

WHITTLESEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

ABN 46019570463

www.whittleseahistoricalsociety.org.au

The first half of the year has seen the Whittlesea Historical Society make a concerted effort to encourage the Whittlesea Council to consider an historical Museum for the area.

Emails were sent to all Councillors to express the Society's concern at the lack of a venue to store and display historical artefacts and information relating to the history of the City. We invited the Mayor Mr Ricky Kirkham to our May meeting in which we outlined the need for some repository for all the objects and photos we have collected. This building would preferably be in a position for easy access to the public where they could see the interesting information and historical records and photos that relate to the area where they live.

We hope that the Council will seriously consider our request so that the residents within the City of Whittlesea can learn and take pride in the heritage of this area now and in the future.

BRIDGE INN HOTEL ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG

By Wendy Lowry

Heritage Victoria has undertaken yet another excavation site along the Plenty River and within the Plenty Gorge Park. It stemmed from historical investigations carried out as part of the Mernda Rail Extension. This dig site however was to solve the mystery of the whereabouts of the original Bridge Inn Hotel which was one of the earliest buildings constructed outside Melbourne as part of the European settlement.

The Old Bridge Inn was built in the 1840's near the crossing point ford on the Plenty River in Mernda. The dig uncovered the bluestone walls and hearth of the Hotel.

NEWSLETTER Number 26 October 2017

Editor Wendy Lowry

This Newsletter is kindly printed by the office of Andrew Giles MP (Federal Member for Scullin)



The hearth and floor flagstones.

Over 1000 artefacts were collected including old hand blown glass bottles, China and pottery and a variety of items for everyday life such as coins, cutlery, jewellery, clay pipes and children's toys. Along with these there was quite a collection of Aboriginal artefacts too.

A Public Open day was held on the 8th July and well over 300 local people turned out to look over the site. Our Society had a table of interesting photos and books on display. This generated a lot of interest and gave the Society the opportunity to come face to face with the public.



Members Cheryl, Heather, Lindsay and Margaret.

KEELBUNDOORA SCARRED TREE AND HERITAGE TRAIL

Bt Wendy Lowry

As part of the Whittlesea Cultural Heritage Program for 2017, the City of Whittlesea along with the RMIT University and the Ngarara Willim Centre, presented an informative lecture and guided walk around the grounds of the RMIT Campus in Mill Park.

The event was led by Ian Hunter, Tribal Elder of the Wurundjeri Tribe, the traditional owners of this area. The name Keelbundoora honours an Aboriginal ancestor of the Wurundjeri clan who as a young boy was present at the signing of the Batman Treaty in 1835.



After a talk about the Aboriginal clans and languages, the meanings of some of the places in the area were explained such as Yan Yean - young boy, Mernda - young girl and Wollert - Possum. The group of about 30 then walked around the heritage trail in the grounds.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By John Waghorn

"MARY BRYANT COURT" Mill Park

'*Mary Bryant Court*' must be one of the most interesting of our street names. **Mary BRYANT**, an English woman, was born in 1765 and came to Sydney in 1788 as a female convict. Soon after her arrival, she had married a fellow convict **William BRYANT**.

In March 1791, Mary, William, their two children and several other convicts made a remarkable bid for freedom. Stealing Governor Arthur Phillip's small boat (Note that '*Arthur Phillip Way*' is an adjacent street), they eventually reached Timor.

Here they were arrested by Dutch officials and eventually sent back to England, but not until after Mary's husband and one of their children had died. Charged with being an escaped convict, the usual death penalty was commuted to her original imprisonment term due to the unusual circumstances.

Mary was pardoned in 1793 and granted a small pension of ten pounds per year. I have not been able to ascertain whether Governor Phillip ever got his boat back.

WHITTLESEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Meetings 3rd Sunday each month
(Excluding January)
Time 2 pm
Venue Whittlesea Community Activity
Centre
Laurel Street, Whittlesea.

Website whittleseahistoricalsociety.org.au

Subscriptions Single \$15/ Family \$20

HORSE TROUGH IN HIGH ST. EPPING

By Wendy Lowry

How many times have you driven along High Street, Epping near Park Street and not noticed the concrete horse trough on the side of the road? Well I am sure there would be lots of people who did not know it was there.



It turns out it was one of many scattered around Victoria as a generous gift from a Melbourne philanthropist and animal lover who wanted to ensure horses could always have a cool drink.

George Bills and his wife Annis had no children but were devoted to animal rights and joined the Victorian Society for the Protection of Animals, a forerunner to the RSPCA today.

In his last will before his death in 1927, George bequeathed his estate of an estimated £80,000 to easing the suffering of animals by instructing his Trustees to erect horse troughs where they thought it necessary.

From 1930 to 1939 between 500 and 700 concrete troughs were built at a cost of £13 each. All were inscribed "*Donated by Annis and George Bills Australia*"



WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?

"NOSEY PARKER"

Meaning an excessively inquisitive person or one who "pokes their nose" into the affairs of others, this expression dates back to the sixteenth century. Matthew PARKER (1504-1575) a vicar and later Archbishop of Canterbury, was a prime mover in the establishment of the Church of England, earning the hostility of religious opponents. He was also noted for the length of his nose. This expression got attached to him and has been applied to countless others with a prominent nose.

"SHRAPNEL"

Royal Artillery Lieutenant, Henry SHRAPNEL (1761 - 1842) spent much of his life and his own savings devising a hollow bomb capable of distributing lead pellets and grapeshot across a wide area while in flight. His invention, first used in battle in the British attack on Surinam in 1804. It became known as the Shrapnel shell and was employed to great effect at Waterloo, with the Duke of Wellington its greatest advocate. Shrapnel's only reward was a meagre pension and a promotion to the rank of Lieutenant - General. In 1837, George IV sought to honour Shrapnel for services to his country. However the monarch died the same year and the notion was lost. Shrapnel died a disappointed man. The use of the word 'shrapnel' was in common usage by World War 1.

"MARBLES"

Marbles started in England in the seventeenth century, about the same time as the first colonies were being founded in America. At that time, the sport of bowling was very popular among the English people. Bowling balls were made of marble, and the toys given to children were simply small bowling balls which came to be called marbles. Eventually, children would gather to play their own game of 'marbles' on the outside grounds of the grown-ups' game.

LIFE BEHIND THE GRAVESTONE

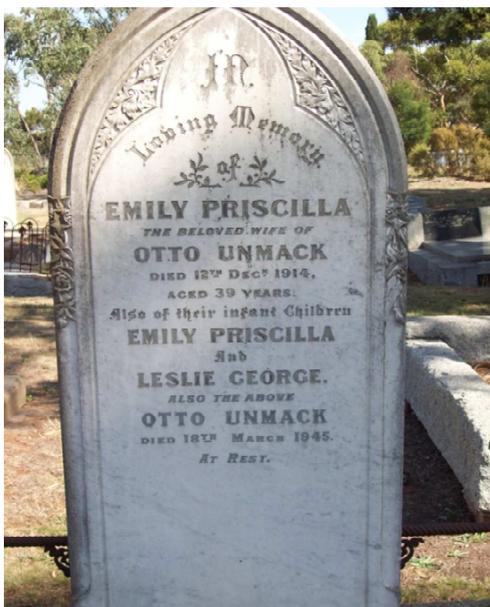
By John Waghorn

UNMACK FAMILY

Carl Louis UNMACK purchased Wilhelm Koch's 75 acre farm in Harvest Home Road East in about 1875 and raised a large family there. Louis, as he was known, had previously married **Caroline ZIEBELL** of Westgarthtown in 1863. Prior to moving to Epping he had been a gold miner at Bendigo. Louis was still active on his death in 1917 aged 87. According to his obituary he believed that "to live a long life a man must go on working to the end".

Interestingly, when **Louis UNMACK** bought Koch's farm, three Koch's children had been buried there. Official death records show that Wilhelm Koch Jnr died 1856 aged three months from croup. Elizabeth died 1861 aged four years and Mary died 1861 aged 18 months are all buried near Epping Road a few hundred metres north of Harvest Home Road east, in the front garden of a white house built along the lines of Elvis Presley's Gracelands mansion.

Louis and Caroline's son Otto later took over the farm. It is his grave that is located in the Epping cemetery.



ODD SPOT

ABC RADIO COMES TO MERNDA



Trevor Carroll, John Faine and Mayor Ricky Kirkham

On the 18th July, ABC Radio broadcasted from inside Turner's Bakery in Mernda. Compere John Faine was taking calls from local residents and questions from people in attendance regarding the development of Mernda with the extension of the Railway.

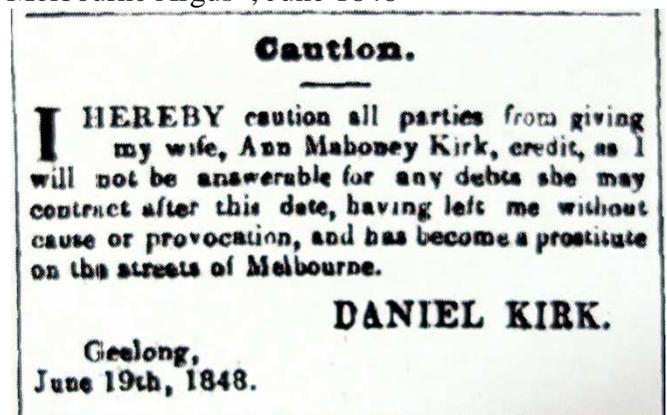
FAYE THOMAS COLLECTION

Whittlesea Council has given the Faye Thomas collection that has been scanned digitally to the Yarra Plenty Library. This collection includes documents, maps and photos relating to Moses Thomas an early pioneer to the area. These can be viewed at the library.

REFUSAL TO PAY WIFE'S DEBTS

From Lindsay Mann

Melbourne Argus, June 1848



UPDATE ON BUNDOORA PRIMARY SCHOOL

By Wendy Lowry

For those of you who sat at the lights on Plenty Road and the Ring Road and looked over to what seemed like a derelict brick building which used to be the original Janefield Primary School, there is an update on its status.

The Whittlesea Historical Society had expressed its concern for the building saying how important it was the area, being on the Victorian Heritage Register since 1997.

The brick building had been erected in 1877 on land purchased from the estate of Henry Brock for £50. The average attendance then was 34 pupils. The need for economy in the 1890's led to the closing of the school and the pupils were sent to Greensborough, Epping and Morang South. It reopened in 1903 under the new name of Bundoora Primary School but as the population grew, a new Bundoora School was built in Balmoral Avenue, Bundoora. The original building was finally closed in the 1990's.

We had been worried when the portion of land was sold to developers and wondered what was to become of the structure. Good news prevails. The building is being saved and utilised in the development of the land as part of a Child Care centre. Here is a recent picture showing the roof tiles off but the building is still there.



EUPHEMERAL OBJECTS

By Wendy Lowry

The word "*euphemeral*" relates to items that are short lived or transitory in nature.

I have come into the possession of an ephemeral object of a Train Timetable for June 1949.

This Timetable is for Melbourne to Keon Park, Thomastown and vice a versa.

In 1949 there were first and second class fares available on this route and the trains from the City left from Princes Bridge which nowadays is Federation Square. Interestingly there was only a penny difference in price for the fare to Keon Park compared to Thomastown.

Train Time-Tables and Fares.

**Melbourne—Keonpark,
Thomastown**

2159-49 As at 19th June, 1949.

Fares to Melbourne	From Keonpark		From Thomastown	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
Single ...	£ s. d. 1 2	£ s. d. 1 11	£ s. d. 1 3	£ s. d. 1 0½
Return ...	1 10	1 6	1 11½	1 7½
Weekly				
Periodical ...	6 11	5 8	7 3	5 9
Monthly ...	1 7 6	1 2 8	1 9 0	1 3 1
Quarterly ...	3 14 3	3 1 2	3 18 4	3 2 4
Half-Yearly ...	7 1 1	5 16 3	7 8 10	5 18 5
Yearly ...	13 15 1	11 6 8	14 10 3	11 10 11

**" OFF PEAK " RETURN FARES
TO MELBOURNE ONLY—**
Issued Mondays to Fridays inclusive
(Public Holidays excepted).

FROM—

	1st	2nd
	s. d.	s. d.
Keonpark ...	1 3	1 1
Thomastown ...	1 4	1 2

Enquire at booking office for conditions of issue.

THOMASTOWN AND KEONPARK TO MELBOURNE

Mondays to Fridays		Saturdays	
Leave Thomastown	Leave Keonpark	Leave Thomastown	Leave Keonpark
a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.
6. 36	6. 38	6. 36	6. 38
7. 22, 52	7. 24, 54	7. 22, 52	7. 24, 54
9. 43	9. 45	8. 50	8. 52
11. 30	11. 32	9. 43	9. 45
p.m.	p.m.	11. 47	11. 49
1. 1	1. 3	p.m.	p.m.
2. 45	2. 47	12. 42	12. 44
4. 31, 51	4. 33, 53	1. 20	1. 22
5. 8	5. 10	4. 14	4. 16
6. 15, 31	6. 17, 33	5. 59	6. 1, 11 C
7. 14, 51 CW	7. 16, 54 CW	6. 8 C	7. 19
8. 44	8. 46	7. 17	8. 27 C
9. 44	9. 46	8. 24 C	9. 16
11. 19	11. 21	9. 14	10. 29
a.m.	a.m.	10. 27	
12. 41 R	12. 43 R		

W. Wednesdays excepted.
R. To Reservoir only.
C. Change at Reservoir.

Diamond Valley Leader, November 1963

LOCAL FARMERS SUCCESS AT WHITTLESEA SHOW

"Many farmers from the Diamond Valley area exhibited in the 104th Whittlesea Show last Saturday. Most successful was Mr H. Tomkins of "Seteldowns" in Kangaroo Ground who scooped the pool with his fine Merino wool taking first prize. His fleece scored a total of 83 points. He also won the Local Champion Fleece and the District Champion Trophy donated by the Commercial Bank of Australia.

Mr Herb Tomkins, a resident and retired grazier of Kangaroo Ground, has devoted a lifetime of wool-classing experience in his former job as wool classer to select the best wool clips from his sheep for the show."

Now what is interesting about this article is that the ribbons that Mr Tomkins won at the 104th Whittlesea Show have been donated to the Whittlesea Historical Society by the Kangaroo Ground Historical Society.

BIBS AND BOBS

INTERNET SITES

For those of you who have a computer at home or go to the local library to use one, here are a couple of Websites you should take the time to look at.

1. **merndarail.com.au/historical**

This has a lot of photos relating to the Mernda Rail Alliance. It also contains old photos of the rail line that went to Whittlesea .

2. **[facebook.com/lostmernda](https://www.facebook.com/lostmernda)**

This site has a lot of old photos of Mernda contributed by local residents

VALE

JACK DOBSON

Old Whittlesea resident 97 years old.
Worked for the Board of Works

CULTURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM SPRING 2017

BEAR'S CASTLE TOUR SAT.21st October

Time 09.30 and 13.30
Cost \$30.00 per person
Where Whittlesea Courthouse
Cnr Church and Beech Sts
Book Joan Terrell 0412907937

MYTHS AND MEMORIES SUN.29th October

Time 1pm - 4pm
Cost \$10.00 per person
Where Council Offices
25 Ferres Boulevard Sth Morang
Book Online
whittlesea.vic.gov.au/events

THOMAS FAMILY OF MERNDA

MON.30th November

Time 11.30am - 12.30pm
Cost Free
Where Whittlesea Community Activity
Centre
57-61 Laurel St, Whittlesea

CARETAKER'S COTTAGE YAN YEAN

TUE.7th November

Time 12pm - 4pm
Cost Free
Where Caretaker's Cottage
Yan Yean Reservoir

CURIOS FROM YESTERYEAR

SUN.19th November

Time 12pm - 4pm
Cost Free
Where German Lane, Thomastown
