complimented us on an eye-catching display of fans. Thank you to all who contributed to give us an active presence in another successful event for the public.

The grant received from *Building Better Museums* has seen us acquire a new style of mannequin, especially for our 1800 gowns. It is very light weight and flexible to accommodate even 18" waists. We have also purchased acrylic stands and sign holders for use in displays and especially made axle stands and props to support our 5 carts. The BBM grant will make an important contribution to the maintenance and display of our collection.

The *Eastlink* bike path is improving the profile of our historic Complex and as a promotional opportunity we provided power for the urns of the North Balwyn Rotary Club bike ride on Sunday Oct 25th.

We have received a grant of \$650 from The City of Whitehorse Parkside department to acknowledge our contribution to the maintenance of the Schwerkolt Complex.

At our December meeting I hope to have an update of latest news on our Museums Accreditation Program (MAP) Re-accreditation application.

The Committee has drawn up a list of speakers for next year to tempt you along to meetings. For this Christmas meeting please come with a Christmas touch – as low key (eg tinsel in your top pocket) or as outrageously (dressed as a Christmas tree) as you like. Our guest speaker Don Horsburgh will be presenting a talk on Puffing Billy.

I wish all our members and readers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Vicki Jones-Evans

Post script

When reviewing our 2009 activity it was interesting to list the public occasions at which we have either participated in or have contributed towards this year:

- ◇ Vermont South Library
- ◇ Nunawading Library
- ◇ Whitehorse Mayoral Dinner
- ◇ Whitehorse Heritage 50 x 50 Exhibition
- ◇ Whitehorse Heritage Walk
- ◇ Whitehorse Heritage Open Day
- ◇ RHSV History Week
- ◇ Whitehorse Spring Festival
- ◇ Whitehorse Volunteer Expo



City of Whitehorse Spring Festival

WHS members participated in the 2009 City of Whitehorse Spring Festival held on the 18th October.

The Society displayed some beautiful fans from the collection and the display was most popular with the many visitors to the stand. Pictured are WHS members Joy and Keith who assisted with enquiries and general information on the day.

*The Whitehorse Historical Society Inc
gratefully acknowledges the support of the
City of Whitehorse.*

**THE NATIONAL TRUST HOUSES OF BLACKBURN
&
THEIR BUILDER,
ALGERNON JOHN ELMORE
(1882 – 1961).**

We know of Algernon John Elmore (1882 – 1961) in his role as an inaugural member of the Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham Council from 1925 to 1930, with a term as Mayor in 1928. He was also the builder of some thirty houses in Blackburn. The surviving twelve buildings, now classified by The National Trust, are still occupied by their satisfied owners. In 1912, at 37 Laburnum Street, Elmore built his family home 'Kyalite' but this was demolished in 1987 and replaced by a block of flats.

A.J. Elmore came to Blackburn c1910 and purchased four large lots in King's Paddock, an area in central Blackburn, bounded by the railway line, Middleborough and Blackburn roads (unmade until 1925), and the Blackburn Creek to the south. Apart from a few cleared areas and cart tracks it was mainly original bushland. This was the beginning of a remarkable building enterprise in Blackburn. A year or two later he bought another large lot for a timber yard; here he set up a joinery, machine, paint and cement shops and extensive drying racks.

The Depression of the late 1920s badly affected the business, which didn't begin to recover until about 1934. With his son, Jack who became his apprentice, Elmore continued to build houses in the area until 1948.

Elmore helped pioneer the use of native hardwoods for building; two of his preferred woods for the frames were Stringybark and Messmate, and for the interior finishes he used Mountain Ash, all of which he bought unseasoned. It was sawn to size, stacked and air-dried prior to use and to minimise the effects of any further shrinkage after construction. He developed an original joint for the architraves in his houses. This became known locally as a 'Jesus joint' because he was known to remark that 'if they did shrink and come away from the head, only Jesus could fix them'!

An example of this window joint can be seen in the building facing the church on the corner of Blackburn Road and The Avenue.

Elmore preferred to finish his houses with their wide fly-screened verandahs by applying oil to both the interior panelling and the exterior woodwork which gave a more natural appearance and helped them blend into the rural landscape.

Elmore's designs are regarded as being influenced by the International Arts and Crafts movement which followed the Great War [WW1] and the then popular style known as the Californian bungalow. However, it has been suggested that Elmore's house designs may also have been influenced by the houses that he lived in as a child. His childhood home was similar to the present cottage in Mitcham that August Schwerkolt built and as both families came from Germany they built their houses in a similar way. The German style had features that were distinctive from the more usual English method of construction seen in the new colony, in particular, a difference in the placement of the chimneys.

Algernon John Elmore, born 1882, was the sixth child of Samuel Marsden Knight, (aka Frederick Elmore) and Louisa Röhr, and some background to the variation in family name is provided below.

It appears that Algernon had only two years of formal schooling and at the age of thirteen was apprenticed to the local undertaker-cum-carpenter at Penshurst in the Western District of Victoria. Then followed two years as an 'improver' in Western Australia.

The Electoral Roll of 1906 shows that an A J Elmore resided in the Swan District of Perth. Elmore is also credited with studying at the Workingmen's College in Melbourne – now RMIT.

There followed a period of employment as a foreman carpenter under Otto Yuncken, for the building firm of Clements Langford.
cont..../

Elmore was married in 1913, to Miss Fanny Louisa Hunter (1874 – 1946). They had one son, Jack born in 1914, and when old enough Jack joined his father in his Blackburn business. In 1941 Jack Elmore married a girl from Hartwell.

Algernon John Elmore died aged 79 in 1961 at Croydon, and was cremated at the Springvale Necropolis where his ashes were scattered in the garden near those of his wife.



One of the Elmore houses of Blackburn NP 3156d

The Marsden — Elmore connection: a brief history

Elmore's early history is worthy of comment as his parents were immigrants who had suffered many personal hardships..

His mother, Louisa Röhr was born in Australia in 1851, the third child of Johanna Dorothea and Johann Samuel Röhr. In 1849 her family migrated to Geelong, Victoria from Germany. Following a family tragedy they joined Frederick Krumnow, a tailor, teacher, farmer and self-styled pastor, who ten years earlier had led a group of 125 Prussian dissenters, mostly from Posen to South Australia.

After some difficulties in South Australia Krumnow took his followers in 1852 to a new settlement near Penshurst, Victoria which he called 'Herrnhut'. Here he bought 1584 acres of land in his own name using the funds his followers had supplied. Johann Röhr's contribution was £300.

Pastor Krumnow controlled the group for twenty-eight years until his death in 1880 when Frederick and Louisa Elmore took charge. It wasn't until 1889 that legal matters were sorted out and the commune disbanded. During Krumnow's tenure he officiated at all the commune births and marriages, but none were registered and it wasn't until many years later that Algernon's parents were legally married in Melbourne.

Algernon Elmore's father, was born one Samuel Marsden Knight, in Hull in 1814. A relatively well educated man in 1835 he arrived in Sydney and a month later went to New Zealand to help his uncle, the Rev. Samuel Marsden, aka "the flogging parson" at his mission.

In 1838 Knight returned to Australia and went to Portland where he worked as a shearer and part time journalist using the nom-de-plume of Mr *Frederick Elmore*. During this time he met and married his first wife who died in 1842. He remarried in 1868 and three children were born. His wife and children went to England to visit her family but on the return voyage she died and was buried at sea. The three children were then left to be raised by his wife's relatives.

Knight's distress was so great he took to the road using his journalist's non-de-plume of Frederick Elmore. Under this name he came to 'Herrnhut' where he worked as a school-teacher in the commune. It was there in 1872 that he fell in love with one of his pupils, Louisa Röhr who was twenty-two years of age, Knight aka Elmore was fifty-seven. A marriage ceremony may have been performed by Pastor Krumnow, but if so it was never officially registered.

It wasn't until 1881 when they were in Melbourne on business that they were legally married under his correct name of Samuel Marsden Knight. However, they continued to be called Mr and Mrs Elmore when Samuel died in 1890, Louisa signed the death certificate as Mrs Knight, the only time it is known that she used her legal name.

Reference Sources:.

- 'Craftsman Bungalows in Australia, by A. Taylor
- 'The Californian Bungalow in Australia' extract by Graeme Butler
- *Map of Walks*, by Ken Green.
- 'Herrnhut, Australia's First Utopian Commune' by William J Metcalf & Elizabeth Huf; Melb Uni. Press 2002.
- BDM and Electoral records at the LDS Blackburn Family History Centre
- Springvale Necropolis records.

Yvonne Fitzmaurice.

Whitehorse Historical Society Dates for your Diary

2010 Meetings

Meetings of the Whitehorse Historical Society will be held throughout 2010 as follows:-

Saturday February 13th

Saturday April 10th

Saturday June 12th

Saturday August 14th (AGM)

Saturday October 9th

Saturday December 11th

Meetings commence at 1-30pm and are held at the Local History Room
Schwerkolt Cottage & Museum Complex

WORKING BEES—2010

Please note these 2010 dates and make some time to join in with this important activity.

Time:- 9-30am-12 noon
Morning Tea provided

Saturday 13th March
Saturday 8th May
Saturday 11th September
Saturday 12th November.

Members in action !



Cataloguing Statistics

Photographs	-	3624
Artefacts	-	4230
Documents	-	5909

Visitation and usage statistics May – October 2009

Cottage & Museum visitors	-	1353
Excluding group bookings		
Research queries	-	30
Web Site hits	-	4361

Can You Help? The Committee has received the following request

WHITEHORSE FRIENDS OF RECONCILIATION

are looking for people who can contribute either oral histories by aboriginal people or memories of aboriginal people they knew while growing up in the area now covered by the City of Whitehorse.

If you or anyone you know can help please phone
Phil Johnson on 9898 3122.

Member news

The WHS extends a warm welcome to our new members:

Cr Raylene Carr, Cr Philip Daw and Leonie Martinson.

We hope they will enjoy their time with our Historical Society

Best wishes to Barbara Gardiner.

WHS Members were saddened to hear that our active and enthusiastic Committee member Barbara Gardiner, had suffered a bad fall and has sustained a fractured wrist.

Barbara will be out of action for a little while and we all wish her a very speedy recovery and look forward to her return to normal activities in time for the festive season.

REMINDER

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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Newsletter

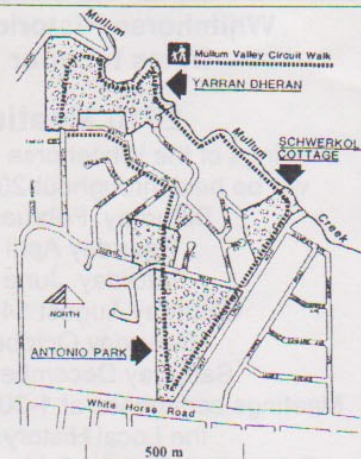
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Copy deadline for Whitehorse Historical Society January-February Newsletter
Next deadline : 1st week of December 2009

From the Collection



At left and below another lovely doll from the Collection sitting and prone possibly a Christmas or birthday gift and no doubt much loved .WHS NA 2878



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