



The Seydlitz story

The ship that brought Mary and Emil together

R.P.D. (Reichspostdampfe) *Seydlitz*, at 7942 gross tons, was built by the F. Schichau shipyards in Danzig for the North German Lloyd Lines (Norddeutscher Lloyd) and was launched on December 25, 1902.

On August 5, 1903, she started her maiden voyage from Bremen to the Far East via the Suez Canal. She was 450.1 feet long (143.15 metres), had a beam of 55.5 feet (16.88 metres), two propellers and triple expansion engines. And, as you can see below, she had one funnel and two masts. Her service speed was 14.5 knots and she could carry 2050 passengers – 101 in first class, 115 in second, 134 in third and 1700 in steerage. Her crew ranged between 155 and 190.

In the years before she was rebuilt – at Newcastle in 1906 – *Seydlitz* completed many round-trips from Bremen – six to the Far East (to Shanghai to Yokohama in December 1906) and 18 to Australia, all via the Suez Canal. And between March 1906 and the summer of 1914, *Seydlitz* completed seven trips to New York, one to South America, and just one trip to Philadelphia.

In 1914 R.P.D. *Seydlitz*, scheduled to sail from Sydney Harbour at 2pm on 5 August, suddenly left two days early, 36 hours before Britain declared war on Germany and World War One commenced. Instead of sailing as programmed to Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth, she headed north for Valparaiso, in Chile. The next day the Australian destroyer *Parramatta*, with twice her speed in the water, was sent to capture and take her back to port.

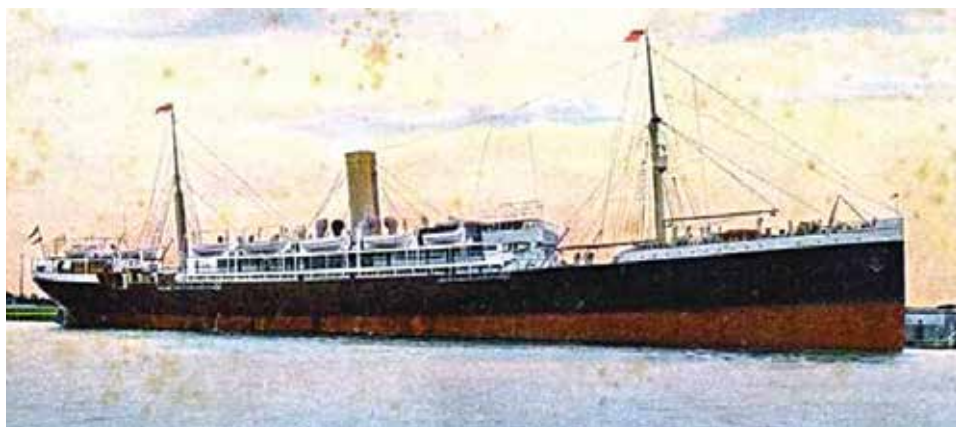
Somewhere on the far north coast of New South Wales the Captain, aware that he was being pursued and almost certain to be captured, sent a boat ashore with a copper sea chest containing about 3000 gold sovereigns, jewels

(reportedly diamonds) and important documents given to him by wealthy Germans living in Sydney. The chest was buried somewhere behind the beach, with the plan that it would be retrieved when Germany won the war. Although the *Seydlitz* did manage to escape the *Parramatta* (no radar in those days), she did not make it back to Germany but became involved in the decisive Battle of the Falkland Islands.

She acted as a support vessel for the *Graf Spee* Squadron for the Battle of Coronel and the Battle of the Falklands. In late 1914 she took refuge at San Antonio Este, in Argentina. There she was interned, and in 1917 her crew is reported to have damaged the engines to prevent her seizure by Argentina and her charter to the Allies. Repaired, and perhaps still under German command, on July 24, 1917 she sailed from Bahia Blanca to Bremen via Montevideo and Saint Vincent. After the Armistice she resumed South America service in late 1921, then switched to the Bremen–New York service through September 1927. In the next years she travelled via Halifax, Canada, to New York or Galveston.

It is believed she was scrapped at Bremerhaven in 1933.

† A fuller account of the *Seydlitz* treasure can be found at www.stradbrokeislandgalleon.com/Seidlitz.html



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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Members

ANOTHER year has rolled around and we are, yet again, coming to our Annual General Meeting. I would like to thank the committee members who have given their time to the Society. The Society cannot exist without a committee, and Rachael, Bob, Pat, Chris, Judith, Rob, Valerie and I have given our time and efforts to continue the good work of prior committee members. We would be pleased to have new members join us, especially as Valerie is no longer with us to help, so please consider joining us.

At our last meeting we considered the purchase of a new showcase for a mannequin to mark our 50th Anniversary, but our Treasurer did not feel our funds were sufficient. However, Joan Hunter has very kindly offered us a donation for the purchase and Barbara Rogalski has also offered to assist.

Owing to the generosity of a member who wishes to remain anonymous, acoustic tiles have been installed on the ceiling of the Visitor Centre and at our last general meeting we were delighted to find that they have solved the problem. As they were installed in conjunction with the City of Whitehorse and are now part of the building, we do not own the tiles but we do get to enjoy the benefits.

In May, Rachael, Valda and I attended a museum workshop on Significance hosted by Knox Historical Society at Ambleside, Ferntree Gully. Knox had obtained a grant to run the workshop, and we were very grateful to attend this informative and helpful event and be looked after so well.

In June, Lyn Ford, Pat, Rachael and I attended the Association of Eastern Historical Societies Annual Conference at Karralyka in Ringwood. The range of speakers this year was excellent and we started with an entertaining talk and photos by a former photographer from *The Age* newspaper, Bruce Postle. Debra Parry, a qualified conservator, spoke next on the do's and don'ts of handling documents and photographs. Liz Pidgeon, a librarian from the Yarra Plenty Regional Library, talked on Content Creation via Story Telling, and the final session was from Blaise van Henke, publisher, on "Your Story, Your Publishing Options". These informative sessions were interspersed with delicious food, tea and coffee. The Association provided us with an excellent and useful program this year, and we are grateful for the work that was put into organising it.

At our last general meeting, on the recommendation of the committee, members passed a motion for a change of wording to our Mission Statement and to add an Acknowledgement to Country.

"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 City of Whitehorse area."

"In the spirit of reconciliation, Whitehorse Historical Society Inc. acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners of the land now known as the City of Whitehorse, and pays respect to its elders past and present."

Our Heritage Family Day this year will be on Sunday, 13 September, from 11am to 4pm. The theme for the council's Heritage Week this year is "Australia Calls", and in keeping with this the council's contribution to our Heritage Day will be a World War One Canteen run by the Blackburn Red Cross from our kitchen with tea, coffee, Anzac biscuits and pound (fruit) cake. This means that we will not need kitchen helpers this year; however, we still need help setting up and packing up on the WHS stall, children's activities, picnic races and gumboot throwing, and if any of the demonstrators need a cuppa fetched.

The City of Whitehorse is also organising an "Australia Calls" exhibition in the Whitehorse Art Space at Box Hill Town Hall. In addition to interpretive panels and artefacts it will include the stories of five descendants, five soldier stories, letters from the front, artefacts, a children's corner, and a computer with screen to access World War One material.

Our speaker at our the Annual General Meeting will be Anne Major, on Family History Research. See you then.

Vicki Jones Evans



February Meeting Report



ON Saturday 13 June, an enjoyable afternoon was spent with our speaker, Bill McAuley, whose family have lived in Warrandyte for seven generations. They came to the area in 1850 to look for gold, and stayed on, eventually building the first school in the district.

Bill started his career as a newspaper and magazine photographer in Melbourne in 1969. For the next 40 years he worked out of Melbourne, Sydney, London and Canberra, working both journalistically for newspapers as well as in a freelance capacity. Bill has covered a wide range of subjects including hard news, bush fires, drought, crime, the arts, sport, politics and human interest. During the 1980s he travelled extensively throughout country Victoria shooting hundreds of rural assignments for *The Australian*.

Bill was foundation pictorial editor of *The Sunday Herald*, *Sunday Herald Sun* and *Sunday Magazine*. Though he ran the photographic desk on these publications he also worked on the road, shooting assignments in Tasmania, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, the Northern Territory and Christmas Island.

He has won *The Australian Press Photographer of The Year Award* and more recently received the *Eltham Arts Council Award* for outstanding service to the arts.

continued over page

PICTURES:
(Above) Deserted building at Birchip, Victoria
(Below) Bill with WHS volunteer Rosalie Whalen





Bill shares a life on film *(continued)*



During his career he has photographed many famous people, including Magda Szubanski, Bob Hawke, Malcolm Fraser, Paul McCartney, Eric Bana, Geoffrey Rush, Frank Sinatra, Sophia Loren, Danii Minogue and Gough Whitlam to name just a few. But his passion is for photographing old and abandoned homesteads around Victoria, capturing their character through the lens of his camera. His visual presentation of a selection of these was much appreciated by all.



To comment on a different aspect of the afternoon: in the past, the acoustics in the reception area have left much to be desired, but since Council has had acoustic panels installed much of the echo has gone and the clarity of sound has vastly improved.

Judith Fry

**PICTURES (clockwise from top):
Magda Szubanski in Melbourne;
Gough Whitlam winning election
during the '70s;**

Deserted stone building at Guildford, Victoria

A letter from Peter McPhee

At the last meeting, after I spoke on the Mitcham RSL, a lady handed me a medal from a Vietnam veteran.

The medal had no ribbon, but the name of the recipient was incised around the side. After checking the Vietnam nominal roll and sending a message to the battalion association, I was contacted by the veteran on the Wednesday following the meeting with the comment: "It's Ossie Biele here, they tell me you've got my medal!"

The medal has been reunited with the recipient, who had served in Vietnam with a battalion of Royal Australian Regiment.

Could you please let the lady know this, as she asked to be advised of the result.

Peter McPhee

WHS Members and friends are advised . . .

that subscription fees for 2015–2016 are now payable.

Fees are unchanged.

Kindly complete the Application Renewal form enclosed with this newsletter and return it ASAP to our membership secretary, Rachael Cottle.

From the

Blackburn & Mitcham Reporter

CIRCULATING IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF BLACKBURN AND MITCHAM AND DONCASTER.

Volume 51 Number 30

Friday, 29 July 1938

Price Twopence

OPEN COLUMN.

FOOTPATH TO BATHS.

(To the Editor.)

Sir,—I write to draw attention to the old brickworks tramway track, and to point out the advisability of converting it into a high level footpath between Carrington road and Howard street. If this were done it would be a very great convenience to a large number of people, many of whom use it even now in its very rough state. The crossing immediately west of the viaduct is dangerous for pedestrians. Five roadways converge at this point. While watching a car from one direction, a person is liable to be surprised by another car from a different angle. As time goes on more and more people would make use of the proposed footpath, and especially when the new swimming baths are constructed in the park. As the cost of smoothing the old track would be only trifling, it is to be sincerely hoped that our councillors will favourably consider this proposal.—Yours etc.,

A. MACKERETH.

36 James street, Box Hill.

B. J. Atkinson

(Formerly J. Horneman)

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MITCHAM TALKIES

MEMORIAL THEATRE,
MITCHAM

Saturday, August 13.

“The Prince and the Pauper”

with

ERROL FLYNN, CLAUDE RAINS,
HENRY STEPHENSON, BARTON
McLANE and the MAUGH TWINS

“Her Husband’s Secretary”

with

JEAN MUIR, BEVERLY ROBERTS,
WARREN HULL.

Matinee, 2.30.

“THE PRINCE AND THE
PAUPER”

Final Chapter, “FLASH GORDON”
CARTOON, NEWS, &c.

COMING SOON!

Deanna Durbin

in

“100 Men and a Girl”



HERITAGE FAMILY DAY 2015

Sunday 13 September
11am to 4pm

Schwerkolt Cottage Museum Complex
Deep Creek Road, Mitcham (Melway 49 D7)

SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS:

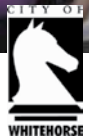
- Children's Chinese Brush painting
- Red Cross WWI Canteen
- Guided tours of the cottage
- Old-fashioned picnic races (3.00pm)
- Fairy Susie's Face painting
- Sausage sizzle (Rotary Club of Forest Hill)
- Tip Top Tom's Balloons & Magic (1pm-3pm)

View our museum displays plus all the regular fun attractions

Tea, coffee and cordial available from Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.



For more information contact 03 9873 4946
or whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com
www.facebook.com/whitehorsehistory



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*

*Please come and help us prepare for Family Heritage Day

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, 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

Saturday, 12 December

1.30pm General Meeting

Topic: "Pop-Up History"

Bring along your own treasure and be prepared to share its history with us

Statistics

Photographs catalogued	-	4168
Artefacts catalogued	-	4726
Documents catalogued	-	6911
Visitors to museum June-July	-	342
 Facebook 'likes' to July	-	494

**The 2015 Annual General Meeting of the Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.
will be held at the Local History Room, Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex,
Deep Creek Road Mitcham
commencing at 1.30 pm on Saturday, 8 August 2015**

AGENDA

1. Welcome & Apologies
2. Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting August 2014
3. Business Arising from previous minutes
4. President's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
 - Presentation of Annual Statement
 - Auditor's Report
 - Appointment of Auditor for 2015-2016
6. Determination of Annual Membership fees
7. General Business
 - Election of Officers and Ordinary Members of the Executive Committee
 - Nominations are called for the positions of:
 - President
 - Vice President
 - Secretary/Public Officer
 - Treasurer
 - Ordinary Members of the Committee (7)
8. Close of Annual General Meeting

Please advise apologies to Secretary Rachael Cottle 9873 4946 or 9724 9298



**Whitehorse Historical Society Inc. AGM 2015
Nomination Form**

As a financial member of the Whitehorse Historical Society I, _____
Accept nomination for the position of:-

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Ordinary Committee Member (7 positions)

Signature Date

Nominated by:- (name) Signature
(Financial Member of WHS)

Seconded by:- (name) Signature
(Financial Member of WHS)

• Please note all nominations must be signed by two financial members of the WHS and have the consent of the candidate • As per the Constitution, Clause 22 (6) A candidate may only nominate for one office, or as an ordinary member of the Committee • The completed nomination form must be received by the WHS Secretary seven days prior to the Annual General Meeting to be held on Saturday, 8 August 2015.

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/
facebook.com/whitehorsehistory

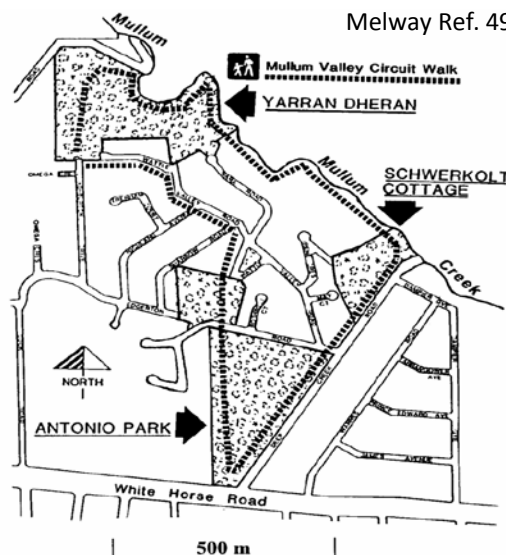
Email

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P.O. Box 272
MITCHAM Vic 3132

Melway Ref. 49 D7



Copy Deadline for next WHS Newsletter: Wednesday, 9 September 2015

The Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.

Mission Statement & Acknowledgement of Country

"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 City of Whitehorse area."

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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

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