

The Whitehorse Historical Society NEWSLETTER

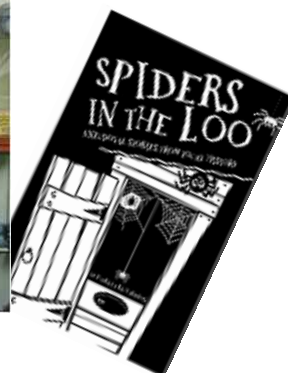
Series 19 no 3 - May - June 2011

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Spiders in the Loo

Pat Richardson's second book *Spiders in the Loo* will be launched at our June meeting. The idea to put the book together came from members of the society. Pat has selected 16 stories about residents from the Whitehorse area, many of them migrants, and included her own family history.

As you read through the book you notice recurring themes of life in the early 20th century in the Whitehorse area. Life was certainly tougher with no water, gas or electricity and no modern conveniences such as the telephone. Historic events such as the Depression and World War II tested the strength of the people in these tales. It's hard to imagine bushfires in the area now, but they also feature in several of the stories.



The stories provide a snapshot of a time gone by. The general store, local school and church were the hub of the community. The importance of the family doctor is evident in these tales and some of the medical treatments will raise eyebrows, as will the medicos who were real characters.

The history of the Deaf & Dumb Society in Blackburn is a very interesting story, as is Pat's own story about her grandmother.

Martha was a pioneer of the area whose life is fascinating, though very sad at times. This edition of our newsletter includes a selection of excerpts from the book.

Spiders in the Loo will be available for purchase from the Museum for \$10.00.



Arthur Edwards and Martha Course - c. 1899

Whitehorse Historical Society Inc. gratefully acknowledges funding under the Victoria 175 History Grants Program for making this project possible.



Next meeting: Saturday 11th June 2011 at 1.30 pm

Speaker: Graeme Plaw from the Hand Tools Society

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From the President - Vicki Jones Evans

Dear Members

At the beginning of May Bob Gardiner and I were invited to inspect the building site of the museum extension with Melissa Hayes and Eddie Law (CofW). Although at that stage there were no internal walls we were very impressed with the size of the space. The storage area and laundry display area are at the same level of finishing but will look great when finished. Eddie Law as Project Manager has done a very good job and has been very quick to assist us with any query or suggestion. Melissa Hayes, Leader of Cultural Facilities & Programs was also impressed and made some suggestions that were very considerate of our needs. The new finishing date was given as the end of May so I hope that when you come to our June meeting you will be able to see for yourselves.

Gerry Robinson gave us a very interesting and entertaining talk on Governors of Victoria and Mitcham street names. Gerry is a noted historian and publisher of several local history books and has kindly agreed to launch Patricia Richardson's book. At the recent AOEHS Conference an announcement of the title of Pat's book "Spiders in the Loo" drew a good laugh so I think Pat has chosen a good title.

We will also welcome Graeme Plaw as our guest meeting speaker to speak on hand tools and I am sure he will add to the occasion. It should be an excellent meeting with so much to see and hear.

Peter Simmenauer is continuing as our Acting Secretary until the AGM in August as Kaele Way is continuing her treatment. At present Peter and I share the Secretary's duties. Neither Peter nor I shall be standing for Secretary at the AGM. I, having served 3 consecutive terms as President, am unable to stand for President. The present Committee comprises members who have either served in the Executive positions in the past and/or do not wish to in the future. We are an older membership so for the Society to continue we need some people with energy to keep us going. Please encourage any younger and/or energetic people (neighbours/family/friends) particularly those with business or organisational experience to get involved – and as soon as possible.

The working bee in May was somewhat depleted of workers with the AOEHS Conference but Bob Gardiner oversaw a small but dedicated team who cleaned, dusted and polished.

We have had notice from the City Of Whitehorse that our suggestion of a name for the laneway in Blackburn has been adopted. Brickworks Lane runs parallel between Alfred and Cottage Streets and was previously unnamed. Our suggestion was based on the idea to keep alive the history of the brick-works that once was vital to the area.

Vicki Jones-Evans

April Meeting

The guest speaker for the April meeting Gerry Robinson, ex Vice Principal Ringwood Secondary School, Member Ringwood Historical Society, and Ringwood Garden Club. Gerry kept us fascinated in his topic "Streets named after Governor and Governor-Generals".

He distributed printed sheets that allowed us to follow his discussion on each of the Governors and follow their histories. Governor Hopetoun, who became Governor of Victoria at only twenty-nine in 1889. A wealthy man, "ostentatiously imperious", was later appointed as our first Governor-General of Australia, but was not popular due to an appointment know as "Hopetoun's Blunder". He nominated an anti-federation politician William Lyne as our first Prime Minister. He later resigned as leading Federalists refused to work with him, so Edmund Barton became our Prime Minister, a natural leader.

Valerie Marshall

Another win for Bob

On the 2nd of April Bob Gardiner competed at the Victorian Masters Athletics Championships held at Doncaster.



Bob competed in two walks and set new M75 Australian Records, going over 95% age graded. Well done Bob!

I came to Australia as a £5 Pom

Extract from an interview with Anne Seeney in 2007

We made an appointment to see an estate agent at Box Hill. When we got there the girl at the desk, "Sorry. It's such a nice day, he went fishing instead." My Dad jumped up and down saying that no English business would survive if people took that attitude to appointments, and all the girl said was "But you're not in England now, are you?" Eventually we found a new weatherboard house in Hastings Avenue, off Middleborough Road, South Blackburn.

During that first summer we realised how incredibly hot it could be. Both my parents love the heat but anything over 90°F made me throw up. Dad had been offered a job as a manager of a new men's hairdresser at Foy and Gibson's. When we got there we discovered that the salon had not yet been built, and they gave him a job instead in the hardware department. This proved to be his forte and he never cut hair professionally again.

Spiders in the Loo, Page 42

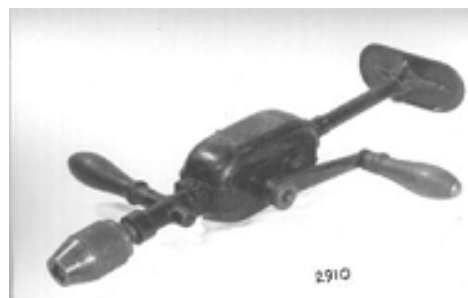
Childhood memories of my sister Nancy

From a letter by Walter Grundy in 1986

By now I had one brother, Albert, and two sisters, Marie and Bertha. There had been some problems in previous years. Dad had dropped Albie over his shoulder and he had landed on his head. This injury may have been the cause of problems later in his life. I had tipped over in my high chair and was taken to the Alfred Hospital with a suspected injury to my shoulder and ankle. My parents were told that I had to have an operation for a rupture, but when my Dad heard this he decided that I was to come home. He took his revolver, Mum, and two friends, Mr and Mrs Hitman, and came to the hospital to demand my release. The doctor told Dad that he would have to sign for my release, which he did, and I was never operated on. Later on I suffered with pneumonia, and the treatment then was to be put in a mustard bath. Following that I had to wear a cotton wool vest around my chest whenever I had a bad cold.

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From the Collection



NA2910 Breast Drill c1940s



NA1989 Lawn Sprinkler 1920s



NA2284 Farrier's Hammer c1920s

WORKING BEES - 2011

Please make a diary note and join us on the day

July - None (too cold!)

September 10th - Saturday

November 12th - Saturday

Working Bees commence at 9.30 am and finish around 12 noon with a great morning tea.

Please come and help even if you can only offer an hour of your time.

* Please note dates in last issue were incorrect



When Antonio Park Was Home

Memories from Robin Harris in 2005

In 1951, Betty, Dennis and Mark Coleclough rented the single-roomed building on property owned by the Antonio brothers. It would become known to my family as 'The Shack'. The official address of 'The Shack' was 627 Whitehorse Road Mitcham and it had previously been rented by a family named Burgess. It was located about forty metres from the Whitehorse Road side of the property and about a hundred metres in from Deep Creek Road. Conditions were very primitive. There was no running water, and an outback style 'dunny' was located some distance from the house along a dirt path. This same track was a popular place for large brown snakes to coil up and sun themselves. Eventually, a Volkswagen car case was fixed to the rear of the shack as a sleep-out, and some years later a new 'dunny' was located nearer to the house. Even then, night-time visits on wet or windy nights were at best unpleasant, and at worst, quite frightening.

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Association Of Eastern Historical Societies Conference - 45th Anniversary

On Saturday 14th May, Lyn Ford (our Association of Eastern Historical Societies Representative), Valda Arrowsmith, Rachael Cottle, Barbara Gardiner, June Ventouras and I attended the Annual Conference. This year it was hosted by Ringwood Historical Society and held for the first time at the Karralyka Centre in Ringwood. This was a wonderful venue – very comfortable and with excellent service. We were treated to delicious morning and afternoon tea and lunch.

The program started with a welcome Glen Turnbull (President) and the cutting of the 45th Anniversary cake. The first presentation was from a representative of the Find My Past on-line genealogy site with access to comprehensive records. The second part of the presentation was a new on-line site, Unlock The Past, set up for genealogy and history societies (no fees) which Rachael is going to use to further our profile.

After our morning tea (with warmed muffins) Jim Connor, President of the Eltham & District Historical Society spoke on the history of mud-brick building in their area, Nillumbik Shire. This interesting talk included power point display and a very messy showing of an actual mud brick from Jim's house. It was a 25 year old much weathered brick that was very heavy and crumbling around the edges.

The next presentation before lunch was from Russ Haines, President of Ringwood & District Historical Society. Russ spoke on Murder, Death and a Ghost in Ringwood. This revealed the number of interesting cases to be found in police records, coroner's reports and word of mouth history. The cool rooms of Hotels, in the early days, were the place that bodies were stored until official viewing. The coronial inquests were also held there. The Ghost was in one of rooms in the collectables/antiques shop in East Ringwood next to the railway station. The last owner of the shop had it exorcised.

After a delicious lunch (vegetarian rolls, pasta, cheese & fruit) we had an excellent presentation by noted historian Alan Gregory on the life and times of Bill Woodfull, one of the greatest Australian cricketer of the 1920s and 1930s. Bill Woodfull's cricket record was outstanding and he was a man of great integrity. Alan's book on Bill Woodfull is available from Melbourne High School Old Boys' Association as Bill Woodfull was a Principal of the school after his cricket career.

After afternoon tea (scones and anniversary cake) our topic was artistic. Sue Thompson, Lilydale & District Historical Society spoke about Dame Nellie Melba. Sue spoke of Dame Nellie's artistic career and her personal life. Her most important contributions with which she was honoured with two citations, were her work raising funds for Belgium relief work and assisting young women to singing careers, which lasts to the current day.

Our thanks go to the Committees of the Ringwood Historical Society and the AOEHS for organising such a great day.

Vicki Jones-Evans



Pills and Potions

John Sharwood in 1992

After I left school I began an apprenticeship with Keith Williams who had pharmacies in Box Hill and Ringwood. I worked in both at some time or another. My dates are a little mixed up here but before I was married I did some relieving work for Mr Wellington, who owned the Mitcham Pharmacy.

In 1956 I was fortunate enough to get a position at Ogg & Co in Collins Street. Later that year I was in Mitcham talking to Mr Wellington, and he mentioned that he would be prepared to sell us the Mitcham Pharmacy, and in November 1957, we took the business over.



Mitcham had a history of the medical profession which went right back to the days when Stanley Cochrane built his house in Mitcham Road. He was a very interesting man! People swore by him! Before he got a motor car he used to do his house calls on a bicycle. Recently I was talking to an elderly local lady and she said that when one of her children was sick she sent for Dr Cochrane. He knocked on the door, went straight across the hall into the living room, sat down at the piano and started to play. He stopped to ask what the trouble was, and then said, "Don't worry about that", and then he went back to playing the piano for a further fifteen minutes. He then said, "Just give him an aspirin and he'll be right", and he left, leaving the woman very frustrated.

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Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.

Dates for your Diary

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

Saturday 11th June 1.30 pm

General Meeting

Speaker Graeme Plaw from the Hand Tools Society
Book launch by Gerry Robinson at 3.00 pm

Saturday 16th July

Visit to Bundoora Homestead Art Centre

Leave 11.30 am for lunch at café then tour of home
Ring Valda 9874 1414 if interested in shared transport

Saturday 13th August 1.30 pm

Annual General Meeting

Speaker Mayor Cr. Ben Stennett

Saturday 8th October 1.30 pm

General Meeting

Speaker Alan Bunton - Brockhoff Biscuit Company

Saturday 10th December 1.30 pm

General Meeting

Eric Panther - Anecdotes

* Please note some information in last issue was incorrect

Cataloguing Statistics

Photographs	-	3840
Artefacts	-	4365
Documents	-	6257
Visitors to Museum Mar/Apr	-	367

Recent Donations

An interesting group of ceramic trade catalogues was recently donated to the Society by Robin Stutchbury. Including makers such as Mintons, Burmantofts, Carter & Poole, Richards and Tichelaar, which were used as references by the Australian Tesselated Tile Co.

There is also a copy of "Australia's Leading Industries", a 1923 trade export promotion book full of extremely interesting advertisements for Australian products.

And the star item: a Letter Book of E. E. Walker, Manager of the Australian Tesselated Tile Co., containing copies of his commercial correspondence 1889-1900.

Thanks Robin for rescuing these items and donating them to the Society's collection, where they are significant additions to our research resources.

Peter Simmenauer

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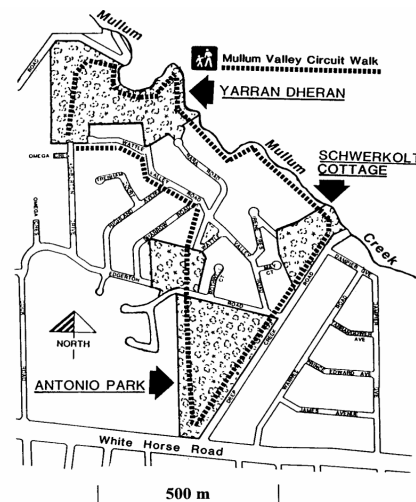
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Copy deadline for next WHS Newsletter: Wednesday 29th June 2011 (earlier due to AGM)



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.

POD

Place of Deposit
Accredited by the
PRO Victoria

CITY OF



WHITEHORSE

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



REMEMBER

Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.
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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