



# Divided Loyalty

## The Making of a display

IT was Barbara Gardiner’s suggestion that WHS create an exhibition for the National Trust Heritage Festival (18 April to 26 May) that kicked the whole thing off. The theme that the National Trust had set was “Conflict and Compassion”, and the problem of how to address this presented itself. The thought of a generic Gallipoli/WWI approach was not flying anyone’s flag. Then Vicki remembered the story of Mary Schwerkolt that Rosalie Whalen had brought to the October meeting, and how it was a potent example of one of the less discussed side effects of war: what if a family has representatives on both sides?



The hanging of the panels

Thus was born our title for the exhibition: “Mary’s Divided Loyalties”.

The next step was to set about putting flesh on the bones of the idea. Rosalie brought her family history to the Wednesday meeting in the form of notes, a raft of documents, photographs and artefacts. A number of meetings took place, at which the concept of creating panels to represent different aspects of Mary’s life was decided upon; Vicki, Rachael and Megan collaborated on writing the content. Megan wrote the final draft

of the first two panels and Vicki wrote the third. The scanning of documents and photos also commenced to support the task at hand as well as to supplement the museum’s collection. Rosalie contacted Mary’s family in the USA and asked if they would lend Mary’s wedding dress for the exhibition. They responded in the

*(continued on page 4)*



(ABOVE and LEFT)  
 The messy process of preparation and design



### CONTENTS

President’s Report	2	From The Reporter	5
Your Committee in Action	2	Diary Dates	6
April Meeting Report	3	Remembering Valerie	6
April meeting/Divided loyalties cont’d	4	Help us with street names	7
		From the Collection	7

*Dear Members*

IT is with sadness that I have to report that Valerie Marshall died on the 30th of April of a heart attack. Valerie was a lovely person and she contributed a lot to our Society by serving on our Committee, working on a Wednesday, writing in the Newsletter and helping out where ever she could. We miss her greatly. A number of us from the Wednesday group attended the Farwell get-together organised by her family on Wednesday, May 13.

In this newsletter are details of our putting together of the Mary's Divided Loyalties exhibition. It will be in the Visitor Centre only until May 27 at this point to allow the Council to organise the installation of acoustic tiles. We will also display it during Heritage Week in September.

In April Rachael and I attended the book launch at the Box Hill RSL of *The Sweetland Project: Remembering Gallipoli in the Shire of Nunawading* by Dr Steven Cooke of Deakin University. It is a very well written book, very easy to read and very interesting.

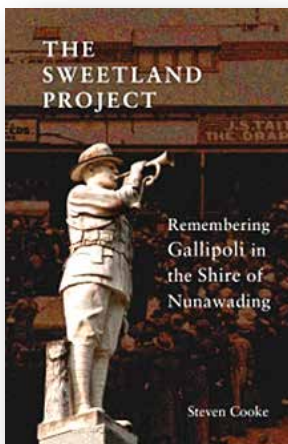
At the April meeting we hosted the Association of

Eastern Historical Societies (AOEHS) meeting. Our entertaining guest speaker was Peter McPhee, who spoke on the History of the Mitcham RSL. We had a slightly different program for the day, starting with our meeting and then the Association's meeting, followed by afternoon tea and then Peter's talk. A raffle prize was donated by Michael Sukkar, Member for Deakin. The visitors from the other Societies were extremely complimentary about our premises.

Thank-you to Brian, Harley, Bob, Anne, Wendy and Barb for helping at the Working Bee on Saturday the 9th of May. We achieved a thorough clean of the Local History Room and the Museum.

The well-known photographer Bill McAuley will be speaking on "Ghosts of the Pioneers" at our next meeting. I hope to see you there.

*Vicki Jones Evans*



### **The Sweetland Project: Remembering Gallipoli in the Shire of Nunawading** by Steven Cooke

A chance discovery made on a tour of Anzac Cove provided an immediate link between Gallipoli and Melbourne's Eastern Suburbs. In the lead up to the Centenary of Anzac, 'The Sweetland Project' (named after a Box Hill man, Stephen Sweetland) became a broader search for the connections between Gallipoli and the former Shire of Nunawading, revealing 27 men from the former shire who died during the Gallipoli campaign. This book traces their stories and the reaction to the Great War of the local community, and shows how personal and collective memories of their experiences still resonate today.

Information from <http://www.scholarly.info/book/425/>

## Your Committee in Action

- An updated Disaster Plan is being drafted for consideration at our next meeting.
- The "Mary's Divided Loyalties" display was developed and used at the 2015 National Trust Heritage Festival. It will also be reused by us later in the year during Heritage Week. There are also plans to turn it into a virtual display on the website.

# February Meeting Report



## The beginning and the end

ON Saturday April 18 our meeting was the biennial occasion on which we play host to the Association of Eastern Historical Societies (AOEHS). The representatives of the various historical societies gave reports bringing us all up to date on their respective doings. At the conclusion of this our speaker for the day, Peter McPhee, despite having had a mild stroke only two weeks previously, gave a rousing and animated talk on the history of the Mitcham RSL.

The first war in which Australians had any presence was the Boer War; yet the numbers of wounded soldiers returning from this did not necessitate an organisation to help them. Gallipoli and the First World War were a different story, however, and (amongst others) the Fathers and Sons Association was formed to look after the needs of returned servicemen and their families (it is largely responsible for the WWI war memorials that we have in Australia). Eventually it became the Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia (RSSAILA), and on January 1, 1920, Mitcham was chartered as a sub branch of its Victorian branch.

Mitcham RSL has never had any money, so as a fundraiser they provided Mitcham's first outdoor picture theatre. It was small, but was rated to accommodate 400 people (unthinkable nowadays). They would put up a hessian screen to keep unwanted eyes from seeing the show; what it couldn't keep out was the moonlight, which, as Peter observed, "would ruin many a good picture show, as they'd have to wait for the moon to go down before showing the next reel". Another problem was that sometimes the Pianola didn't keep up with the film, with the result that the redskins might be seen biting the dust to the strains of "If You Were the Only Girl in the World". However,

this endeavour contributed to enabling them to buy a block on the corner of Whitehorse Road and McDowall Street, and in 1923 approval was sought to build the memorial hall.

From early days, a number of orchestral, choral, and other community societies used the hall as their base, some of them being formed by the club itself. During WWII, the hall was a designated first aid centre in the event of invasion. After the war a youth centre was started there, aided by the tender ministrations of one Sergeant Lewis (as is remembered by some older ex-members).

1992 brought the introduction of poker machines to the RSL. The Mitcham branch took delivery of 25, receiving a third of the proceeds as their cut. It was a mixed blessing, as Mitcham had always been more of a family/socially-oriented branch, and the negative aspect was compounded when the government put pokies into hotels; Mitcham RSL, with 25 machines, could scarcely compete with Mitcham Hotel's 100. Then, when Tattersalls reset the guidelines for performance, removal of the machines was threatened.

Unlike in New South Wales, where the RSL is relegated to a small section of social clubs, the Victorian branch avoided this indignity by taking possession of the property titles, becoming the trustees. It was this that enabled them to decide that Mitcham was broke. They met in June 1996 and voted to sell the building. The debt then was \$250,000 plus 3 months interest. Bruce Ruxton and the heavies from Anzac House came out to the branch and unceremoniously appointed a committee of five to organise a way to avoid branch closure. Peter was told he was the Treasurer, and when he objected, the response was swift.

"Right. Give us the keys, turn out the lights. We'll close you down tomorrow!"

"That's blackmail, sir!" replied Peter.

"Too right! Do you want the job, or don't you?"

Peter accepted, and within two years their committee

had turned the club's fortunes around. However, their success brought with it another problem: there was still a motion active to sell the building. Another meeting had to be called to vote *not* to do so.

They had a number of successful managers ... and a number of less successful ones. Peter recalls a time when, as president, he received a call from the bank.

"Have you paid your tax bill?"

"Yes."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

Peter contacted the manager, and was assured that the tax had been paid. Then the bank sent their records, which indicated that *no* tax of any kind had been paid in the past twelve months. That was the end of that manager!

A million-dollar loan for renovations was taken out in the early 2000s, with the promise of

a resultant increase in business. Unfortunately, this did not occur. Neither did the poker machines contribute to anything but the increasing debt.

Even so, when called in to Anzac House and given 12 months to turn the business around, this result was achieved. But closure could not be staved off as Anzac House had received conflicting reports from a dysfunctional committee. And so the plug was pulled on 98 years of service to returned servicemen and families in the area.

So what of the future? The memorial in Halliday Park will remain the focus of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day commemorations; visits to schools and other organisations will also continue, as will other services to the community in one form or another.

Chris Gray

Peter McPhee makes a point



## Divided Loyalty

### The Making of a display

(from page 1)

affirmative but did not stop there, expressing their desire to donate the dress to the Society to be held permanently in the collection.

With the content written or, in the case of images, decided upon, the layout of the panels was expressed in a series of drawings to rival anything produced by Leonardo. A further meeting between Vicki, Rachael, Chris, Rosalie and Megan ensued, and with the layout confirmed, Chris went ahead and created the panels using InDesign.

In the meantime Bob and Harley were busy repainting the mannequin stand, constructing a platform for it, and

working out how to hang the panels.

These had been printed by Blackhills in South Blackburn, coming up really nicely on thick, matte paper panels. Bob, Maurie, Harley, Judy and Barbara assisted Rachael and Vicki in installing the panels in the visitor centre – along with the dress and artefacts prepared and assembled with the help of Wendy and Judy. It was a great team effort.

*A booklet based on the display is also in production, and a virtual exhibit will be included on the website later in the year.*



# Blackburn & Mitcham Reporter

CIRCULATING IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF BLACKBURN AND MITCHAM AND DONCASTER.

Volume 51 Number 22

Friday, 3 June 1938

Price Twopence

## FOOTBALL. EASTERN SUBURBAN LEAGUE.

### AUBURN v. BLACKBURN.

At Auburn last Saturday Blackburn were defeated by the margin of 9 goals. Final scores were:— Auburn, 19.9; Blackburn, 10.9.

Best for Blackburn were French, Syrratt, Warne, George, Hopkins, Wall; goalkickers were Warne (8), George, Wall.

## VERMONT.

### SCHOOL CELEBRATION.

A pleasing programme was carried through on Friday, 20th May, when the assembled scholars joined in observance of Empire Day. After the pupils had sung "O God Our Help in Ages Past," James Durand read his essay on the Significance of Empire Day. The Infants sang "God bless our King and Queen To-day," and David Tucker a solo, "The Bugles of England." The solo and chorus of "Sons of Britannia" were taken by Bobbie White and Grades 3 and 4, and another hymn preceded an address by Mr. O'Brien of the Empire Day Movement. "Hail to our Land" was followed by the National Anthem, and then the pupils gave three rousing cheers for the King and Queen.

Clergyman: "And what does your mother give you for being a good girl?"

Little Girl: "She lets me stay away from church on Sundays."

## R. H. BLAKE

(Late G. M. Evans, 17½ years)

BOX HILL FUEL AND FODDER MERCHANT.

162 WHITE HORSE ROAD, BOX HILL.

The Best of Grey Box, Briquettes, Coke. All Kinds of Poultry Foods, etc. Orders promptly attended to. A Trial Solicited. — WX2138.

# Walker's

## MAY SALE Now On!

### SOME MORE QUICK SELLERS

#### 10/6 pr. Ladies' Nappa Gloves.

In Nigger, Navy and Black, gauntlet styles, finished with neat buckle. Superior skin gloves. Reduced from 12/11 pr.

Walker's May Sale . . . 10/6 pr.

#### 4/11 ea. Ladies' Blouses

Short sleeve blouses, charming little styles in Georgette, Silk and Satin. In plain styles or lace trimmed. Special. SSW, to W.

Walker's May Sale . . . 4/11 ea.

#### 1/- pr. Maids' Mercerised Cotton Hose

Oddments only, in Black, Brown and Mole. Well worth 2/3 and 2/11 pr. To clear at

Walker's May Sale . . . 1/- pr.

#### 4½d. ea. or 3 for 1/- Cloth and Serviette Sets

39in. x 39in. In Damask patterned paper, with 6 matching serviettes. Wrapped in cellophane. Ideal for picnics or parties.

Walker's May Sale—4½d. ea., or 3 for 1/-.

HAVE YOU EVER VISITED WALKER'S CHILDREN'S WEAR DEPARTMENT ON THE FIRST FLOOR? There you can obtain everything for the kiddie to wear. Coats, Hats, Shoes, Dresses and Underwear. Bring your child along and have him or her outfitted at Walker's.

#### 17/11 pr. Ladies' Navy Suede Lace Shoe.

With superfine Calf, toe caps, heels and strappings. 4-hole ties. New novelty finish to tongue, 2 to 6. Sports heel.

Walker's May Sale . . . 17/11 pr.

#### 19/11. Glace Kid, Gussetted Court Shoe

Finished with tongue, pump soles, 16/8 heels. Sizes 2 to 7, also half sizes. Specially priced for this sale.

Walker's May Sale . . . 19/11 pr.

#### 16/11 pr. Brown Suede Derby Tie Shoe.

With snappy design, in calf strapping on sides and front of shoe. Suede covered Cuban heels, 2 to 7, also ½ sizes.

Walker's May Sale . . . 16/11 pr.

#### 4/11 pr. Felt Slippers

With cosy soles and 6/8 heels. Finished with silk pom. Moccasin fronts and stiffening in heels. 2 to 7.

Walker's May Specials, 4/11 pr.

## WALKER'S STORES

RAILWAY STATION ENTRANCE

PHONE: HAW. 5301.

GLENFERRIE

# remembering Valerie



**T**HE Wednesday members were saddened by the recent, sudden death of our friend and colleague, Valerie Marshall. A local resident, Valerie had many interests. She was a talented artist and participated in both water colour and calligraphy classes. Her work with the Olinda Rhododendron Gardens saw a new yellow variety of rhododendron named after her.

She was a member of our society for many years; was a committee member, and wrote many articles for the Newsletter. She was also a “jill-of-all-trades”, always willing to help out where needed.

Valerie was a lady! We will miss her snowy white hair with the black bow at the back, her feisty participation in our discussions and her friendly nature.

God bless, Valerie!



## 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 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 June**

**1.30pm General Meeting**

*Speaker: Bill McAuley*

*Topic: “Ghosts of the Pioneers”*

**Saturday, 8 August**

**1.30pm General Meeting**

*Speaker: Anne Major*

*Topic: “Family History Research”*

**Saturday, 10 October**


**1.30pm General Meeting**

*50th Anniversary of WHS*

*Party & launch of History book by Gerry Robinson*

**Remaining date: December 12**

## Statistics

Photographs catalogued	-	4162
Artefacts catalogued	-	4721
Documents catalogued	-	6859
Visitors to museum March–April	-	427
 Facebook ‘likes’ to May	-	462

# Help our street knowledge



**W**hitehorse Historical Society Inc. is collecting and recording the origins of street names of the former City of Nunawading. This information will complement the Box Hill City Council publication *The Origin of Box Hill Street Names*, by Charles F. Williams.

We are asking you to tell us anything you may know about the origins of street names in the area. Perhaps your neighbours or friends, or relatives who have moved away, have information you could pass on to us. Please ask them – anything we learn can be used to help the many people who are interested in the area, including students, new residents and researchers.

The Nunawading street details we need are:

- who named it
- after whom or what
- when it was named.

Please let the Society know at PO Box 272 Mitcham 3132, phone 9873 4946 or email [whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com](mailto:whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com)

## FROM THE COLLECTION . . . . .



### NA4711.1

Maria Elizabeth Schwerkolt (known as Mary) was the youngest daughter of August and Wilhemina Schwerkolt. She was born on January 17, 1887 – after August's death – at the cottage in Deep Creek Road.

Having travelled to Germany, Mary returned to Australia in 1909 on the *Seydlitz* to claim her inheritance. Having settled this, she delayed her departure for three months to return on the same ship to meet up with German ship steward Emil Jackschowsky, for whom she had developed an attraction. On the voyage she stopped in Delhi, India, and it was there that she purchased the silk gown in which she would later be married.

She was married on April 14, 1912 (the day the Titanic hit the iceberg that was to sink it!).

In 2015 her four grand-daughters decided to lend the gown to WHS for use in the "Mary's Divided Loyalties" Heritage display, and subsequently decided that they would like to donate it for the collection in perpetuity.

## WHS Committee Contacts

### President

Vicki Jones-Evans  
9873 3383

### Vice-President

Pat Richardson

### Secretary

Rachael Cottle

### Treasurer

Bob Gardiner

Local History Room (03) 9873 4946

## Newsletter Team

Chris Gray  
Bettina Stevenson  
Wendy Standfield  
Valda Arrowsmith OAM

## WHS website

[www.vicnet.net.au/~ndhsinc/](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~ndhsinc/)  
[facebook.com/whitehorsehistory](https://facebook.com/whitehorsehistory)

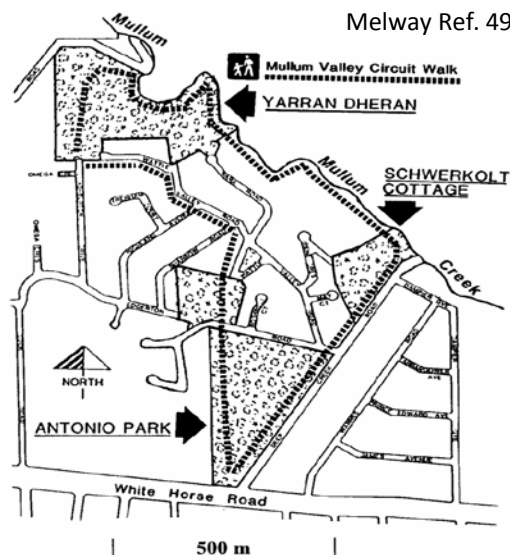
## Email

[whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com](mailto:whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com)

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**Copy Deadline for next WHS Newsletter: Wednesday, 8 July 2015**

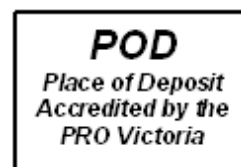
## The Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.



### 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



## 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  
Deep Creek Road, Mitcham, VIC 3132  
If undeliverable, please return to P.O. Box 272 Mitcham, VIC 3132

