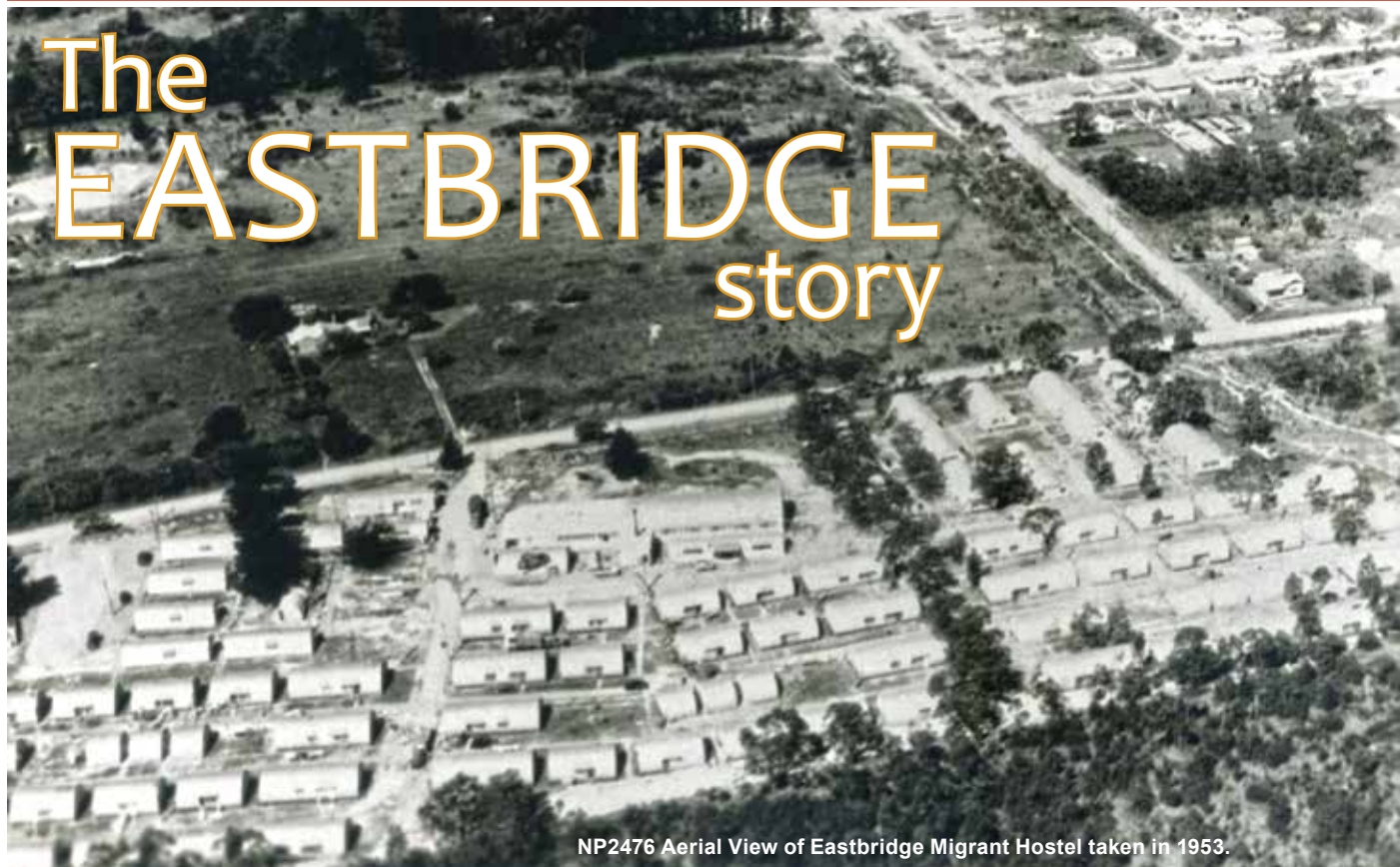




The EASTBRIDGE story



NP2476 Aerial View of Eastbridge Migrant Hostel taken in 1953.

IMMIGRATION is not new. For thousands of years humans have been moving from the land of their birth and the reasons are many and varied; but all have the basis of wanting to have a better life free of persecution, disease, famine, vagaries of climate and latterly, economic insecurity.

“Eastbridge”, a migrant hostel in Rooks Road Nunawading, was only one of many Australia-wide that gave a place of refuge for displaced persons after WWII. The site for the hostel was bought by the Commonwealth Government in 1949 as emergency accommodation for the new

arrivals where they could remain while establishing themselves in their new country. The average length of stay was approximately twenty weeks.

The hostel that opened in 1952 for these selected immigrants consisted of Nissen Huts. Each hut had been repainted, lined and divided into family sleeping units, but each lacked a bathroom and a suitable kitchen. Instead there was a communal dining hall and communal ablution blocks. The lack of both of these facilities caused much hardship and concern, especially when parents needed to escort their children to

the toilet during the night.

A great deal of money was spent by the Federal Government on improvements to the older style accommodation in an effort to transform them, and Nunawading’s was one of the first hostels in Australia to benefit from this programme when the Nissen huts were replaced by new two storied brick units. Two accommodation blocks of modern design and construction, with the capacity 200 persons (about 48 families), were opened in July 1967 – and buildings to accommodate a further 400 persons were to be constructed. *(continued page 4)*

NEXT MEETING

General Meeting 1pm Saturday, 10 December

Bob Gardiner: “Olympic Experiences”

Dear Members

DR Lorinda Cramer spoke at the October meeting about ladies adjusting to life on the Victorian goldfields, and how in the midst of dirt, mud and heat women still managed to produce a “civilising” effect with their sewing and their “Fancywork”.

We are currently planning our meetings for 2017 and would appreciate any suggestions you may have for speakers.



Vicki's Christmas tree decoration

Our display at the Whitehorse Spring Festival attracted a lot of interest and some sales. This year the items of most interest were a water sprinkler and an adding machine. Thanks to members who manned our stall on the day.

Three new displays have recently been installed in the Museum – lace, female underwear and a Christmas display. Please come and have a look.

Christmas is fast approaching and we are planning a different display in the Visitor Centre and also on our Facebook page. It will be based on “Your favourite Christmas tree decoration – and why it is your favourite”. Please bring your decoration to the meeting on December 10 so we can take a photo of it and a write few words describing why it is special to you.

We will print out the photo, cut it out into a circle with the story on the reverse and use these to decorate a tree in the Visitor Centre. If you are unable to attend the meeting please email a photo and the story to whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com or upload a photo and the story to our Facebook page.

Due to the significant increase in the cost of postage we are looking to use email for distributing our newsletters wherever possible. In addition to the cost saving you will have the advantage of seeing the Newsletter in colour. If you would like to receive an emailed copy of the newsletter you can let us know by emailing whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com or indicate this is on the attendance register for the December meeting.

Finally, we hope everyone will have a wonderful Christmas and New Year. We are looking forward to a productive year in 2017.

Vicki Jones-Evans
for

Pat Richardson

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“Your Fine Lady Doesn’t Do Here Any More”

LORINDA Cramer came to us to share some of the results of her four-and-a-half year search, undertaken for a thesis, for examples of women’s needlework from the 1840s to the 1870s. The title of her talk comes from a quote: “This is the country for people to come to that have got sinews in their bodies. Your fine lady doesn’t do here. She’s of no use. The men won’t have her, nor the women either. And so she must work, or starve, or do something worse”.¹



PIN MONEY.

Lorinda suggested that, contrary to contemporary assertions, fine ladies DID do here, and some did very well. Which broached the subject of needlework, and its importance for people emigrating to Australia and trying to make new homes for themselves.

Generally, needlework was poorly paid in Britain, and from 1850 there was a program to bring what were referred to as “distressed needlewomen” to Victoria, to fill a perceived opportunity for them. Unfortunately, the conditions here soon started to replicate those in London – though this was not necessarily the case, as skilled needlewomen who were able to start their own businesses, and employ others, did meet with success.

“Picture Victoria in 1851,” said Lorinda. “The colony was newly separated from NSW and burst onto the world stage with the discovery of gold. With the news of the earliest finds, the Argus newspaper reported, ‘gentlemen foaming at the mouths, ladies fainting, and children throwing somersaults’. Whatever the short-term results, the long-term one, due to massive immigration, was to change the demographic of colonial society forever”.

Elizabeth Ramsay-Laye wrote a book called *Social Life and Manners in Australia*. She came to the Castlemaine diggings in 1853, and was very well-endowed with goods that included her Parisian trousseau. She wrote: “Money absorbed every thought, every heart, in the diggings”.

Life on goldfields was uncomfortable, and certainly difficult for women to make or conform to any lifestyle to which they were used. However, small touches of women’s needlework could really enhance tent life.

Men too, felt the vacuum created by the rough, unadorned lifestyle. Miner James Petford wrote (with some despair): “I am very tired of living the single life. I have no comfort whatever”. Another contemporary also linked women to the higher standards of tent life,

adding: “One man’s tent, maintained by his wife near the Avoca diggings, wore an air of comfort I have long been stranger to”.

One of the focuses of Lorinda’s research was the doings of one Jane Brown – nee Hamilton. When she came out to the diggings from Scotland, she described in some detail the sewing work she did to make her tent on the Bendigo diggings more comfortable.

“[It was] a digger’s tent, half tent, half house, being wooden with a white calico roof”; instead of papering the room, Jane sewed together glazed chintz to hang on the walls. She carpeted the floors; she dressed the chairs and boxes in “new frocks”, and made linen covers for the tables. In a letter written to her mother back in Scotland she described the effect as “quite impressive”. However

(continued on page 6)



NEEDLE MONEY.

The EASTBRIDGE story continued

PICTURES: NP2207 Two boys on steps outside hut in 1959; NP1197 Nunawading Migrant Hostel, 1971

The total capacity of Eastbridge reached 560 persons. At the end of September 1970, 423 persons were in residence, with 292 from Britain, and countries such as Czechoslovakia, Italy, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia and Turkey making up the remainder. Between 1952 and 1970, approximately 19,000 migrants made it their temporary home while finding their feet in Australia.



Initially, between 1952 and 1958, the children at the Rooks Road migrant camp had their own separate primary school, subsequently replaced by the Nunawading School. Three years later a high school was opened.

In 1983 the nine hectare (22.5 acres) complex of buildings was closed as a migrant centre, though a few activities remained, such as child care for foreign students undertaking English language classes, and a Vietnamese migrant information centre. The Federal Youth Employment Support (CYS8) also had offices there.

Local residents were concerned about early rumours for the future development of the site, one of which was the prospect of a prison; fortunately this was rebuffed. The State Government did investigate the possibility of converting the accommodation units into emergency housing, but this too was deemed too

expensive.

Real estate agents had stated that the land could accommodate up to 100 home sites as a normal private subdivision; instead it was sold in 1985 for \$3.4 million. The southern part became a housing estate (Eastbridge Court) for twenty-nine purpose-built family units. The remaining area at the north end of the original site was bought in 1986 for \$2.8 million by Australia Post. The Eastern Mail Centre, the biggest in the country was built and opened for business in late 1992.

The WHS archives have many oral histories given by new Australian residents, all of whom ultimately resided in Whitehorse, but unfortunately only one is a personal story about their stay at the hostel in Rooks Road. The society would be interested to hear from descendants of the people who actually lived in Eastbridge.

A Y Fitzmaurice

Sources

- WHS; ND files: 625; 941; 949; 953; 1264; 2037; 2306; ; 2328; 2445; 2454; 3424; 4694; 6113
- Whitehorse post 1945 Heritage Study.
- Monash Uni website .
- Many photographs of Eastbridge on Nat Archives Series A 12111.
- RESIDENT'S HISTORY – Margaret SKEY ND5655



UNTIL 1952, hostels were managed by the Migrant Workers' Accommodation Division of the Department of Labour and National Service. The increasing number of migrants entering Australia caused this division to expand so rapidly that the Government decided to create a separate organisation to operate the hostels.

Commonwealth Hostels Ltd was established for the purpose. The non-profit making company was modelled closely on the National Hostels Corporation

that had been set up in Great Britain after WWII to accommodate displaced persons.

The new company was, and is, controlled by a Board of Directors, with representatives from the Department of Immigration, the Treasury, the Trades Unions and the business community, who are directly responsible to the Minister for Labour and National Service. The company's operations have, since 1970, been extended to include non-migrant guest houses and hostels in Canberra, the Northern Territory, Exmouth Gulf and the Cocos Islands.

Blackburn & Mitcham Reporter

CIRCULATING IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF BLACKBURN AND MITCHAM AND DONCASTER.

Volume 45 Number 49

Friday, 9 December 1932

Price Twopence

A LINK WITH AUSTRALIA'S BIRTH.

The new vicar of St. John's, the Rev. L. H. Russell-Croker, Th.L., was unfortunately absent from the parish until the day of his induction on Friday last owing to the lamented death in Sydney of his father, the late Mr Bute Stewart Croker. The late Mr Croker was, up to the time of his death, the oldest surviving member of a family which provides a direct line with the very earliest days of settlement in Australia, the original member having been an officer of the staff that accompanied Governor Phillip to the settlement at Botany Bay. His mother was the eldest sister of the late Marquis of Bute, and she was formerly lady-in-waiting to the late Queen Victoria. The late Mr Bute Stewart Croker was engaged in mining and agricultural pursuits in his earlier years, and for the past twenty-five years had been living in retirement, having his home in Sydney.

XMAS CHEER PARTY.

A Xmas cheer gift afternoon tea party held at the home of Mrs A. J. Elmore, president of the Benevolent Society, on Monday afternoon, was most successful. About sixty were present, and in addition to 80 parcels of groceries for distribution to those in need, the excellent sum of £9 10/ was raised for the object, including a donation of £2 10/ from an anonymous donor. A pleasant social time was spent over the teacups, while the cups were read and fair fortunes distributed therefrom by one initiated into the mysteries of this art.

AMUSEMENTS.

RIALTO THEATRE BOX HILL

EVERY EVENING AT 8.
THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY
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BERT WHEELER and ROBERT
WOOLSEY

in
"PEACH O RENO"

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SYLVIA SIDNEY

"LADIES OF THE BIG HOUSE."
(Children not admitted.)

Matinee Programme.—"Peach O' Reno," Episode 2 of "Battling with Buffalo Bill," Comedies, etc.

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 19, 20 and 21.

THE PICTURE OF THE AGES
"BEN HUR"

with a cast of thousands, headed by
RAMON NOVARRO

also

"THE WEEK-END MYSTERY."

Box Plan at Theatre. Phone WX1418

DISTRICT COURT

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1932.
Before Mr. O'Callaghan, P.M., and
Messrs. Sneddon, Kefford and El-
lingworth, J's.P.

MAINTENANCE CLAIM.

Dulcie Child obtained an order for 7/6 weekly for herself and 2/6 for her child against her husband, Bernard Child, of Montrose, in an action for maintenance. The husband was ordered to find a surety of £10, and to pay £2/10/6 costs.

FAILING TO AFFIX DUTY STAMP.

Horace Walker Garrett, radio salesman, 315 White Horse road, Box Hill, was charged with having failed to affix a duty stamp to a receipt for an amount exceeding £2.

William James, clerk, Menzies Creek, said that he paid defendant £3, and received an unstamped receipt.

Garrett, who was defended by Mr. Fulton, deposed that he did not have a duty stamp when the receipt was given to James, but next day affixed a duty stamp to another receipt, which he had overlooked delivering to James.

Fined 5/-, with 7/9 costs.

OWNERSHIP DISPUTED.

Constable McKibbin applied to the court to determine the ownership of a scoop. He said that following a complaint from John William Yeomans that a scoop had been stolen from his yard at Canterbury road, Box Hill, he took possession of a scoop held by George Henry Fletcher, 49 Acacia street, Box Hill. Both Yeomans and Fletcher claimed to be the rightful owners of the scoop.

Yeomans, on oath, identified the scoop as the one stolen from his yard.

Fletcher, who was represented by Mr. Cleary, said he purchased the scoop three years ago, and his claim was supported by his wife and three others, who identified it on oath as his.

The bench decided that the weight of evidence favoured Fletcher's claim, and ordered that he be given possession of the scoop.

DEBT CLAIM.

Frederick Morris sued Mr. Walton for £3/10/- for meat supplied. Walton admitted indebtedness of £2/19/5, and an order was made for that amount, with £1/6/- costs.

MITCHAM AND BLACKBURN BAKERIES

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RAILWAY ROAD, BLACKBURN.

L. J. Barelli BAKER AND
PASTRYCOOK.

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SPECIALISING IN PASTRY AND SMALL GOODS.
Weddings, Picnic Parties, etc., Catered For.

MONT ALBERT.

CHRISTMAS MEDLEY.

A first class entertainment was presented by the young ladies of the Hotham street Methodist Church on Saturday evening, under the able direction of Mrs. F. R. Nicholas. The first part of the programme was composed of a series of short items, a pianoforte solo by Miss N. Ferguson, and Christmas recitations by Miss Sampson and Miss Ella Anderson. These, with sweet Yuletide harmonies, sung by the Hotham Quartette (Misses E. Angwin, S. Lurst, W. Sheppard and M. Vernon), accompanied by Mrs. Pattison, made a suitable setting for Dickens' Christmas carol, "The Awakening of Scrooge," which occupied the second half of the evening. Miss M. Beckett, who took the part of the old miser, gave an outstanding display of fine dramatic ability, and the supporting characters combined with her to give a strikingly effective portrayal of the events leading up to and following Scrooge's reformation. A beautiful stage curtain, made by Mr. W. Whelan, of Box Hill, and donated to the church by the young ladies, was used for the first time with great effect. At the conclusion, Rev. A. Sussex thanked the company on behalf of the crowded audience for the excellent programme. Others who took part in the carol included Misses E. Anderson, G. Davies, E. Davies, B. Durst, R. Johns, M. King, D. Nicholas, T. Parkinson, A. Sampson, F. Scholes, G. Tipping, J. Watson and L. White. Valuable assistance in the lighting and stage management was given by gentlemen of the church.

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“Your Fine Lady Doesn’t Do Here Any More” (from page 3)

she added that it had been very time-consuming, leaving her “not much time for either play or sport”. She also confided that she “indulged in a little fancywork”, using elegant stitching that contrasted with the plain needlework of necessity and gave her assurance that she retained the culture necessary to identify as “genteel”. Decorative needlework (“handiwork/fancywork”) comprised embroidery, knitting, crochet, tatting, beading and lacemaking; as well as the use of a range of other materials.

Lorinda went on to mention the rash of publications that advised migrants what they should bring with them to Australia – including advice on the types of clothing. They advised that material was taken so that clothes could be sewn on board ship during the long journey. Garments were often made on the journey, but had to be embroidered on deck, as the available light in the cabins was not good enough to sustain intricate needlework.

Lorinda’s interesting talk was, alas, all too soon over. A cornucopia of fascinating ideas and images literally fell out of the available time, leaving us wishing that there had been another hour available for us to spend in her company.

Chris Gray

1. John Shearer, *The Gold Finder of Australia: How He Went, How He Fared, and How He Made His Fortune* (1853)



NA289.1–2 Little dress and cape made on board ship

Whitehorse Historical Society 2017 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 11 March

Saturday 6 May

Saturday 9 September

Saturday 11 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 Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex.

Saturday, 10 December
1.00pm General Meeting

Bob Gardiner:
Olympic Experiences

Saturday, 11 February 2017
1.00pm General Meeting

2017 Speakers T.B.A.

Statistics

Photographs catalogued	-	4227
Artefacts catalogued	-	4782
Documents catalogued	-	7194
Museum visitors September–October	-	329
 Facebook ‘likes’ to October	-	642

Ladies Advice Regarding Sea Travel, (1881) - an excerpt

“I’LL show you the contents of this little fifteen-inch square box first. This I call my ‘steamer-trunk’. It is not a steamer-trunk proper, but I find it much more convenient than a long flat one such as is used to go under the berth. This will stand on one side of the wash-stand in the state-room, where a camp-stool is generally found, and by placing a folded shawl on top it makes a permanent, comfortable, and firm seat, saves trouble of stooping and dragging it out, as is the case with an ordinary steamer-trunk, when you want to open it. The lid has a flat leather loop in the center for a handle and can be easily lifted when closed.



There is a small tray inside which I use as a “catch-all,” and there is plenty of room under the tray for all the clean linen I shall require on the voyage. This and my dressing-bag, with one shawl-strap, is all the baggage I put into my state-room.

Don’t take anything in the eating line except a basket of lemons, and if you must take something to drink let it be Chartreuse. Take a box of cathartic pills, and if you need a dose make it a little larger than you would under the same circumstances on shore. Coarse blue flannel or serge is the best for deck

wear. Have the skirt of the dress as short as possible without looking odd. Attach the skirt to the waist of the dress and

make the front without side forms so that it will look well without a corset. A blouse waist, if well made, will be suitable for almost any figure, and is the most comfortable, but it must fit perfectly round the neck and shoulders.

One flannel skirt, one thin skirt of some bright clean gingham, warm flannels next the body, one pair of overall flannel drawers, bright turkey red, to be worn over the ordinary underclothing and slipped off on going below, two pair stout boots with good square heels, and buttons or laces to support the ankles properly, warm stockings of silk or very fine wool. Have the limbs well covered and free for walking. No matter what season of the year, take along a good stout cloth ulster, reaching to the bottom of your dress and securely buttoned from the throat to the bottom; no hood nor cape for the wind to make a sail of, only one good broad collar for turning up to keep your ears and neck warm while promenading the deck or sitting in your steamer chair; two or three good outside pockets are indispensable. Never venture on deck without this coat, and a big shawl to cover your feet while sitting down.

Do your own packing if you do not keep a maid. Have a place for everything, so that when you want anything in a hurry, or you feel tired, you will not have that interminable bug-bear of ‘having to unpack everything to find it’. Many a good manager or housekeeper seems perfectly lost when she contemplates the possibility of ‘living in a trunk’, as it is vulgarly called. But if she will bring some of her good common sense to bear upon these smaller details, she will find it not only adds greatly to her own comfort, but it will save her friends from the depression of listening to her uninteresting complainings”.

Lynn Coleman

FROM THE COLLECTION



NA228.3 “Howzat”

This Australian game of chance is advertised as ‘The Great indoor Cricket Game’ and was popular in the 1930s when Don Bradman was at his peak.

By simply rolling the modified dice, the player amasses a score until ‘Howzat’ comes up. The other roller is then used to determine whether or not the player is out.



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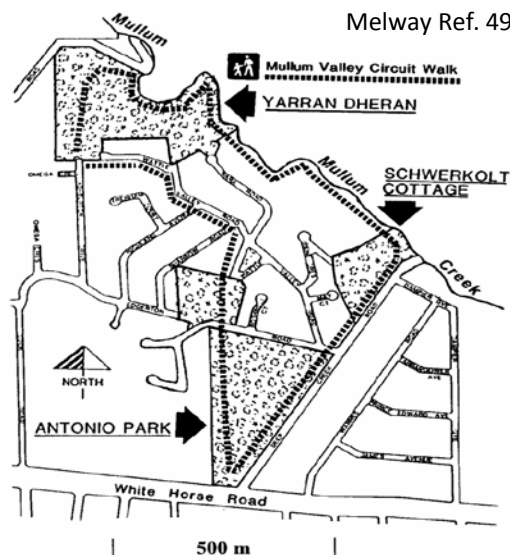
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Copy Deadline for next WHS Newsletter: Wednesday, 11 January 2017

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."

"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."



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available on microfiche for research.

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support of the
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