NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY. NEWSLETTER.

Price 5c. JANUARY - FEBRUARY, 1981.

Registered for posting as a publication. Category "B"

ACTING PRESIDENT.

January: Jean Webster.
874-4210

February: Phyllis Johnson
874-4745

VICE PRESIDENTS.

Shirley Jones
874-7073

Judy Robley
878-1492

SECRETARY.

Clyde Tilson
878-4086

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Doris Mattingly
878-4630

JOINT TREASURERS.

Ian & Shirley Barker
14 Tortice Street,
NUNAWADING.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

A SPECIAL MEETING of the Nunawading Historical Society was held on Sunday, 30th November, 1980 at the Museum. This meeting was called by the Past President, Jean Webster, as an emergency meeting to resolve the situation where-in the Society was without Office-bearers. No nominations were received at either the Annual Meeting or at the following General Meeting in November. In such a case it could be said that an organisation does not exist.

T. Poole moved the motion that Jean Webster and Clyde Tilson act as Chairman and Secretary respectively for this meeting. This motion was passed.

The meeting was opened at 6.15 p.m. and members were reminded that as all positions as Office-bearers had been declared vacant at the November meeting and if no-one was prepared to fill these vacancies then this Society would be unable to carry on. Our membership has increased over the past 12 months; we have attended a number of social functions and shared outings of an historic interest; had no trouble in getting help for our working bees and in all areas the society seemed to be in a strengthening position.

After much discussion a rather unusual solution was found to the problem of no nomination for President. (All other positions had been filled, as above.) It was decided that a number of members would take it in turn to act as President for one month. It is hoped that this will introduce a lot of new ideas and enthusiasm to the group and at the same time allow members to gain the necessary confidence to nominate for executive positions.

YOUR COMMITTEE FOR 1981.

BETTY MUCKLESTON 874-2350

SHIRLEY JONES 874-7073

PHYLLIS JOHNSON 874-4745

JEAN WEBSTER 874-4210

VEE WOOD 873-2238

M. CHATWIN 874-2487

C. TILSON 878-4086

D. MATTINGLY ..... ~~787~~ 818-4630

HISTORY IN THE MAKING.

Workmen in Sydney are putting together the city's biggest jigsaw puzzle with no less than 800,000 individual pieces, and covering 4,800 square meters. The puzzle is made up of irregular shaped pieces of cobblestones, all the same colour, and weighing in all 550 tonnes. When completed it will cover Circular Quay's plaza area.

The cobblestones, imported from Italy, are being placed by hand, one at a time, into hundreds of fan-shaped patterns. And they have to be laid in a way that ensures a good walking surface with no protruding edges which could trip pedestrians.

A level bed of weak sand and cement is placed on the jigsaw floor before the cobblestones are selected and tapped into place. Workmen use a large wooden template to define the "Fan" pattern, moving the template to create another similar pattern alongside as each "fan" is completed.

The cobblestones are being laid in a way that has not substantially changed since first put down at Circular Quay back in the early days of the colony. Cement grouting is used to fill the spaces between the cobblestones and to firmly fix them in position. When the cement is set, the stones are acid etched to bring out the rich russet colour of the stones.

Sydney is working hard to re-create much of the romantic atmosphere of old Sydney when Circular Quay was lined with tall-masted sailing ships. The plaza is also to contain 30 light standards; 53 flagpoles; 85 trees; 68 bench seats; 48 pre-cast litter bins.

From "The Sun", Sydney.

AND IT ALL WENT DOWN THE DRAIN.

It was a tough job for Jack Rothwell and his workmates dredging a busy stretch of the Chesterfield Canal, in Nottinghamshire, England. Now they were finding it impossible to shift a heavy chain lying on the bottom of the canal.
Finally, Jack, foreman of the gang, ordered the chain to be hooked to their dredger. The driver started up and with one sharp tug, the obstruction was freed. The workmen hauled in the chain, along with a large block of wood attached to the end of it, and knocked off for a tea break.

While they were away, a passing policeman noticed an extraordinary whirlpool in the normally placid canal. He also noticed that the water level was falling. By the time he brought back the dredging gang the canal had almost disappeared. Jack and his men had pulled out the plug of the canal. One-and-a-half miles of waterway had gone down the drain. The plug, put there 200 years earlier, had remained undisturbed until Jack's gang came along in 1978. Now all that was left were grounded holiday cruisers complete with angry owners, the dredger stuck firmly on the muddy bottom.... and a plug-hole.

WILL YOU BE IN THE VICINITY OF WARRNAMBOOL DURING THE HOLIDAYS ? ? ? ?

If so, why not visit Flagstaff Hill.

Flagstaff Hill, the port of Warrnambool, is a developing complex of ships, buildings and artifacts recalling the days of sail. It emphasises the dependence of early Australia on the moods of the weather and sea and the importance of coastal ports in the latter part of the 19th century.

The port of Warrnambool on Lady Bay has a history going back to the 1840's. The treacherous bay claimed numerous sailing vessels and in 1853 a flagstaff was erected on the hill as a navigational aid. The following year a stone column, the base of the lower lighthouse, was erected and together with a wooden lighthouse on the beach, and a bluestone one on Middle Island, assisted vessels.

In 1871 the lighthouse and associated buildings were removed and re-erected on Flagstaff Hill and a light added to the stone pillar. Alignment of the two lighthouses indicated a safe channel.

The rapid increase in sea trade necessitated the building of two jetties and later a breakwater, completed in 1890 and extended in 1914. However, the completion of the rail line to Warrnambool in 1897 and the comparative insecurity from southern gales led to a decline in the use of the port by 1934.

Today, the building re-erected on Flagstaff Hill in 1871, which was classified by the National Trust, are complemented by re-created buildings such as the main entrance building which is a replica of the old Warrnambool Town Hall, circa 1854, the port medical office, Examiner Newspaper office, "Stella Maris" tea rooms, shipsmith, lifeboat shed, and areas for a boat builder, the Steamship Navigation Co.,

a ship chandler and a bond store.

Vessels on display include the ketch the "Reginal M" and the barquentine "Speculant" while the anchor from the ill fated "Loch Ard" is also on display while undergoing restoration.

Flagstaff Hill is open every day from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. except Good Friday and Christmas Day.

TIN KETTLING EXPERIENCE.

In a locality where everyone knew everyone else it was a big event that soon after a couple got 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.

The fellows of the district arranged to gather together, kerosene tins or whatever, and a waddy, to make a terrible racket and at a given time surround the home of the newly married couple. There were many incidents of tripping over objects or falling into drains which only added to the fun and excitement. Then all together the din would start and the couple would usually be pleased to invite the fellows in to have the noise stopped for awhile.

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. Some would bring aplate -- sandwiches made so innocent looking 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 toilets (outside) would be tampered with. It all seemed to be in the game. Then all would depart leaving their "Blessings" and an array of tins, as after each wedding another lot of tins would be found.

Who knows how relieved the young couple would be when the sound of the merry-makers faded as they walked to their meeting place still enjoying the fun of "surprising" yet another pair of newly weds.

VICTORIAN VILLA GARDENS.

Many typical suburban villas of the 1870's and 1880's abound in the middle ring suburbs of Melbourne and a number of their new owners have been looking to the National Trust for information re an appropriate garden for a particular type of house.

It is curious, though not surprising, how an historically accurate garden is so appropriate to the architecture it was designed to surround. Owners wishing to research the original form of their garden in a thorough way would find the M.M.B.W. maps of Melbourne, which were prepared around the turn of the century when Melbourne was being sewered, most interesting. Copies can be seen at the map section of the Public Library in Swanston Street. These maps show considerable detail and if you are lucky will show the exact layout of the garden in which you may be interested. Carefully digging over the garden of an old home may also unearth paths, edges, drains, etc. which will also give clues to the original layout.

Photographs are also very useful and if you are lucky enough to have an early photograph this will often be your best source of information. The LaTrobe Library in LaTrobe Street has a good collection of photographs of suburban areas and often your local Municipal Library and the Historical Society also have collections.

You may have to undertake a conjectural design, if all the above sources fail. Some general observations may assist; remember these are only related to a typical suburban villa.

Picket Fences of varying designs were common. Many of these still survive and you can study them in many of the middle ring suburbs.
Gardens were often symmetrical. Lawns wereusually kept to a minimum if used at all.
Garden Beds were often lined with edging tiles or clipped box hedges or occasionally both.
A Hedge about 7 or 8 ft. high along the front fence was common. This was often Pittosporum or Cupressus.
Wire Arbours, to support climbing plants were often placed over paths.
The symmetrical design often focussed on a special feature - a fountain, urn or a special plant, such as a cordyline or a camellia.
Large trees and shrubs were usually located toward the side boundaries with lower planting in the centre of the composition.

From National Trust News.

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY. PROGRAMME FOR 1981.

ALL MEETINGS WILL BE HELD ON THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH, IN THE WILLIS ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE, NUNAWADING at 8.00 p.m.

FEBRUARY	11th.	Business Meeting. Members Brief Contributions.
MARCH	11th.	Mrs. LESLEY ENTERKIN, who has contributed material to the Archives in the State College of Education, to speak on: "TEACHER TRAINING IN THE THIRTIES"
APRIL	8th.	Mr. IAN WEICKHARDT, co-author of 'Return to Ross Town', to speak on "FOLLOWING THE HISTORY TRAIL TO ROSS TOWN" (the now defunct railway of several Melbourne suburbs).
MAY	~~19~~ 13th.	Mr. ELEY, President of the Fire Brigade Historical Society to speak on: "FIRE BRIGADES OF THE PAST".
JUNE	10th.	Mr. DAVID MOSS will tell of: "THE HISTORY OF THE BLACKBURN/MITCHAM FILM SOCIETY".
JULY	8th.	EVENING MEMORIES. (The making of Socieal History)
AUGUST	12th.	Panel of Speakers from the Blackburn Baptist Interdenominational Stamp and Coin Club. "A STAMP THAT IS DIFFERENT" Story of this 10 year old club and a short audio-visual show depicting the early history of the Republic of Nauru through its stamps.
SEPTEMBER	9th.	To be arranged.
OCTOBER	14th.	ANNUAL MEETING.
NOVEMBER	11th.	Mr. MORRIS CHATWIN - his subject - "POSTAL HISTORY."
DECEMBER	9th	CHRISTMAS MEETING.

All meetings are open to the public and you are cordially invited to attend. You can be assured of a warm welcome.

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY. NEWSLETTER.

Price 5c. MARCH - APRIL, 1981.

Registered for posting as a publication. Category "B"

	ACTING PRESIDENTS.	VICE-PRESIDENTS.	NEWSLETTER EDITOR.
March:	M. Chatwin. 874-2487	Shirley Jones. 874-7073	Jean Webster 874-4210
April:	K. Patterson. 878-3162	Judy Robley. 878-1492	
May:	I. Barker.		

SECRETARY.	ASSISTANT SECRETARY.	JOINT TREASURERS.
Clyde Tilson. 874-4086	Doris Mattingly. 878-4630	Ian & Shirley Barker. 14 Tortice Street, Nunawading.

CORRECTION TO JANUARY-FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER.

Please note that the May meeting will be held on the 13th, and not the 19th.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

At our February meeting the history teacher from Burwood Heights High School sought the assistance of this Society for a number of his Higher School Certificate students who are studying Australian History this year. These students will be given the option of preparing papers on local history for the period 1914-1945, and intend using the City of Nunawading for this project.

They will have a sheet of prepared questions and would like to talk to members of the community who have lived in this city for a long period between 1914-1945. As their papers will represent one third of their possible exam result, in this subject, you can appreciate that our support is of the utmost importance.

If you feel that you can be of assistance, will you please add your name to the list to be submitted to the school.
RING Clyde Tilson (878-4086) or any other office bearer as shown above.

MARCH 29TH. 'BACK TO BLACKBURN' 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

As part of the 'Back to Blackburn' celebrations the Nunawading Historical Society will hold an exhibition of Photographs and items of general interest in the pavilion at Morton Park between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Sunday, March 29th. The exhibits have to be prepared, and Clyde or Maurie Chatwin would be pleased to hear when you would be available to assist. Volunteers are also required on the day -

8.30 to 10 a.m. - To set up exhibits.
10.00 to 5 p.m. - The area is a large one and it is felt that at least three members would be needed on duty throughout this period. If we have lots of names then the work can be evenly shared and others will have the opportunity of enjoying the other attractions.
5 p.m. to 6 p.m. - To dismantle and pack away exhibits.

WHAT TIME WILL YOU BE THERE?????
This is to be a real family day. Games - Stalls - Afternoon Tea.
.....A Steam Train running from Camberwell to Blackburn and taking people from Blackburn further up the line for a ride to revive many memories.
..... Cobb & Co. Coach running between Morton Park and Blackburn Lake.

DATES TO REMEMBER.

MARCH 11th — Nunawading Historical Society - General Meeting - 8p.m.
Mrs. Lesley Enterkin to speak on "Teacher Training in the Thirties".

APRIL 8th — Nunawading Historical Society - General Meeting - 8 p.m.
Mr. Ian Weickhardt - "Following the History Trail to Ross Town".

SATURDAY, APRIL 11th, 1981.
THEATRE PARTY MITCHAM REP. PRODUCTION OF 'SHOCK', A MYSTERY THRILLER.
NUNAWADING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE - $3.50 per ticket, available from Phyllis Johnson (874-4745. Please book and pay for your tickets as early as possible.

LIONS DEN OP SHOP, BLACKBURN - MONDAY 8th TO SATURDAY 20th JUNE.
Please keep your discarded items till then as we need stock totake when we start our two weeks. Also need volunteers to man the shop, so keep date free please.

MEMORIES OF VERMONT.

Sidney and Shirley came to Vermont in 1936 from Brighton. They left a well settled suburban home to build in the quiet rural area of Vermont. Their new home was situated one block from View Road on Canterbury Road and made the fourth house between there and the Mitcham Road intersection. There were only two or three more houses in that stretch to Heatherdale Road. While on the opposite side of Canterbury Road St. Luke's Church of England stood on the corner; then the old wooden ex-mechanics hall that was used as a Scout's Hall, the Bakery owned by the Wallis family and two or three houses, with the remaining area to Heatherdale Road being apple and pear orchards. Laurie and Zerbie were two names that came to mind as orchardists in this area. Canterbury Road was a two lane road in a cutting between two steep-sided banks. The unmade tracks on these banks were used as service roads to the houses set back amidst the gums, brooms and native wattles, till progress caught up with it about 1967. To those who lived along this stretch of the road it was destruction of the first order as first one authority and then another came through and cut down those magnificent gums. It was like a circus. One authority would leave a patch of trees and vegetation and work around it, clean up and move on. Within days another authority would be there digging up a completely different track of land. By the time they'd all finished the only vegetation left was that on private property. It is hard to believe that for many years after 1936 the local boys rode their bikes and billycarts down Canterbury Road and became quite offended when a car ventured onto "their road".

Charlie Pannam's store stood on the corner of Canterbury Road (site of the present Shell garage) and his name has been given to that group of shops that now stand immediately opposite, "Pannam's Corner". Charlie, as he was affectionately known, sold all the groceries, hay and corn, firewood, briquettes, chook food and a host of other items. Here the local people gathered to collect their mail, buy newspapers, and to just catch up on the local happenings. Many locals, who had come over the rough and muddy roads, left their gumboots and old shoes at Charlie's store, leaving on the bus with no sign of their slipping and sliding journey up the hill.

A Milk Bar, Fruit Shop and Butcher completed Vermont's Shopping centre, while at Rangeview (called Half-Way) there was the grocer run by the Clarke family and a butcher. Shirley remembers well receiving visits from the two grocers and butchers seeking her custom. Orders were called for and the goods delivered, at no charge. This was still the system when I came to Vermont in 1949, continuing into the early 1950's. How many remember those small bags (or in your case was it a twist of white paper?) filled with boiled lollies that came with the receipted account from the grocer.

The children attended Vermont State School to 8th grade and those hoping to go on to further education had to sit for an entrance exam either to Box Hill Boy's School or Camberwell Girl's School. It was quite an achievement to get a place at one of these schools and not something that one could take as a normal progression at the end of State School.

Entertainment in the district centred around the home and the church. Afternoon tea parties were popular with the ladies and visiting or entertaining on Sunday evenings, when family and friends would sit around the open fire and talk or join together around the piano for a sing-song. Pictures were shown on Saturday evenings in the Memorial Hall at Mitcham and on Saturday nights a special bus ran from Vermont corner at 7.40. It was always full to overflowing. There were church concerts and socials and the Annual Fetes held by church and school involved a great number of community members. The Parish Ball was a must and the ladies of the parish excelled themselves with magnificent suppers that are still remembered by those who attended.

The small wooden Church of St. Luke's was dedicated on Tuesday 3rd September 1907 by Archbishop Clarke in the presence of a large gathering of residents of the parish and surrounding districts. The Church was designed by the Rev. A. B. Rowed, B.C.E. and had seating accommodation for 120 persons. In 1920 the Rev. Thomas McKeon was inducted Vicar of St. Luke's and under his leadership the Church went from strength to strength. The Church building having been found inadequate, an extension was added to the southern side in 1922, and the two additional gables that were added to the Church transformed its appearance. This Church is now situated to the rear of the brick Church built approximately 1960, and is in use for Sunday School and other Church activities. Following the death of Rev. McKeon the people of St. Luke's, ably led by Rev. A. Craig, built a parish hall named the McKeon Hall, at a cost of £782. The existing vicarage was built on the corner of Grove Street in 1940 and the foundation of the Kindergarten was laid in 1956. A government grant of £2,250 assisted with the finance, the remainder of the cost of £5,500 being found in equal shares by the Church and enthusiastic committee and members of St. Luke's Free Kindergarten; the Church provided the land for the project. The building was substantially erected by volunteer labour.

There was no doctor in Vermont till early 1960's when Dr. Corbett came to the area. Prior to this the district was served by either Dr. Carter or Dr. Cochrane, both of whom had practices in Mitcham. Each doctor worked on his own with a locum taking over when they took that all too rare break. They served the area of Mitcham, Vermont and beyond 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Dr. Carter was particularly remembered. He was a family doctor in every sense of the word. He always wore a smart white coat in his surgery and always saw his patients to the front door and on the way back welcomed his next patient. He had no receptionist, so if you rang the doctor, then you spoke to him. It was a great loss to the community when this man died at work. Of course, going to the doctor was a rare occurrence and only for real emergencies or continuing illness. The local chemist was consulted and offered advice for the common illnesses and made up simple medicines. Patent medicines were few. Then there were the tried and trusted home remedies passed on from mother to daughter. Things like the hot bread poultice used to draw out a deep set splinter or the like. Salt heated in an old woollen sock and held to the face to ease the pain of tooth-ache. Carb-soda and lemon used for any type of indigestion. How many such remedies are still in use in your family?

Over the period 1950-1960 the character of Vermont gradually changed as many orcharists sold their properties for sub-division into housing blocks and homes began to spring up like mushrooms. Even sub-divisions were different, for then there were no regulations relating to the making of roads and footpaths. Roads were formed, drainage from many blocks ran out into the street, and neighbours in those new areas often held working bees to fill potholes, clear drains and so make the long wait for proper roads more bearable. Land prices soared and many a story was told of land available, prior to the war, for £15 per block, that brought thousands after the war. With so many new people taking up

residence the character of Vermont changed. No longer was it a small village where everyone knew everyone else. Progress had caught up with it and Vermont became just another suburb - well almost.

To those who had lived here for many years it will always be a place apart. Perhaps that sign that once stood near the crossroad of Canterbury and Mitcham Roads should be replaced. It read -

THIS IS VERMONT.
NOW YOU HAVE SEEN IT TELL YOUR FRIENDS.

This is a piece of Social History. It must be remembered that a Social History is about events as seen by one person, or group of people. An Historian on the other hand will research a story from all available sources and put together the facts from his findings.

It would give me great pleasure, and I'm sure other readers would be interested in hearing similar stories from other sections of this city. Why not write some memories to be included in the next Newsletter.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE TRACING THEIR FAMILY TREE OR THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHERE TO START.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

REGISTRAR Queen Street, Melbourne (for Victorians)
Certificates of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

LATROBE LIBRARY
Postal Directories
Some Electoral Rolls
Lists of Teachers in Parliamentary Papers
Lists of Civil Service in Blue Books (usually in Parliamentary Papers)
Reference in local histories, unpublished manuscripts, etc.
Government Gazettes

PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE, Cherry Lane, North Laverton, or its reading room, 1 Little Collins Street, Melbourne.
Ship's Passenger Lists
Probate Registers and Copies of Wills
Lands Dept. - Plans, reports of land sales, selectors files, Lease and Licence Registers.
Education Dept. - Lists of prospective pupils for new schools in school building files.
Crown Law - Inquests and Criminal Cases, also civil legal actions, insolvencies.
Blue Books - List of Civil Servants
Departmental Correspondence
Admissions to the Bar.

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, 98 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
Has copies of material listed above, plus private records.

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY. NEWSLETTER.

Price 5c.
JUNE - JULY, 1981.
Registered for posting as a publication. Category "B"

ACTING PRESIDENTS.

June: B. Muckleston. 874-2350

July: A. or T. Poole. 878-2880

August: L. or A. Baker. 878-7729

VICE PRESIDENTS.

Shirley Jones. 874-7073

Judy Robley 878-1492

ACTING SECRETARY.

Clyde Tilson 878-4086

ASSISTANT SECRETARY.

Doris Mattingly. 878-4630

JOINT TREASURERS.

Ian & Shirley Barker, 14 Tortice Street, Nunawading.

EDITOR.

Jean Webster 874-4210

PLEASE NOTE.

All meetings of the Nunawading Historical Society will in future begin at 7.45 p.m. SHARP. This will enable us to complete the business of the meeting by 8.30 and allow our speakers an earlier start. Please be seated by 7.40 p.m.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

JUNE 10th. 7.45 p.m. Willis Room, Civic Centre, Nunawading. Mr. David Moss on the "History of the Blackburn/Mitcham Film Society".

JUNE 9th to 20th. The Society will be looking after the Lion's Den Opportunity Shop, Blackburn during this period. A good percentage of funds raised during these two weeks will go to our funds. If you have not already notified SHIRLEY JONES of the time you are available, please ring her now - 874-7073. We need goods to sell and as many helpers as possible.

JULY 8th. 7.45 p.m. Willis Room, Civic Centre, Nunawading. Evening of Memories (the Making of a Social History) All members are asked to contribute a short story from your childhood memories, school, growing up, wartime, your suburb, etc. List of suggested topics available at June meeting.

JULY 25th. THEATRE PARTY - "Breath of Spring" - a very funny comedy production by Mitcham Rep. Nunawading High School Theatre
Adults $3.50 Pensioners & Students $2.50
Bookings: Ring Phyllis Johnson - 874-4745.

Thanks to Teddy and Allan Poole for the gift of two twentieth century china plates for display at the Museum. Also to Mrs. Gaskin of Nunawading who donated two antique plates, one about 150 years old.

Mrs. Gaskin is 6th generation Australian, descended from Richard Tuckwell, Quarter-Master Sergeant of the 102nd Regiment, arriving at Sydney Cove in January 1788 with the First Fleet.

She has generously presented to our Museum a plate inscribed "Parramatta 2nd. November 1788", which was specially made for the Centenary in the next century; also a red and white plate, the last of a particular dinner-set of the family, known to be 150 years old, and a leather purse 110 years old, owned and used by members of the family. At one time a Tuckwell married one of the Stonehams, a musical Geelong family, who were among the first settlers in Victoria.

We are indeed grateful to Mrs. Gaskin for her gifts, and to Teddy and Allan for another example of their continuing support.

While in Sydney I was fortunate to join a guided tour of the Town Hall, an activity of 'Heritage Week' in N.S.W. It is a beautiful building. The entrance foyer, which was originally to be the council chambers, is used for many private functions, as well as civic ones, and is in great demand for weddings. There is a large concert hall, elegant ceilings throughout the building, many cedar doors, some 3 inches to 5 inches thick and beautifully carved, as well as cedar panelling and window frames. Everything we saw was in immaculate condition.

There are many treasures in the Town Hall, and we saw examples of fine antique furniture and china in use in the rooms specially set aside for use by the Lady Mayoress. The stained glass window at the top of one staircase featured Capt. in Cook and on another wall was a portrait of the young Queen Victoria. These items are of special significance. At present three rooms are being re-decorated to house an on-going exhibition of "gifts to the people of Sydney".

I understand that tours similar to this are to become a regular thing at the Town Hall and I would recommend them to you. Numbers will be limited on each tour, so a 'phone call re times etc. would be advisable.

It was in 1842 that the New South Wales Government decided Sydney's 35,000 citizens should form a municipality and administer their own town. A total of 24 aldermen were elected and council meetings were held in Pulteney's Hotel in York Street, and occasionally in the parlour of the London Tavern.

At that time a limit was set on the amount of tax a Sydney Council could impose, and when the council decided to build a Town Hall of monumental proportions at a cost of £5,000, there was such an uproar from the ratepayers that the scheme had to be dropped. The main opposition came from those who complained that the city was in a mess with shocking roads and not even a decent garbage system. If the council could not afford these ammenities, how could it justify the expensive Town Hall?

By 1853 the Sydney aldermen were thoroughly unpopular and most citizens were delighted when Parliament abolished the council on the grounds that many members were using it as a means of feathering their own nests or that of their families. It was not till 1858 that Parliament decided Sydney should try the municipality system and a council was duly elected. The first thing it demanded was a home of its own.

There was a possible site for the new Town Hall in Bent Street but a far more promising site was the old graveyard next to St. Andrews Cathedral, then still being built. It was now 1867 and when news of the council's intention reached the public they 'rose up in anger'. This was hallowed ground and anyway if the dead were dug up to be transferred elsewhere, all kinds of terrible diseases would be let loose. Parliament, however, brushed away these fears of typhus and small-pox and gave the council a grant of one fifth of a hectare of the old graveyard. At the same time they stipulated that the Town Hall was not to cost more than £25,000.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Alfred (one of Queen Victoria's sons) was visiting Australia in 1868 and the council looked to him to lay the foundation stone. During a picnic at Sydney's Clontarf an Irishman fired a shot at the Prince and his Royal Highness developed a sudden distaste for ceremonies involving crowds. Whether it was the welcome of the colonials, or the persuasive tongue of the Lord Mayor, Charles Moore which made the Prince change his mind is hard to say. He did agree to lay the foundation stone, although his aides insisted that only members of the council and Parliament and a selected number of prominent citizens should attend the ceremony. The story got around, as stories do, and a large crowd packed George Street on that April day.

The trowel used by the Duke of Edinburgh, and presented to him as a momento of the occasion, was made by Sydney craftsmen. It had a 22 carat gold blade and an ivory handle inlaid with Australian mined malachite pieces set in gold. It was also studded with pearls and a large emerald.

There were problems from the beginning. Outcries about desecration of sanctified ground when skeletons were removed from the old cemetary and work began on the Town Hall. Then as the walls rose higher and higher it was discovered that the building overlapped its grant of land. The Colonial Secretary insisted that the building be pulled down and restarted. As a result of this and many other problems the Town Hall was far from completion when the deadline was reached on 1st January 1872. The first section of the building was opened in 1875 and today we would not be surprised to hear that any such project had indeed increased in cost by more than 300% from the original estimate, as it did then.

At this stage the Town Hall consisted of various business chambers and a fine vestibule. But the aldermen argued that a real Town Hall also needed a great assembly hall that could be used for all types of gatherings. It seems that our ancestors did not always learn from their mistakes, because walls here had to be pulled down too, when it was discovered that the foundations were not solid. The Hall was completed in 1889 and in November of that year a crowd of 7,000 milled in George Street to watch the Mayor, John Harris, welcome the Governor, Lord Carrington to the Town Hall. The crowd cheered the Mayor, the Governor and his wife and two daughters, and roared with delight when Henry Parkes, then Premier, arrived in a splendid uniform he had designed himself. Harris's daughter Marion was given the task of opening the Town Hall and it was named 'Centennial' to commemorate the centennial of the arrival of the First Fleet. It din't seem to matter to anyone that the actual centennial had been a year earlier.

Afterwards there was a concert given by an orchestra of 60 and a choir of 200. The crowd joined in the thanksgiving hymn "All people that on earth do dwell". Half Sydney turned out that night to watch the arrival of the 2,000 chosen guests who were to be entertained at the Mayoral Ball. In all it was a marvellous day and no one seemed concerned that the magnificent Sydney Town Hall had cost not the £25,000 originally quoted but £350,000. Imagine that! Then inflation was hardly thought of as a fact of life as it is today.

. . . . . .

(Information re History of Town Hall from the "Daily Mirror", Sydney)

SNIPPETS OF HISTORY by Doris Mattingly

In the early days of Australian history King Island in Bass Strait had the reputation of being one of the three Islands of Wrecks around the Australian coast, in company with Kangaroo Island off the South Australian coast and Fraser Island off Queensland. King Island was first permanently settled in 1855; originally thickly wooded, it is now mostly grazing land. At Currie, the main town, the local Historical Society of today meets in the former lighthouse keeper's residence, an 1880 building. An eminently suitable place.

. . . . . .

Edward Wilson, Artist, Journalist, Philanthropist, came to Australia in 1842 and joined J.S. Johnson in a cattle station at Dandenong. He was filled with enthusiasm for political reform and had a ready and caustic pen. When the chance came he and his partner Johnson became proprietors of the "Argus" in 1847. Wilson and Johnson amalgamated with it the Port Phillip Gazette and Daily News. Thus there were two papers left - the "Argus" and the "Morning Herald. In 1852 the daily issue of the "Argus" was 3100 and the Colony at this time possessed 216 Journalists.

In the mid 1930's the "Argus" printed for a short time an evening paper called the "Star" as a rival to the "Herald" In order to establish a market, it was essential for the "Star" to reach the newsagents first. A member of our society living in Werribee at that time remembers how the locals used to watch with interest the races between

the "Herald" delivery motor-van on the way to Geelong, and the motor-cycle and side-car carrying copies of the "Star". The "Herald" library has supplied the information that in 1929 the "Herald" garage housed 36 delivery vans. Today there are 116 in operation.

. . . . . .

Local History from the Vic Rail News.

After wandering in to Mitcham Station about 7 years ago 'Wal the Cat' died on Cup Eve last year while on night shift. He was 10 years old. His dedication to stomach comfort saw him weigh in at 9.5 kg at his peak, slimming down to a fighting 7.5 kg during the summer. As well as being known throughout the system and a real favourite with the public (people often brought their children and friends up to see him), he was a great friend and companion to the staff at Mitcham Station. Wherever Wal has gone we hope they have plenty of good food or he will rip their arms off.

KNOW YOUR RAILWAYS

1839 First railway plan. Robert Hoddle, N.S.W. Government Surveyor at Port Phillip District in March marked out a town site at The Beach (now Port Melbourne) and planned a line from Melbourne.

1850 Uneventful public discussion on railways from Melbourne to The Beach and to Geelong. A company to build a steam railway from Geelong to Melbourne and to be completed within 3 years at an estimated cost of £84,00, collapsed because of lack of financial support.

1851 The Colony of Victoria established July 1.

1852-3 Eight private railway syndicates formed. Three private companies Authorized by the Government to build railways. Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Jan. 20, 1853; Geelong and Melbourne Railway February 8th; Melbourne Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway, February 8th.

1854 First steam railway in Australia - from Flinders Street, Melbourne to Sandridge (now Port Melbourne) - officially opened, September 12, by Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Co.

1855 Extensive surveys in Victoria for proposed Government trunk railways.

1856 Victorian Railways Department established by Government purchase of the Melbourne Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway Co's property and assets, March 19; completion of the Company's Melbourne to Williamstown line to be undertaken.

1857 Melbourne & Hobson's Bay Railway Co's line from Melbourne to St. Kilda opened, May 13.

Victoria's first country railway, Geelong to Greenwich (Newport) opened June 25th, by Geelong and Melbourne Railway Co.

Parliament authorized the construction and financing by the Government of trunk railway from Melbourne to Sandhurst (Bendigo) and Echuca, and from Geelong to Ballarat, November 24.

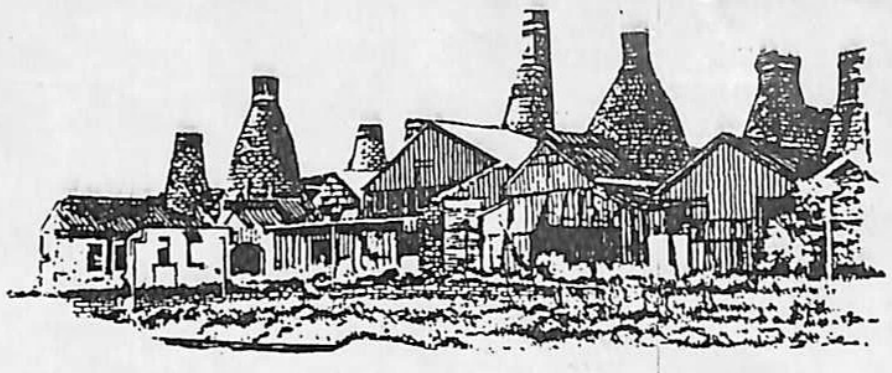
MELbourne & Suburban Railway Co. and St. Kilda Brighton Railway Co. authorized to build lines from Melbourne to Hawthorn and Brighton, November 24.

To be continued.

Please accept my apologies for the lateness of this Newsletter. We have had problems trying to find a new source for the duplicating without having to use the very expensive commercial outlets. I would like to thank Joan Sach for the typing of the stencils and "THE HOUSE" (Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre) for their willingness to assist and for the duplicating.

Editor.

nunawading
historical
society



NEWSLETTER OCTOBER - DECEMBER 1981

Dear Members,

On behalf of the Committee I wish to thank all members for their support over the past year. Although there are so few members we have achieved a good deal in that time. A wonderful display at the Back to Blackburn celebrations, 2 weeks at the "Lion's Den" Opportunity Shop Blackburn which added over $900 to our bank balance, several outings which were enjoyed by all who attended; none of these would have been possible without the strong support of all members. Attendance at meetings was generally good, we have had interesting speakers & a great night when members spoke about their ancestors or their own earlier days.

Let us look forward to a successful 1982, we may have to change our format in some way to fit our present needs,but whatever is decided at our A.G.M. the future of the Society will be uppermost in all minds. Please keep Wed. 14th Oct. free the Society needs your support, do come along.

Get Well wishes to Nancy Leach who has spent some time in hospital recently, glad to know you are feeling better Nancy.

Welcome to new members Helen & Frank Campbell of Mitcham, Helen & Frank have lived in Mitcham for many years & are looking forward to joining in the activities of the Society.

Shirley Jones V.Pres.

****

DATES TO REMEMBER

WED. 14th Oct. Annual General Meeting, 8pm Willis Room Nunawading Civic Centre. Election of Office Bearers. Any nominations for Office Bearers accepted at Meeting.

MON. 26th Oct. A visit to TASMA TERRACE (Headquarters of the Nat. Trust) 11am & the POSTAL MUSEUM Richmond 1pm. We will travel by the 9.52 am train from Mitcham or meet at Tasma Trce. Time permitting we will look at churches in the area. Bring cut lunch to eat in the Fitzroy Gardens. Phone Phyl Johnson for further details. 874 4745.

WED. 11th Nov. Historical Scty. Meeting Willis Room Civic Centre. Speaker will be Morris Chatwin who will speak on his special interest "Postal History". All welcome.

SAT. 28th Nov. Visit to Ambleside Park (Knox Shire Historic home) 3 Olivebank Rd. Ferntree Gully (Melway ref. 65D 12) Meet there at 2pm, bring afternoon tea including water. Further details Shirley Jones 874 7073.

WED. 9th Dec. Historical Scty. Christmas Meeting Willis Room Civic Centre. A Christmas get-together for all members, bring along a small plate of Christmas fare.

WED. 10th Feb. 1982 The first Meeting for 1982 will be held as usual at the Schwerkolt Cottage, near Museum at 6.30pm Bring along your evening meal & chairs, water will be available at the Museum.