



# The Whitehorse Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Series 18 no 3 – June 2010

ABN 44 352 041 634 Inc A0012235J

## 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.

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

## Remembering

The Whitehorse Historical Society , Display Sub Committee members have mounted a detailed display in the Museum in memory of those from our community who served in both World Wars.



The collection of items will be on display until August.  
The Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum is open



### Next meeting : Saturday 12th June

Special General Meeting commencing 1-30 pm  
Speaker: Richard Carter From Horse shoes to High Heels  
Ringwood Shopping Centre & Eastland's 1858-2008

## From the President - Vicki Jones Evans

Dear Members,

In May The Whitehorse Leader featured photos and articles on the booklet that the WHS is planning to launch soon. The summary of the letters of Alwyn Till 1942-44 has been written by Yvonne Fitzmaurice. Alwyn was a well known Mitcham young man who lost his life in WW2 serving as a Pathfinder while on secondment with the RAF.

His letters home came into our collection three years ago and as we considered them very valuable we donated them to the State Library of Victoria. Yvonne was struck with the humour, wit and descriptions of daily life in the services in the letter. We hope to have them in print very soon.

In memory of those who served in WW1 and WW2 from our municipality we have a new display in the museum.

We are continuing to research for our displays to contribute to The City of Whitehorse Heritage Week on the theme "Celebrating Our Industrial Heritage". Remember our Open Day is on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September – all help from members is welcome.

Our speaker at our April meeting was Pam Chambers on the the History of Australian Red Cross Blackburn Unit. Pam entertained us with the story of the Blackburn unit from its start and through the changes over the years.

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May we had our last working bee before the winter set in. This is very necessary work for our museum accreditation and we welcome all help. Thanks to Barbara & Bob Gardiner, Yvonne Fitzmaurice, June Ventouras, Joy and Kaele for their assistance on the day.

On Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May we hosted a meeting of the Maxus In Magic database users. Our photographs, documents and artefacts details are stored on the computer using this program. We welcomed members of other Historical societies and museums at this meeting.

At our next meeting our speaker will be Richard Carter on From Horse Shoes to High Heels on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June at 1.30. All members and friends are welcome – we do not charge an entrance fee and we have afternoon tea to follow.

Vicki Jones-Evans

## Our April Meeting

Pam Chambers, President of the Australian Red Cross Blackburn Unit was the Guest Speaker at the 10th April Special General Meeting. Pam gave an informative and entertaining profile of the Units 35 year history, including profiles of the work of the Red Cross volunteers. Amongst the traditional Red Cross activities of Blood Bank support, Emergency relief and Fundraising the Blackburn Red Cross Unit provides catering for the Whitehorse City Council Citizenship Ceremonies and provides catering and refreshment's for 230 people.



The Blackburn Red Cross Unit is holding a Fundraising Morning Tea on Thursday 3rd June at the Whitehorse Civic Centre. Special Guest Speaker will be Mrs Jan de Kretser, wife of the Governor of Victoria David De Kretser AO .

To reserve a place at this event contact Kaele Way on 9877 1901

The Morning Tea commences at 10-30am and concludes t 11-30am. Cost is \$20per person .

## HOME PHOTOGRAPHY AND CAMERAS

Early cameras used a wet plate collodion process, where glass or metal plates were coated with a light sensitive solution. After the exposure was made, the image was "fixed" with a sodium thiosulphate solution. These cameras were bulky and heavy, and mostly used in studios, although travelling photographers made a living by taking their equipment around the country, processing the photographs taken in darkrooms set up in their horse-drawn carts and wagons.



Having one's photograph taken could be quite an ordeal, as the slow speed of the emulsion meant that the sitter had to stay still for some time, otherwise the photograph would be blurred. Braces were often provided to keep the subjects' heads still, so no wonder the people looked stiff and uncomfortable!

It was not until 1884 that George Eastman developed the technology of film to replace the less portable glass plate technology. Owners of early Kodak box roll-film cameras returned their cameras to the factory, where the exposed film was removed, processed and the prints and camera were returned with new film to the owner. As the use of cameras became more widespread, processing laboratories met the growing demand, and film on reels became available through retail outlets.

While wet-plate technology continued to be used for specialist applications, mass production of light, small cameras meant that families could adopt them, using them for family and tourist shots.



The twentieth century saw rapid improvement in lens design, with wider availability of variable aperture and shutter speeds, focussing and higher speed film, enabling photographs to be taken under a wider range of light conditions and speeds. Action shots of sports and other moving subjects were now possible without blurring and with less distortion. People were able to buy relatively inexpensive cameras which were capable of taking both portrait and landscape subjects, although most sales were of budget cameras, such as Kodak's Box Brownie. This camera had a small reflex viewfinder mounted on top of the camera, no aperture or focussing controls and just a simple shutter.

To fit in a pocket, the earlier developed bellows arrangement was used in the production of folding cameras. These usually had more controls but were still affordable.

Rangefinder cameras with two viewfinders were developed to make focussing easier, and film development permitted the use of smaller format film. 110 size was developed by Kodak in 1972, and this, together with 126 enabled very small cameras. However, these sizes were quickly superseded by 35 mm which were widely used in rangefinder and single lens reflex cameras. Today, popular film cameras have been almost entirely superseded by digital technology.

The Society has a small collection of cameras which have been donated by members.

It includes some classic and interesting models, such as:

- Kodak No.2 Brownie Box Model F. Variable aperture, 120 film (1924-1933)
- Eastman Kodak BT 8048 film pack folding (Promoette) (1910-1915?)
- Kodak No.2 folding Autographic Brownie, 120 film (1915-1926)  
(Has a steel inscribing pin for writing details on film)
- Kodak Six-20 Brownie folding with Anaston lens, 620 film (1940s) (*pictured, top*)
- Agfa folding w. Bilinar lens 127 film? (1939)
- Superfex 127 film. French made Czech simple camera (1942-?)
- Kodak "Retina" 1A bellows, 135 film (1951-1954)
- Agfa "Clack" 120 film. (1954-1965) (Strong German competitor the Box Brownie) (*pictured right*)
- Canon "Canonet" rangefinder, 135 film (1961)
- Kodak Instamatic 104, 126 film (1965-1968) (*pictured*)
- Agfa X-126 Autostar 126 cartridge film (1970s-?)
- Polaroid EE44 self-developing camera ((c.1975)
- Kodak Tele-Ektra 110 cartridge film camera (1978-1981)



to





## A young man's war dispatches form the basis of a new book

Yvonne Fitzmaurice has written a book, *War Letters*, based on the letters of a young Mitcham man who served as a bomber navigator in Europe in World War II.

Old letters from a World War II hero have been preserved to form a permanent and inspirational Anzac tale.

The compelling true story of a young Mitcham man who travelled to Europe to fight for his country has been retold in Yvonne Fitzmaurice's book *War Letters*.

"Alwyn Terence Till was a soldier who was sending letters back home to his family while he was at war," Fitzmaurice said. As a 20-year-old, Till volunteered for the RAAF in 1942 and headed into battle six months later. He served as a navigator in Lancaster bombers in Europe.

Filled with heartache, humour and hope, the letters describe Till's experiences as a soldier.

"Curiosity initially caused me to begin reading the Till letters but the more I read them the more I laughed and laughed," Fitzmaurice said.

"Till described in often humorous detail his RAAF training, his ambition to do well, the countryside and his impressions about people he met."

Fitzmaurice said there was a change in Till's style of writing as he progressed from being a carefree young man to one who faced the harsh realities of war.

Till was only 23 when, during a raid targeted at Russelsheim, his aircraft was shot down.

"He was one of a seven-member crew and the only survivor who parachuted safely," Fitzmaurice said. After walking almost 60km towards the coast, Till was recognised and given shelter by a member of the Belgian Maquis.

But eight days after bailing out, he was killed by an enemy sniper.

Till's name is on his family's gravestone at the Box Hill Cemetery. Fitzmaurice's book is available at the Schwerkolt Cottage Museum in Mitcham.

*Editor's note This article appeared in the Whitehorse Leader Newspaper on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010 . The WHS Committee gratefully acknowledges the Leader Newspaper in reprinting this item .*

## Whitehorse Historical Society Dates for your Diary

Meetings are held at the Local History Room  
Schwerkolt Cottage & Museum Complex

**Saturday 12th June 1.30pm**

### Special General Meeting

Speaker: Richard Carter  
From Horse Shoes to High Heels  
Ringwood Shopping Centre & Eastland's 1858-2008

**Saturday 14th August 1.30pm**

### Annual General Meeting

45h Birthday Celebration Special Guest  
City of Whitehorse Mayor Cr Bill Pemberton

**Saturday 11th September**

**Working Bee** Please come along and lend a hand.

This is an important working bee prior to our Open Day.



**Sunday 12th September**

Heritage Open Day at Schwerkolt Cottage and  
Museum Complex 12 noon-5pm

**Sunday 3rd October– Bunning's Nunawading 8-30am-5pm**

Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser at Bunning's Store Nunawading  
Helper's needed. Contact Kaele on 9877 1901 8-30am-5pm

**Saturday October 1-30pm**

### Special General Meeting

Speaker to be advised

**Sunday 24th October**

City of Whitehorse Spring Festival  
Civic Centre Nunawading

**Saturday 13th November**

**Working Bee** Please join us for the morning.

Delicious Morning Tea provided



**Saturday 11th December 1-30pm**

### Special General Meeting

Speaker: Ian Moodie Parkside City of Whitehorse  
Christmas Meeting & Celebration

## Visitors to the Local History Room

In April the WHS welcomed a visit from

Welcome Home to Ted Arrowsmith

## New Members

Welcome to our new members.

Judy Tin Rosanna  
Andrew Gibson Blackburn



## 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

## Cataloguing Statistics

Photographs - XXXX  
Artefacts - XXXX  
Documents - XXXX  
Visitors to Museum April-May

## WHS Committee Contacts

**President:** Vicki Jones-Evans  
9873 3383 - [vicki@xi.com.au](mailto:vicki@xi.com.au)

**Vice. President:** Valerie Marshall  
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**Secretary:** Kaele Way AM JP  
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**Treasurer:** Bob Gardiner 9874 6592  
[bobnbarb@melbpc.org.au](mailto:bobnbarb@melbpc.org.au)

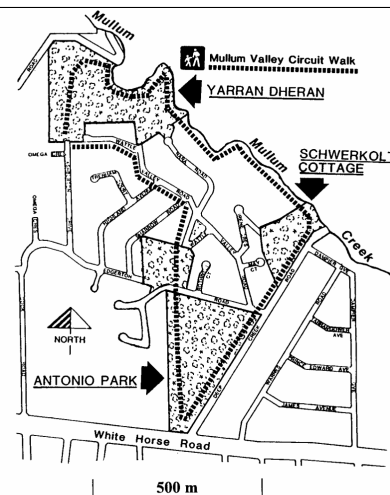
**Local History Room: (03) 9873 4946**

## Newsletter support group:

**Editor:** Kaele Way AM JP  
Yvonne Fitzmaurice  
Wendy Standfield  
Peter Simmenauer

**WHS internet site:**  
[www.vicnet.net.au/~ndhsinc/](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~ndhsinc/)  
**Email:** [whitehistory@hotmail.com](mailto:whitehistory@hotmail.com)

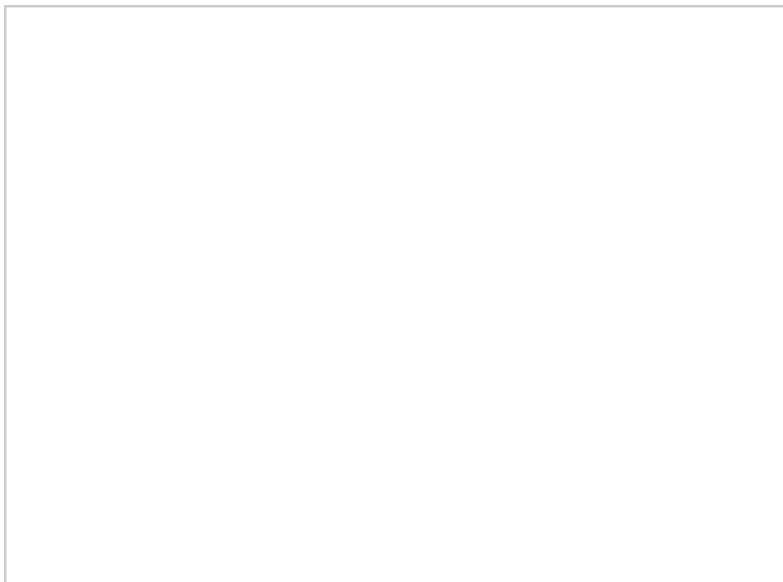
**Postal Address:**  
P.O.Box 272  
MITCHAM Vic 3132



Melway Ref. 49 D7

**Copy deadline for WHS Newsletters first Saturday of the month preceding the meeting month.  
Next deadline :**

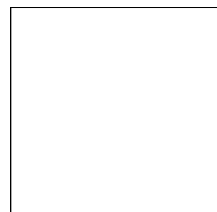
## From the Collection



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