



Back to the future

On Wednesday, the 29th of October I arrived to see a phalanx of kids injecting a welcome level of energy to the museum surrounds. Dressed in period costume (as were the teachers) Grade 2 from Laburnum Primary School were paying us a visit.

Having arrived at 9.30 they split into groups and commenced their tour of the various parts of the complex; whilst one group would be looking at the museum, another

would be taken over the cottage and its out buildings, and yet another would be having a turn playing as children would have 100 years ago, with skipping ropes, quoits, hoops etc. (and enjoying themselves immensely – some things don't change that much!).

But what was the kids favourite part? According to the teachers it was (who would have thought it) the museum itself. Ah, the lure of ancient technology!

Chris Gray



PICTURES:
 (Left) Students enjoy "classic" games outside the museum
 (Above) a group are shown an exhibit in the museum

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Dear Members

Our October celebration of the 50th anniversary of the acquisition by Council of Schwerkolt Cottage was a wonderful day. The weather was perfect for the plaque unveiling and tree-planting ceremony in the Cottage garden. Rosalie Whalen and the Mayor, Cr Sharon Ellis carried out their unveiling and planting with aplomb before an audience of guests: namely, Janet and Peter Galley from Box Hill Historical Society, Graham Hansen from Knox Historical Society, Tom O'Meara, President of the AOEHS, and Dawn Cantwell from the Upper Yarra Historical Society and Councillors, Philip Daw and Ben Stennet.

Barbara Rogalski entertained us with a talk on family, and in particular her dad, and was followed by Rosalie Whalen, who brought her family, the Schwerkolts – especially Mary Schwerkolt – to life in her talk concerning the history of the Cottage until Mary sold it to the Council in 1964.

We continued our enjoyment of the day with afternoon tea in the Local History Room, cutting an anniversary cake featuring an edible image of the Cottage. Sherryn of Ace Cakes, daughter of Maurie, one of our Wednesday volunteers, supplied this delicious buttercake with the intriguing image.

We attended the Whitehorse Spring Festival on Sunday, 19 October, in our usual position in the foyer of the Civic Centre. The day went very well and we featured some “old technology” – a dial telephone, a “brick” mobile phone, a portable record player and a 1950s cap-style hair dryer.

On Wednesday, 19 November, we welcomed the panel from the Museum Accreditation Program for assessment as part of our 2014 reaccreditation. Liz Marsden and Rosemary Hanscombe, MAP Managers, were assisted by Warren from their Advisory group. We toured the Complex and they were very impressed with our facilities and we await their report.

It was very disappointing to hear that the old property in Boronia Road, known both as Weston Favell and Greenways, was burnt down recently – just two weeks after the land was



The Mayor and Rosalie cut the cake

rezoned. The property was part of the Nethercote orchard and had declined to a very poor condition while under the management of Vic Roads. Members may remember Tim Shambrook's article in a recent newsletter where he established it was Vermont's oldest house. Mr Goodwin originally owned the land and the house was built c1877.

The latest figures from Council indicate that there has been a 17% increase in the visitors to the Complex this year which is very good news. Perhaps all the articles in the Whitehorse News this year has boosted our numbers.

Finally, for our Pop-up History meeting in December, please do not forget to bring along an item that means something to you – or even one that you would like to identify. See you then.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday season.

Vicki Jones Evans

Your Committee in Action

- A Launch Date has been confirmed for the History of the Society booklet currently under preparation.
- Purchase of a second camera is approved, to be used exclusively for the recording of artefacts.
- Computer Network Access Storage for data has recently been installed.
- The City of Whitehorse Heritage Festival 2015 dates have been decided.

October Meeting Report



On Saturday, 11 October, our meeting celebrated a singular event: 50 years since the purchase by the Council of Schwerkolt Cottage in March 1964. The meeting was attended by Mayor Sharon Ellis and a number of Whitehorse councillors, who participated in the ceremony at which a commemorative tree was planted and a plaque recording the occasion was unveiled. At the conclusion of the tree-planting all present retired to the Local History Room, where a special cake – decorated with a magnificent picture of the Cottage – was cut with ceremony and consumed with relish.



PICTURES
Top: Rosalie Whalen and Mayor Sharon Ellis plant the commemorative tree
Above: The Mayor and Rosalie unveil the plaque
Below left: Barbara Rogalski shows pictures illustrating her talk



The speakers on this special occasion were Rosalie Whalen (great granddaughter of Wilhemina Schwerkolt), whose address is reproduced elsewhere in this newsletter, and Barbara Rogalski, whose paintings of the Cottage adorn our walls and feature in the cards for sale in the Museum.

Barbara presented an animated and interesting talk about her family – how her grandparents Anne and William came to Australia from Wales

the speakers

in 1911, settling in Daylesford and raising eight children. She illustrated her talk with photographs, so that her audience was able visualise the people and situations she described.

She told of how her parents met, of her father's involvement in World War II and his later operation of a catering business – doing a lot of catering for Prahran City Council, which led to his catering at the official opening of Schwerkolt Cottage on October 17, 1965.

Chris Gray

Rosalie remembers . . .



On the 17th of October 1965, 49 years ago, Schwerkolt Cottage was officially opened by Sir Rohan Delacombe, having been purchased by the Nunawading Council in March the previous year.

It was a shame that my father, who had been born in the Cottage, died five months after the purchase in 1964, so failed to see the building restored. He had spent the last 18 years of his life trying to get a title to the property for his aunt, who lived in America, but at least he died in the knowledge that it was to be preserved rather than demolished.

From the time of purchase to Opening Day there was only a period of 18 months for the Cottage to be restored, the area around it to be drained, the grounds landscaped and a pioneer cottage garden replicated by a devoted group of volunteers.

It must have been a hive of industry, and our family were so grateful for the interest shown by the council and the local people. As a family, we were not involved at all and it was with much admiration of their achievement that we viewed it on Opening Day.

I was 25 at the time and as I recall, it was a fine day and except for my mother who was on a trip overseas, we had all been invited and were in attendance. I felt so much pride to see my father's 18 years of struggle come to fruition. The Cottage had been furnished with donated items and the pioneer garden was a delight.

There was much excitement – along with apprehension, because my niece, Jane Schwerkolt, who had just turned two, was to present a posy of wild flowers to Lady Delacombe. Jane's mother had dressed her in a lovely new pink frock for the occasion, but our concern was whether she would actually hand over the posy or

would Lady Delacombe be expected to catch it! However, our apprehension turned to disappointment when we learned that Lady Delacombe was not well enough to attend.

Back in the first half of the 1900s there was a timber farmhouse occupied first by August Schwerkolt's son Louis and then by his grandson Ern and his family. Ern and my father were first cousins, both grandsons of August, who built the Cottage.

When I was a child, once a month on a Sunday we would all go to visit them and have lunch and dinner together, and we have lovely childhood memories of exploring the creek, the hillsides and the quarry, of picking wild flowers and generally getting into mischief with their son Arthur, who was four years older than me and who still lives in Ringwood. I can still remember the potatoes cooked in a bonfire there.

During this time Schwerkolt Cottage was in good repair and was rented to people who enjoyed living there and took good care of the property; from time to time we would visit them.

Mike Bates and his wife were tenants in the mid-fifties and Mike enjoyed writing poetry about the Old Stone House and sending it to my father. After they died, one of their distant relatives rented it whose family included mother, father and 11 children, but they could not afford to pay rent and the cottage ended up in a sorry state, resulting in a demolition order being put on it on the 7th of November 1960. Of course, rates etcetera still had to be paid without any rental income. The family continued to live there until Council purchased it in 1964.

I believe I have time to tell you the fascinating story of August's youngest child Mary, who inherited the cottage.

August built it in 1885 for his second wife, Wilhelmina, and twins were born there of which only the boy survived. The following year August

(Continued on page 6)

Schwerkolt Cottage c1914



(Camberwell, Surrey Hills and Box Hill News.)

From **THE REPORTER.**

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Friday, 20 December 1901

SUPPLEMENT TO THE "REPORTER."

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1902 CALENDAR

| 1902 JANUARY 1902 | | | | | | | 1902 FEBRUARY 1902 | | | | | | | 1902 MARCH 1902 | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| SUN. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THU. | FRI. | SAT. | SUN. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THU. | FRI. | SAT. | SUN. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THU. | FRI. | SAT. |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

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| 1902 APRIL 1902 | | | | | | | 1902 MAY 1902 | | | | | | | 1902 JUNE 1902 | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| SUN. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THU. | FRI. | SAT. | SUN. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THU. | FRI. | SAT. | SUN. | MON. | TUE. | WED. | THU. | FRI. | SAT. |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

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1902 OCTOBER 1902 **1902 NOVEMBER 1902** **1902 DECEMBER 1902**

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NP1769 Mary, taken at around the time of the move to America

died at the age of 65, leaving Wilhelmina a widow and five months pregnant.

Mary was duly born and the family lived happily in the cottage until 1900. Mary was 13 and her brother was 15 when Wilhelmina decided they would move to America to live with her brother John Kruse. Two years later Wilhelmina and John died leaving Mary an orphan at 16, but the rightful inheritor of the cottage.

Her mother had erroneously given the cottage and land to

Louis, which was not in accordance with August's will. So in 1908, when she was 22, she returned to Melbourne with her uncle and gained Title to her property.

On the ship voyage she met a German ship steward Emil Jackschowsky whom she fancied and on returning to America she made sure she sailed on his ship. He moved to America, and they married in 1912 – on the day the Titanic sank.

By 1914 there was no work in America so they decided to come to Melbourne via Germany to visit Emil's family for two months, and were stranded there when World War One broke out. Her husband was conscripted, and Mary had to fend for herself. Initially she lived with her in-laws in a farmhouse, but then the Russians approached so she had to flee, spending two days and nights in a cattle car train.

By 1915 she was living in Berlin with a nice family; she had her own room and cooked her own food. Then she contracted scarlet fever and spent six weeks in hospital. Recovered, she found a job in a candy factory, where she worked for four years.

Ironically, during this time my father's brother William had enlisted here in 1914; he survived fighting in Gallipoli, only to be killed in France in November 1916 – fighting against Mary's husband!

Mary's husband survived the war and initially they lived in Berlin in a house with 25 other families, after which they had two rooms in a house shared with ten families. Her husband was employed, but wages were so low that they almost starved. Then, in 1919, their son Walter was born and they were desperate to return to America. Australia was out of the question because the Australian Government had confiscated her property here since she had married a German national. My father tried to send her some money, but the Australian

Government would not permit money to be sent out of the country. In 1920 her uncle had died, but his children managed to send Mary and her family tickets to return to America in 1922. Her husband became employed there by a lumber company. He also farmed and sold vegetables, and eggs from his 500 hens.

From 1946 my father had power of attorney over her property here, which the government finally restored to her, but without Title. My father collected the rent from the tenants and fought for 18 years for her to get Title to the property, but it could only be obtained by adverse possession, which meant that for 30 years Mary had to prove she had fenced it, paid the rates and many other things. Adverse possession was finally achieved in 1963, just three years before she died.

In 1964 the council purchased it from her, and she died knowing that the Cottage her father had built was to be preserved.

In 1965, when the Cottage was being officially opened, my mother was visiting Mary in America and she asked about her memories of the Cottage. Mary said she remembered blood-red roses growing along the verandah; a wooden shed at each end of the house for storage; a water tank each end of the house (and a possum falling in and polluting it); a deep well mostly for washing; a summerhouse close to the Cottage, built of wooden slats for flowers; milking the cows in the morning before going to the Ringwood school; termites in the verandah posts and the dining-room floor; peach trees in the flooded paddock, grapes and gooseberries close to the house and pears, plums and peach trees nearer the creek; the wine cellar containing barrels of wine and hay for the cows; picking heath on the hill to sell at the market, and the oxen that were used to take the fruit to market.

In 1990, when Mary's son Walter and his wife came from America and visited the Cottage that he had heard so much about all his life, he was amazed and thrilled to think that the local people would cherish his heritage in the manner that they have. More recently, his grandson has also visited.

The Council and interested local residents are to be congratulated for their enduring commitment to this lovely piece of our heritage.



Emil Jackschowsky

Rosalie Whalen

BICYCLE SPORTS AT BOX HILL.

The Box Hill bicycle club held a very enjoyable sports meeting at the local recreation grounds on Wednesday afternoon. As far as the weather was concerned, the day was an ideal one for an outdoor gathering, and a very large number of the residents took advantage of the occasion to spend a very pleasant afternoon. The spectators included a large percentage of ladies, who took great interest in the proceedings. A word of commendation is due to the promoters, who showed how a sports meeting could be carried on to the evident satisfaction of all, without any drawback in the shape of betting and booze. There was fortunately any amount of "soft stuff" available, thanks to the enterprise of Mr and Mrs Lavell. No Sunday school picnic could have been carried out with more decorum, than these bicycle sports, and no more orderly or respectable gathering has ever assembled in Box Hill. The promoters have done valuable public service in proving that bicycle races may be held in such a way as to afford genuine enjoyment to the onlookers, without a vestige of anything in the shape of gambling and beer-guzzling. The programme of racing was gone through without a hitch, and there were some very exciting finishes, while the married men's race (in which a record was broken), afforded a great deal of amusement. Mr A. J. Petherick acted as starter, Messrs E. Willis, E. Payne and H. Burrows as judges, and Messrs F. Bright, S. Williams and J. V. Young (hon. sec.) as handicappers, and all attended to their duties in a highly satisfactory manner. Appended are the results of the racing:—

MILE RACE.—1st heat, H. Willis, 10 yds. 1; H. Wilkins, 30 yds. 2. 2nd heat, E. Rawlings, 65 yds. 1; D. Ritter, 15 yds. 2. Final—H. Willis 1, E. Rawlings 2, D. Ritter 3.

CLUB RACE, 2 miles.—1st heat, H. Willis, 20 yds. 1; H. Wilkins, 45 yds. 2; J. Albon, 85 yds. 3. 2nd heat, A. Swift, 175 yds. 1; R. Garrett, 140 yds. 2; R. Mashiter, 100 yds. 3. Final—H. Willis 1, H. Wilkins 2, J. Albon 3.

HANDICAP FLUTTER, 2 laps.—1st heat, E. Rawlings, 20 yds. 1; Albert Johnstone, 35 yds. 2. 2nd heat, E. Hislop, 10 yds. 1; S. Williams, 45 yds. 2. Final—E. Hislop 1, S. Williams 2, E. Rawlings 3.

FIVE-MILE SCRATCH RACE.—H. Willis 1, E. Hislop 2, D. Ritter 3.

CONSOLATION RACE.—J. Rammage 1, Albert Johnstone 2.

MARRIED MEN'S RACE, 1 mile.—Andrew Johnstone 1, E. Payne 2, C. Wilson 3, A. J. Petherick 4.

IMPROMPTU RACE, 6 laps.—Jackson, scr. 1; Deering, 15 yds. 2, Todd, 20 yds. 3. 2nd heat, B. Glenburn, 15 yds. 1; Thomas, 10 yds. 2; E. Hislop, 10 yds. 3. Final—Jackson 1, Deering 2.

Whitehorse Historical Society 2015 WORKING BEES

Please make a diary note and join us on the day.

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

Saturday 14 March

Saturday 9 May

Saturday 5 September

Saturday 14 November

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

Whitehorse Historical Society DIARY DATES

Meetings are held at the Local History Room, Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex.

Saturday, 13 December, 1.30pm

General Meeting

Topic: "Pop-Up History"

Bring along your own local historical artifact and be prepared to share its history with us

Saturday, 14 February, 2015

1.30pm General Meeting

Film:

"Nunawading - City of Contrasts" (1971)

Saturday, 18 April

1.30pm General Meeting

Speaker: Peter McPhee

Topic: "History of the Mitcham RSL"

Statistics

| | | |
|---|---|------|
| Photographs catalogued | - | 4133 |
| Artefacts catalogued | - | 4681 |
| Documents catalogued | - | 6747 |
| Visitors to museum Sept-Oct | - | 420 |
|  Facebook 'likes' to October | - | 373 |



LES SMITH PRIDE OF AUSTRALIA – AND WHITEHORSE

WHS member Les Smith has been a life-long environmental activist, and at the age of 86 has not slowed down, recently being awarded a Pride of Australia Medal for 2014.

He volunteers for a number of environmental committees and organisations, and has, for example, been a member of the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society since its foundation in 1967.

We at WHS congratulate Les on this accolade, and wish him many more years of environmental activity.

This is a police report of very mild interest, received at Russell Street in 1885. The main interest in it is the proof it gives that Dr L.L.Smith still owned his "Model Farm" (in Boronia Road, Vermont), but had given up supervising it himself in favour of letting it to tenants.

The story began when his private secretary, Edward G. Purves, wrote to the police asking them to investigate a report that someone was dismantling the farm buildings by taking the roofs off the piggeries.

Constable Balchin reported on 29 June 1885 that he visited the farm with Mr Bean the manager. It had been rented to a Mr Adams for the last twelve months. He found eleven doors off the piggeries and the spouting apparently broken down. The top half of the stable door was also missing. He found six small doors being used to make a crossing over a drain and thought they had been taken down by various tenants, and Mr Bean agreed as

the piggeries had not been used for years.

Mr Adams said the place was in the same state as when he came there, but he would see Dr Smith and explain the situation.

*Keith Patterson
WHS Newsletter,
1970*

WHO STOLE THE DOORS?



HISTORICAL SOCIETY INFORMATION SERVICES

Whitehorse Historical Society is well known for its Museum exhibits in the Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex. But it also provides a research assistance service to the Whitehorse community and to visitors. Both these services are supported by collections that are relevant to the history of the Whitehorse community, with particular reference to the suburbs comprising the former City of Nunawading.

- Collections in historical societies, if they operate a museum, typically include documents, photographs, books, maps, audiovisual materials and ephemera as sources of information, as well as artefacts.
 - Enquiries received are most often about people, places or organisations. A few topics dealt with by Whitehorse over the last year include old maps of Blackburn, photos of shops, Heatherdale Railway Station, a bank robbery in Blackburn South in 1971, the “Kew Flyer” bicycle that belonged to the Hookes of Wandinong Sanctuary, the architect of a house and numerous enquiries about families, street names and football clubs.
 - When dealing with enquiries, the first thing is to find out what people really want. We then need to find if we have relevant printed, photographic or audio information available. If we have none, we try to suggest another organisation that might help. We often refer people to the Public Record Office, the State Library or LandData.
 - Our catalogue is essential in helping us to locate material relevant to the enquiry. Our volunteers catalogue each item in the collection, making each entry accessible by subject and author, and describing it in a way that will show people whether it will suit their needs.
 - The information is then entered in a database, the result being similar to a library catalogue.
 - Some skill and experience is needed to create and use the database effectively – entries need to be consistently structured. For instance, do you use the subject name “Bowls clubs” or “Bowling clubs”, “Refugees” or “Asylum seekers”, the term “RACV” or “Royal Automobile Club of Victoria”? It doesn’t matter much, as long as you use the same version every time. If you want to find out about a particular house, how do you describe it? We do it in a uniform way, such as “Stewart Avenue, Blackburn, No. 6”. Basically it’s a matter of knowing and following simple rules.
 - The Society gets enquiries from people living in country Victoria, interstate and overseas. How do they find out about our collections?
 - In 1997 the Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Corporation instigated the *Whitehorse Manningham Local Heritage Network* database, hosted on the library website www.wml.vic.gov.au It includes entries for the documents and photos held by four historical societies: Box Hill, Doncaster–Templestowe, Warrandyte and Whitehorse, as well as items in the local history collections at Nunawading Library and Doncaster Library. Images for some of the photograph entries are also included. The Catalogue link is used to find the library catalogue and databases.
 - As well as the Heritage Network database, three smaller local history databases are hosted on the library website: Cemetery, Diggers (World War 1) and Petition (signatures on the 1891 Woman’s Suffrage Petition).
- The historical societies are totally volunteer bodies, funded by member subscriptions and grant applications mainly from municipal, state and federal governments. Their services are a recognition of their responsibility to the community, to use these public and member funds in the public interest by making their collections freely available as exhibits and information resources. The databases show the societies and the Library working together to make their local history information available to the local and wider community.

Peter Simmenauer and Vicki Court

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9873 3383

Vice-President

Pat Richardson

Secretary

Rachael Cottle

Treasurer

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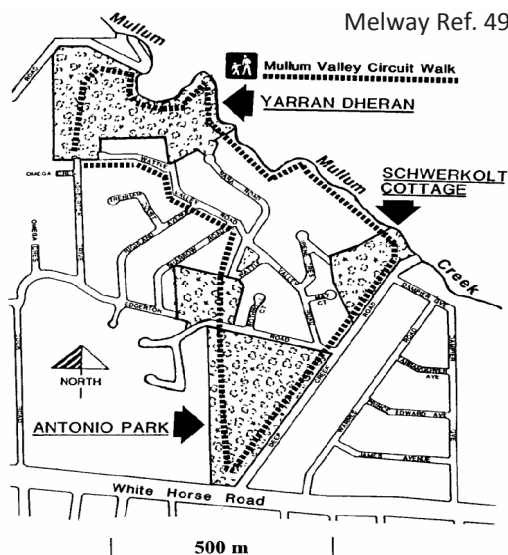
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Copy Deadline for next WHS Newsletter: Wednesday, 14 January 2015

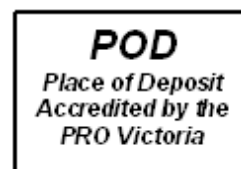
The Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.



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.



CITY OF



WHITEHORSE

REMEMBER

**Whitehorse Historical Society
Local History Collection & Place of Deposit**

Open 10.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. 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 Whitehorse
Historical Society, Inc.
acknowledges the
support of the
City of Whitehorse.*



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