



# NEWSLETTER

Series 26, No. 1

January–February 2018

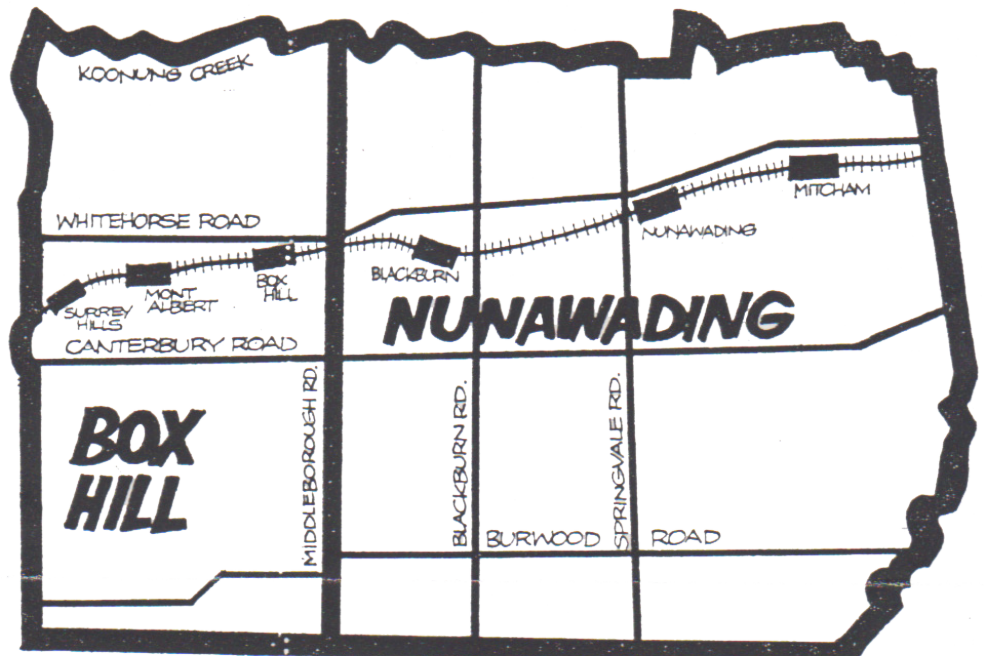
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## BEFORE THE DIVORCE

**T**AKE the first gum tree on the right, pass the three orchards to the left and turn the horses for home.

This is how Nunawading looked before its divorce from the Box Hill district in 1925. (See map). The Shires of Blackburn and Mitcham created their new district on May 26 when Cr Norman Armstrong moved for severance from the Box Hill areas. In December 1925, the Shire of Nunawading became the borough of Box Hill which in turn was proclaimed a city in 1927. The name “Nunawading” was revived in 1945 when the Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham, including the district of Nunawading (Tunstall), was itself proclaimed a city. But despite the severance of what is new Nunawading and Box Hill, the two municipalities have maintained a close



link in progress and together constitute the hub of the eastern suburbs. So while the two cities have played out history. They now both took to their combined future in providing the best possible facilities for residents of their own municipalities and the eastern suburbs.

*\*from the Nunawading Gazette Centenary Issue  
9 August 1972*

**NEXT MEETING**

**General Meeting 1pm Saturday 10 February 2018**  
Helen Opie – Fromelles: An illustrated talk.



# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

*Dear Members*

Welcome to 2018! I hope you all had a pleasant Christmas and start to the new year.

Our December meeting was a great success, with the launch by Yvonne of the beautiful Doll's House. We have had a number of comments in the visitors book expressing praise of it. Harley Hall has built an impressive showcase to display the house opened out to reveal all the rooms.

The hail storm we recently experienced caused an awful mess on the verandah and at the museum entrance. Harley diligently came back during our

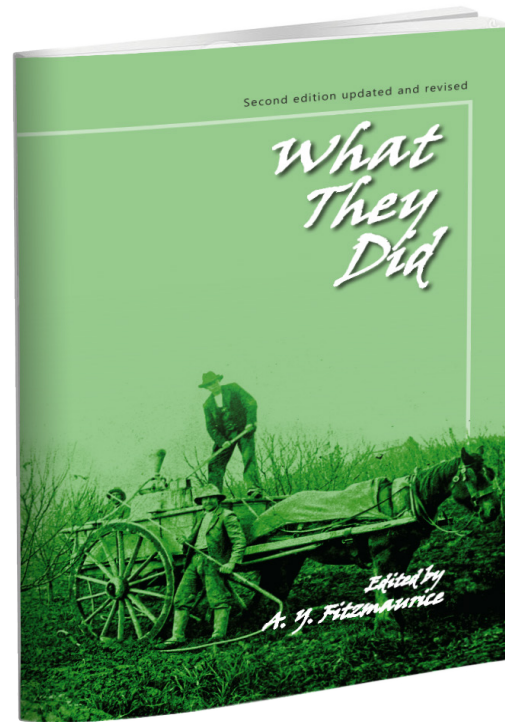
holiday break to clear it up. This is something we will raise with council, as it has happened before.

Our book *What They Did* has sold out, so an updated and revised version was prepared. Pictured right, it is now A4 in size, has an eye-catching new cover and additional articles and photos, and is now available for \$10 per copy.

Regarding future events, we will have a library display in March in the Nunawading Library. Our next meeting will feature Helen Opie speaking on her visit to Fromelles.

No doubt this is the start to another busy year.

*Vicki Jones Evans  
for  
Pat Richardson*



## ERRATUM

In the Meeting report of the December newsletter a picture was incorrectly captioned "Tawny Frogmouth". It was in fact the Powerful Owl.



HELEN OPIE

"A body was found, I was found as a niece and was invited as a guest to the reinterment when the cemetery was opened."

## My Visit to Fromelles

A short talk by Helen Opie

1pm February 10 2018



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# DECEMBER MEETING REPORT



**S**ATURDAY 9 December saw a well attended and much anticipated talk by Yvonne Fitzmaurice about the history of the Doll's House she has donated to the WHS collection. Self-made for her family, it is a truly local piece of history, as well as being a remarkable feat of artistry and skill in its own right. I'll let Yvonne tell the story.

**The Fitzmaurice family** lived in Fuller Street, Mitcham from about 1968 to 2002 where this dolls' house was constructed between the years 1976 and 78.

My daughter, Susan, has recently said that she thought it was I who wanted a dolls' house. She may have been correct! My son Alastair had a train set – was any other excuse needed?

It became a family effort and the builders' photographs are in frames on the inside of the front opening.

However, it was initiated by, and made mainly by me as a birthday present for my daughter.

My husband, Malcolm (reluctantly, as I found out later) cut and assembled the half inch marine ply body. And when the house was completed he remarked that he had thought I would never finish it. But, as it progressed he happily installed the electric lights. And it was he who thought of a wheeled plinth.

Alastair assembled and inserted the fiddly staircase rails and when it was time to complete the roof he helped with the tedious task of cutting to shape and fixing the many tiles. These were made from wooden tongue depressors; each one made three tiles.

Susan appeared to be more interested in furnishing the house. She assembled the cradle, another fiddly exercise. From advertisements she cut out the tiny recipes and glued them into the cook books. She wrote the sheet music, found the maps and newspapers, made the toys and the raffia baskets, plus the Christmas decorations.

She was also responsible for making the household's fresh food which was moulded from an artificial substance that gave off a dreadful smell while it baked. It was then painted.

This brings the question – what did I do?

Some years earlier on necessity I had learnt how to make furniture – and still own one table. I also learnt upholstery and how to wallpaper successfully. However, before construction commenced I decided that if I could make panel doors and sash windows I could make a dolls' house.

To this end I enlisted the help of the salesman at the Model Dockyard in Spencer Street who showed me the type of U shaped wood that could make the sash window channels and the thickness of wood required to allow the frames to slide easily. To make the windows, a sheet of clear acrylic was glued between two pieces of wood.

To manage this close grained soft wood, called Bass wood or Lime wood, special Dremel tools were needed. These included a fret saw with sander, electric drill and bits, a router, a vice, a small square and an equally small spirit level – all bought from Stanley Turner, a Nunawading firm. The kitchen bench was my work space for the many sessions that lasted as long as there was pocket money and spare time available.

All the wooden furniture was made by me, with the exception of the writing desk and the cupboard above it – both were bought as examples from a store in St Charles, Illinois.

The house was completed in time for my daughter's birthday, 15 August 1978, when we gave her a Title Deed to mark the occasion. This date is inscribed on a brass coloured diamond situated at the apex on the front of the house.

In 2002 when our family home was sold, the Doll's House went to stay with close friends in Blackburn until 2017. There the children received amusement and comfort at bedtime when the lights were left glowing as a night light. The children grew, as they do, and interest dissipated. It was then offered to, and accepted by, our Whitehorse Historical Society. And, on one early winter morning it was transported to the museum on the back of a truck.

As I was not present at the meeting, I'll again let Yvonne describe it for posterity:

*The talk went well, a big crowd, some laughter during the talk and spontaneous clapping for both Harley and Richard when I thanked them; plus lots of photos of house and moi post talk.*

*Which brings me to an omission I made: I forgot to thank Kath Innes for all her work arranging the photographs to accompany my talk. A mistake I made: we lived at Mitcham until 2004 when I sold the house. [2002 was the year my husband died.] The latter a small detail, but an error on my part.*

*On behalf of WHS Pat presented me with a lovely big bunch of pink carnations – the perfect colour.*

Chris Gray

# THE WALKER SAGA

## Part Two: HENRY IVANHOE WALKER 1897-1916



**ABOVE:** Ivan Walker just before he went to war;  
**BELOW:** SS “*Themistocles*” departing Sydney for Egypt in 1915

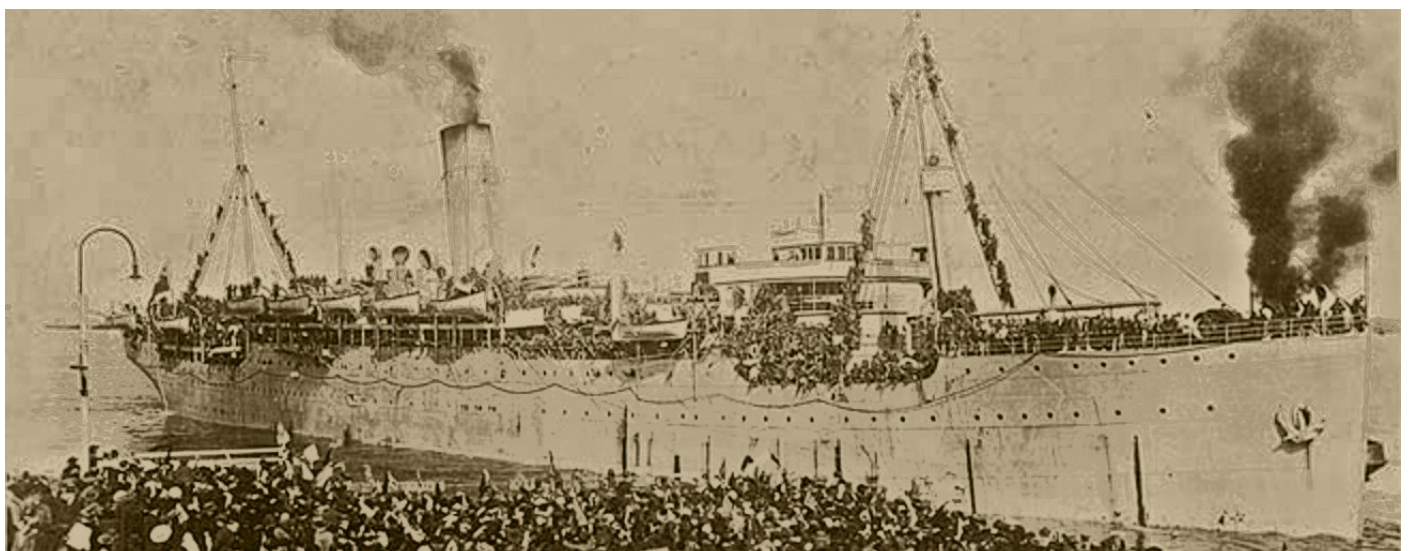
**D**ESCENDANTS of Pte Henry Ivanhoe Walker, representing the children and grandchildren of three of Ivan’s siblings, gathered at the Box Hill RSL on 16 August 2016 to mark the centenary of his death in Pozieres, France during the Great European War of 1914–1918.

Ivan, as he was known, was born in 1897, the first son of Henry Christopher Walker and Mary Jane née Pascoe. Henry Christopher was the blacksmith in Mitcham with a forge at the south-west corner of the intersection of Rooks Road and Whitehorse Road. This Walker family has no connection to the better known family headed by E. E. Walker of Australian Tessellated Tile Company fame, but both families were stalwarts of the Mitcham Methodist Church. There is an unusual connection between the two families however; the author’s step-grandmother was a grand-daughter of E. E. Walker and so the two Walker families are not completely independent.

Henry Ivanhoe (“Ivan”) started his working career with the Victorian Railways in the city. It has been said that Ivan was a sensitive individual noted for playing the violin – which he bought himself – and for reading and writing, and he was much loved for those gentle characteristics. (Ben Walker, Ivan’s great-nephew, has Ivan’s violin in France, where he lives with his family. It is now restored, and he is learning to play it).

Ivan enlisted in 1915 on his 18th birthday, 16 October, and initially trained in Australia. He went into camp at Royal Park on 1 November 1915 and on 28 January 1916 sailed for Egypt on the SS *Themistocles*. When training was completed in Egypt, Ivan was shipped to Marseilles and then joined action on the Western Front. His mother, Mary Jane, became increasingly unhappy with his being a volunteer for army duty. She saw no purpose in her eldest son being sent off to fight “someone else’s war”, as she was prone to call it. She was not a typical colonial loyalist: she was a pragmatist. She refused to allow Ivan to go to war until he was the right age and she taught Roy how to function as an independent individual.

*(continued on page 7)*





# From the Nunawading Reporter

CIRCULATING IN THE CITY OF NUNAWADING AND THE SHIRE OF DONCASTER AND TEMPLESTOWE AND SURROUNDING DISTRICTS

Volume 66 Number 7

Friday, 6 February 1953

Price Threepence

## Escaped Death At The Gorge

The death of Mr. Ronald James Anderson, 29, of Camberwell, last week, when he fell to his death down the rugged gorge at Mt. Buffalo, recalled to a Box Hill resident that he had a remarkable escape from death in a fall at almost exactly the same spot in 1910. He is Mr. L. A. Gregory, of Kent road, Box Hill, who, as a young man of 21, fell 1,000 feet in the gorge. A few scars, snapshots of the scene of the fall and yellowed newspaper cuttings headed "Man's Marvellous Escape," are some souvenirs Mr. Gregory has of his mishap.

### Still Amazed

Badly lacerated and bruised, Mr. Gregory, who is still amazed that anyone should survive such a fall, broke no bones, but, on regaining consciousness, was able to crawl along the foot of the gorge, unaided, until he reached the house of a caretaker at Mt. Buffalo. In those days communication and transport were really difficult, and Mr. Gregory recalled that he had a long wait in a little cottage with only the caretaker's wife to look after him till he could be moved.

### Beautiful and Treacherous

Beautiful are the magnificent views of the waterfalls, streams and the snow-clad heights in winter, but the ground is treacherous as it has claimed at least five lives in the last half century, including those of a clergyman, a doctor and a woman.

## The Pusher Caused A Furore

A Box Hill housewife who started a feud with the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board because she refused to get off a tram with her pusher, has received communications from more than 40 women supporting her stand.

It all started when, one hot day earlier this month, Mrs. W. P. Byrne, Monash street, Box Hill, got on a Wattle Park tram with her pusher folded up. Mrs. Byrne claims she was ordered off the tram. She says the conductress refused a fare for the pusher when Mrs. Byrne would not get off and called an inspector and told him, "She gets off or I stop the tram."

### "Merely Explained"

The conductress said she had merely explained the law regarding hours in which pushcarts could be carried according to the chairman of the tramways board, Mr. Risson. She was telling Mrs. Byrne so she would not be disappointed if ordered off a more crowded tram in future. The conductress told Mrs. Byrne she was an hour late—that pushers should not be carried after 4 p.m.

According to the conductress, Mrs. Byrne invited her to "just try and put me off."

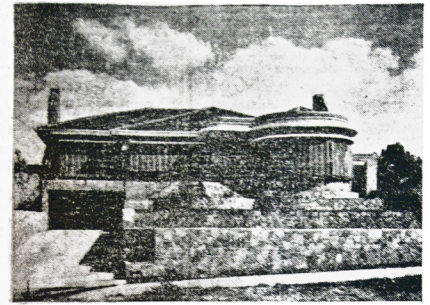
### To Protect Herself

The chairman of the tramways board said the conductress asked Mrs. Byrne's name and address to protect herself. Had Mrs. Byrne given the information the board would have written to her explaining the law. Mr. Risson said he regretted there had been no independent witnesses. The board's officers and he himself accepted the conductress's version, he said. "I regret that she has suffered unpleasant publicity in her endeavour to do a difficult job in the service of the public." Later it was announced the board would review the hours during which it was possible to carry pushers.

Mrs. Byrne said that she was very happy that the board was reviewing the question. She said she would not have adopted the attitude she did if it had not been that there were only two other people in the compartment, and the whole tram was much less than a quarter full.

### Discretion

Mrs. Byrne said she felt the board could give official permission to conductors and conductresses to use their own discretion when trams are obviously empty enough for pushers to be carried without discomfort or inconvenience to anybody.



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## MITCHAM

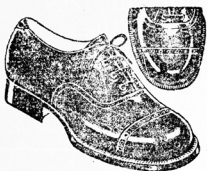
### THE END IN SIGHT

Over a year since the hopeful beginning in 1952, the Nunawading Youth Club's hall in Walker Park is in within sight of being finished. For some time past three faithful adult members of the committee and two younger members of the club have been plugging away at week-ends. But last week-end the gang included no less than 20 volunteers. This is indeed encouraging, but there is more to come as the floor will be put in in the next few weeks. The need for its own building is being greatly felt with largely increased membership in both boys' and girls' sections.

### BEWARE! THIEF

A lady, resident of Middleborough road, was looking out of her window for the post-woman one afternoon last week when she saw someone else taking a keen, a too keen, interest in her very nice garden. This person a woman, already supplied with some plants, after a quick look round turned her attention to some young privet plants in the developing hedge and started to pull up several. The lady of the house rushed out and demanded what the other thought she was doing. The intruder gave a name and address (which is being checked by the police), and made off in the general direction of Springfield road.

## BACK TO SCHOOL SHOES



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Young people nowadays may be interested to hear of a rite of passage experienced by many newlyweds in the earlier part of the last century. It is described here in an article that appeared in the WHS Newsletter in 1981 (writer unknown).

## THE TIN KETTLING EXPERIENCE

**I**N a locality where everyone knew everyone else it was a big event. Soon after a couple were married there would be a "tin kettling". It was hard to know if it was a threat or a promise, but with much apprehension on the bride's part, the traumatic experience had to be endured. Living in dread of the visitors' arrival each night - the suspense grew and grew.

By prior arrangement, the fellows of the district gathered together bringing empty kerosene tins or whatever, and a waddy\* to make a terrible racket. At a given time they surrounded the home of the newly married couple. Then, all together, the din would start. The couple would usually be pleased to invite the fellows in, if only to have the noise stopped for a while. On the way to the newly-weds' home there were many incidents of tripping over objects or falling into drains, which only added to the fun and excitement.

There would not be enough chairs, so they would sit on the floor, chatting, singing and playing mouth organs and often squeeze boxes. The new bride would proceed to see if there were enough cups for supper. Someone would bring a plate of innocent looking sandwiches made with flannel fillings.

One or two of the visitors would be up to even more tricks outside while the evening was in progress. A bag would be placed over the chimney to make the fire smoke, or they would tamper with the outside toilets. It all seemed to be part of the game. Then they would all depart just as quickly as they came, leaving their "Blessings" and their array of tins, because, before the next wedding another lot could be found.

Who knows how relieved the young couple were when the sound of the merry-makers faded as they walked away, still enjoying the fun of 'surprising' yet another pair of newly-weds.

*\*a heavy wooden club*

FOOTNOTE: An 1861 newspaper article shows that tin-kettling was used at times as a form of protest against the union of the couple. In this case a much married widow was tin-kettled upon her marriage to a youth who was younger than one of her sons.

## Whitehorse Historical Society 2018 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 10 March*

*Saturday 5 May*

*Saturday 8 September*

*Saturday 10 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 February 2018**

**1.00pm General Meeting**

*Helen Opie*

*Fromelles. An illustrated talk.*

**Saturday, 14 April**

**1.00pm General Meeting**

*Jan Davidson*

*Cemeteries – In General*

**Saturday, 16 June**

**1.00pm General Meeting**

*Gary Presland*

*Local Indigenous Groups*

## Statistics

Photographs catalogued	-	4253
Artefacts catalogued	-	4798
Documents catalogued	-	7418
Museum visitors November–December		342
 Facebook 'likes' to December	-	702

# THE WALKER SAGA

## Part Two: HENRY IVANHOE WALKER 1897-1916

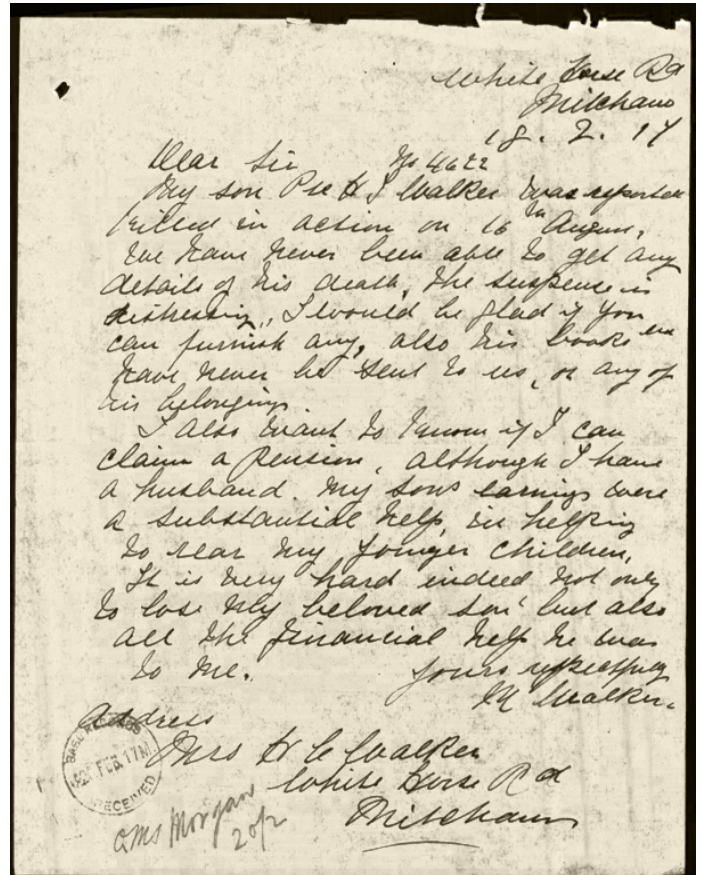
(continued from page 4)

Ivan was killed in action in France on August 16, 1916, in Pozieres on the Western Front, in the Battle of the Somme. Ivan's sister Hazel recalls: "I was outside on the green when Vera came running to say our parents were both crying. The minister from Box Hill had called with the sad news. I don't think my father had ever thought it would happen to Ivan. Our life was changed now. Roy became very quiet. The two boys had grown up very close to each other."

A series of pathetic correspondence commenced as Mary Jane begged the War Office for news and the return of any personal effects. Ivan's body had been identified as dead but, not unusually, was lost in subsequent actions and was not recovered. The lack of an identified grave site compounded the grief. Many members of the family have since visited Pozieres in tribute to Ivan's service.

Ivan's name lives on. Roy's first son, Evan Herbert, was named after Ivan. (Evan, an architect, held several ministries in the government of John Cain Jnr including Planning and is largely credited with the development of Southbank.). Ivan's close friend, Francis Southall, was sufficiently moved to name his first son Ivan (he went on to become the well-known and awarded author Ivan Southall). Ben Walker, Evan's son and Ivan's great-nephew, has composed a musical celebrating Ivan's life and that of Rudolf, a German soldier and the great uncle of a lifelong friend of Ben's. Ivan and Rudolph fought against each other in Pozieres and the musical notes the futility of war and the essential brotherhood of mankind.

Ken Barelli



ABOVE: Letter from Mary Jane to the War Office seeking word of Ivan; LEFT: Ivan's violin (now restored). He signed and dated the inside back of the soundboard.



## WHS Committee Contacts

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9837 5840

### Vice-President

Vicki Jones-Evans

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Kathy Innes

### Treasurer

Eddie Tan

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Wendy Standfield

## WHS website

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

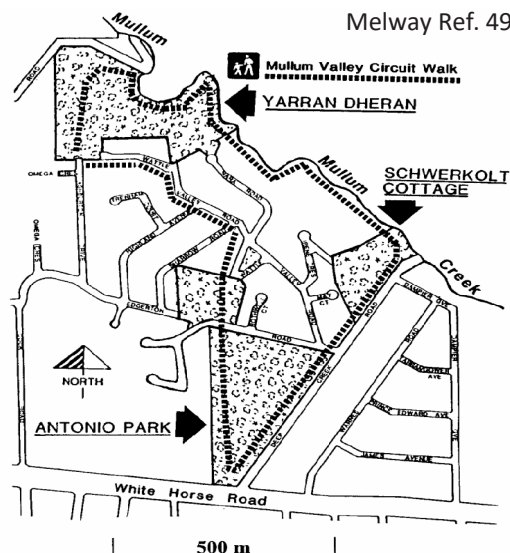
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**Copy Deadline for next WHS Newsletter: Wednesday, 7 March 2018**

## 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."*



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.



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