

WHITTLESEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

ABN 46019570463

Welcome to an exciting year in the Whittlesea Historical Society. We have decided to make a concerted effort in making our presence be seen around the community and initiate the all important cataloguing of our acquisitions. The latter of course will be a mammoth task but we will be looking to conduct it methodically with the help of our volunteers. Our participation in the Whittlesea Community Festival in March was the start and we have a couple of activities planned for the Whittlesea Heritage Program which we actively support. Add to this, a continued expansion of information that will be on our website as well as a regular article in the local Town Crier, we hope that we will be able to attract new members and impress the Council for the need of a permanent repository for our history.

2017 AGM

The Whittlesea Historical Society held its 2017 Annual General Meeting at the Whittlesea Bowling Club on the 15th October last year.

The following members were elected to the Executive committee for 2017.

President	Bruce Batten
Vice President	Neil Johnson
Secretary/Public Officer	Dawn Allen
Treasurer	Margaret Mann
Research Officers	Maureen Doyle & Gwen Hawke
Editor	Wendy Lowry
Ordinary Committee	Lindsay Mann Andrea Johnson Bruce Whitchurch Margaret Jolly

Our guest speaker at the AGM was Dr Madonna Grehan who presented an interesting talk on Female Maternity Attendants.

NEWSLETTER Number 27 May 2018

Editor Wendy Lowry

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

Female Maternity Attendants in Colonial Victoria.

In the 21st Century a midwife is someone who has completed a course specialising in women's antenatal, post natal, child birth and new born health but back in colonial Victoria there was no such course.

In the nineteenth century maternity care of women having babies was given in charitable institutions such as Lying in Hospitals like the Women's, established in Albert Street in 1856 and was also provided in private hospitals. Dr Grehan had found many examples of advertisements in the Melbourne Papers for doctors and nurses operating private Lying in hospitals.



Despite the high number of these hospitals, by 1890 less than 3% of registered births were delivered in such places.

Maternity care was mostly given at home. On birth certificates there was often mention of a female attendant present. These may have been elder family women who had had children of their own or women within the community who were called upon to these occasions. The process was often rudimentary and unhygienic and sometimes doctors did not get there to attend the birth. In the case of difficult births at home these often resulted in tragedy not only for the baby but also for the mother.

It was not until the late nineteenth century that better training and education was being given to nurses who began to specialise in maternity welfare. Certification of skills required was adopted which became the fore runner to the midwifery course we have today.



Dr Madonna Grehan with President Bruce Batten

MYTHS AND LEGENDS

As part of the Whittlesea Heritage Program in 2017, the society was involved in presenting a tour of the northern reaches of the municipality to uncover stories of events, people and places that have contributed to our local history.

Members Gwen Hawke, Bruce Batten, Len Lord and Wendy Lowry helped with the event.

We went to the family home of Ned Kelly to learn how Ned had a run in with John Mason. While there, the bus was held up by Ned himself (aka Bruce Batten) Then we travelled to the Donnybrook Cemetery where Gwen told us about her lost relative supposedly buried outside the gates of the cemetery. Finally ending at the Woodstock Hall to see the display of memorabilia and listen to one of Len's renditions of the poem Dog and the Ute.



LIFE BEHIND THE GRAVESTONE

By Wendy Lowry

ROBERT ZINNOW

Robert Zinnow was born in Germany around 1853 and arrived in Victoria in 1867. He married Mary Ann McGann at Coburg in 1876 and they had 6 children. His occupation was a plate worker for the railways.

On October 2nd, 1888 he was engaged with others in repairing the railway line 2 miles north of Donnybrook. A goods train from Melbourne was seen approaching. The other men stepped right off the line while Zinnow got out of its way on to the second line of rails but did not notice another train coming in the opposite direction. His mates called out to him but in the windy conditions he could not hear them. The buffer of the engine struck him on the forehead, inflicting a fearful gash knocking him down. The whole train then passed over his legs, both of which were completely severed besides otherwise mutilating his body. An inquest was held on the 3rd October with a verdict of accidental death and he was buried at the Donnybrook cemetery on the 4th October.

The headstone below was erected by his friends and fellow workers.



THE MORANG BRIDGE, MERNDA

Written by Andrea Johnson



The Morang Bridge celebrates 150 years.

To many residents of the area that travel by car along Bridge Inn Road over the Plenty River at Mernda, you would never be aware of the history that lies beneath. From road level it appears nothing more than a strip of black bitumen with concrete pillars along either side. But wander off the beaten track and look at what lies beneath the road surface and you will find a structure made in another era that has surely stood the test of time.

On either side of the river bank stand two substantial bluestone walls along with two sturdy bluestone supporting pillars in the middle of the river, that together support the roadway that defines the boundary between Mernda and Doreen.

On 17 August 1866, the foundation stone of the new bridge over the Plenty River was laid by Mrs Wilton, the wife of John Wilton, Esq., J.P. As quoted in the Argus newspaper, "A bottle, containing the daily journals, a record of the proceedings in connection with the erection of the bridge, and several coins of the realm, were placed in a cavity in the stone; and it having been declared duly laid, three hearty cheers were given. A handsome silver trowel, bearing a suitable inscription, was presented to Mrs Wilton by the chairman of the Morang Road Board, in honour of the occasion. Refreshments were provided in a tent erected on the ground adjoining."

On Friday 15 February 1867, the Morang Bridge was formally opened by Mr Moses Thomas. A marquee was erected, and gaily decked with flags and evergreens. There were present a large concourse of people, including several ladies, and about sixty children, belonging to the Morang Sunday and Common Schools. Mr. Watkins, M.L.A., in the course of his speech congratulated the assemblage upon the completion of such a substantial structure, observing that good roads and bridges had a moral and intellectual as well as commercial influence upon the

people of a district. The party then adjourned to the marquee for refreshment, but the rain came down fast, and shortened what would have been a very pleasant afternoon.

Built at a cost of £1,217.13.0 pounds, the tender for construction of the bridge was awarded to Mr Thomas Sobey of Preston, for the amount of £1,217.30 shillings, of which he received £1,163.00, with Civil Engineer J.E. Austin receiving £52.10.

Such was the strength of the Morang Bridge it survived the great flood of 1878 which partially dismantled the nearby Aqueduct which carried water from the Yan Yean Reservoir to Melbourne, and was Melbourne's main water source. It was reported that the flood waters rose to above 7 foot. The integrity of the bridge has seen it stand for the past 150 years and hopefully for many more.



MOTORCYCLE RACING IN WHITTLESEA

By Gwen Hawke/Maureen Doyle

Motorcycle racing commenced in the Whittlesea area before World War 2. The first race was held on Motorbike Hill, at the rear of the Whittlesea Primary School in Plenty Road in the 1930's. Clubs from all over Melbourne would come to compete in both Hill climbs and flat races

The most significant event in the racing year was the Motorbike Hill Climb, where two riders starting from scratch, raced each other to the top of the hill. Those recording the fastest times on the day competed in the finals, with the fastest for the day being named the Champion hill climber. In 1939, Bill Ford riding his "Levis" motorcycle was the Whittlesea Motor Cycle Hill Climb Champion.

Spectators and participants arrived in their thousands by train and wheels. As the event grew in popularity the noise level began to concern the locals and in 1947, it was discontinued at this site.

WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?

WINDSOR KNOT

The Windsor knot is a large loose knot in a necktie, after the fashion of Prince Edward, the Duke of Windsor (1894 - 1972), formerly Edward VIII. Americans once believed the Duke wore a style of neckwear known as "God's Tie". His upper class vowels obviously lost something in the translation, as it was in fact the Guard's tie that the former monarch wore.

MY WORD IS MY BOND

This has been the motto of the London Stock Exchange since 1801. At the Stock Exchange bargains are made on the "nod" without a written pledge being given, and without documents being exchanged. The motto's Latin form is *Dictum meum pactum* and the phrase implies a sense of honour, an agreement that cannot be broken without disgrace.

NEWFANGLED

The Old English word '*fangol*' means '*inclined to take*' and combined with '*new*' it gives us the word used to describe things whose sole appeal lies in the fact that they are new. At one time the people who were easily carried away by new ideas were described as '*newfangled*' .

WHITTLESEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Meetings 3rd Sunday each month
(Excluding January)
Time 2p.m.
Venue Whittlesea Community Activity
Centre
Laurel Street, Whittlesea
Subscriptions Single \$15
Family \$20
Website whittleseahistoricalsociety.org.au

GOLDEN KING GOLD MINE , YARRAMBAT

An excerpt from an article that appeared in the Diamond Valley News, Sept. 29th 1964.

" A gold mine is still being worked only 18 miles from Melbourne, in Yarrambat, which was the originally sunk by Fred Clayton, called the Golden King.

This backyard gold mine is being worked by the grandson of Fred Clayton and his two sons. The Claytons work full time at the mine and it yields them all a comfortable living. The Claytons are Bill Sen., Bill Jun. and Desmond. It is the only private gold mine in Victoria and it smelts the gold into 100oz ingots in an iron mould that came from the historic Diamond Creek mine.

The Claytons say there are still tons of gold in their mine on the Apple tree lode, a lode that Bill Sen. named when he located it on the site of an apple orchard.

Yarrambat that used to be known as Tanks Corner, is in the centre of gold bearing country. There were mines all over the Plenty Ranges including Hurstbridge and Diamond Creek and some of Victoria's first gold discoveries in 1851 were in the Plenty Hills.

The district is honeycombed with old tunnels and shafts. You can walk half a mile underground from the Golden King Mine. A mile down the road is Smuggler's Gully where thousands of Chinese toiled a hundred years ago in a small but rich field that produced 1½ tons of gold.

The price of gold has not altered since 1947, when it was valued at £15/12/6 an ounce. There is also a Government subsidy of £2 an ounce and because gold is non-taxable there is no income tax to pay."

ODD SPOT

Courtesy of Lindsay Mann

The following two extracts are from *The Advertiser Hurstbridge* dated 25th Jan, 1929.

MEN I HAVE KNOWN By "Mernda"

"In the early eighteen fifties there resided at Wilton Vale, Morang, the late John Wilton J.P., with his wife, two daughters and three sons. Mr Wilton was one of the early residents of the fruitful valley of the Plenty River and in conjunction with the late Cornelius S. Haley, of Lancefield, speculated in land in Yan Yean, which they afterwards cut up and sold to advantage.

The Mernda Post Office and store, the Mechanics' Institute and Turner's Bakery and store and the Wesleyan and Roman Catholic Churches are all situated on the land sold by the two gentlemen, now passed away, as well as numerous other homes. etc.

Mr Wilton ever took a keen and lively interest in the district and although a Church of England man, he was one of the founders of the Mayfield Presbyterian Church and State School at Mernda. In both cases he was an able and generous co-adjutor of the late Moses Thomas of Mayfield."

SHE KNEW

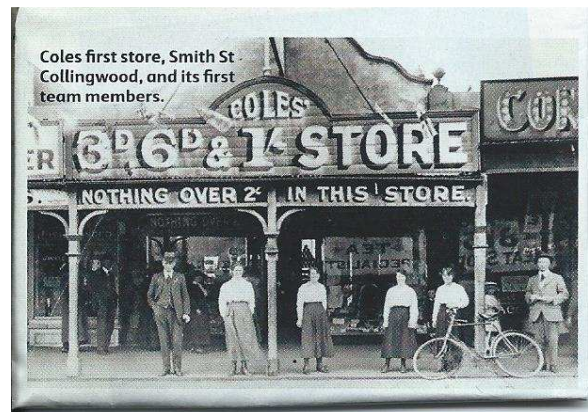
"The mistress of the house was giving a new maid, who was fresh from the country, a list of the household requirements. "There you are," she said and then suddenly remembered an item she had almost forgotten. "Oh ---er---don't forget we shall want a new griller for the kitchen too". The maid stared vacantly. "Don't you know what a griller is?" asked the mistress sharply. "I do ", replied the maid significantly, "It's a big, hairy monkey the size of a man. And if you want one of those in your kitchen I'm leaving at once."

NEW CONSTRUCTION

COLES SUPERMARKET, MERNDA

With the new construction of the latest Coles Supermarket well underway in Mernda on Bridge Inn Road, it might be timely to look back at the first Coles Store.

The following information was taken from a Coles Fresh Magazine back in 2014 when Coles was celebrating its 100th anniversary.



The first store opened on the 9th April, 1914 on Smith St. Collingwood with six team members. For founder G.J. Coles the well-being of team members was just as important as service to the customer. Today Coles employs approximately 100,000 Australians and with stores in most communities that means Coles is a big provider of local jobs throughout regional and rural Australia.

In 1957, G.J. Coles was honoured with a knighthood recognising his services to commerce and the community. The Coles family is the only family in the world to have five brothers knighted and is recognised in the Guinness Book of Records for this incredible achievement.

VALE

John Biancon 2017

Manager of Combi Construction who assisted with the Memorial Stone at Yan Yean Cemetery.

John 'Jack' Murray 1933 - 2018

Long time resident of Whittlesea.

DYSON'S MOVING WITH THE TIMES

As part of the Whittlesea Cultural Heritage Program in October 2017, Dyson's Bus Company allowed a rare opportunity to go behind the scenes and learn more about this iconic local, Australian family owned and operated business.

The family business started out in Melbourne's north in 1952, beginning in Reservoir and East Preston. The Head office is now located in McKimmies Road Bundoora. Over their 66 years in business, Dyson's have developed a reputation for delivering friendly and reliable service and for being a strong and active member of the local communities they serve.

Today Dyson's operates a fleet of approximately 430 vehicles out of seven locations throughout Victoria, 230 vehicles operate out of the Bundoora depot alone which is open 24/7. Their buses travel approximately 2,300,000 kms. per month and use around 900,000 litres of diesel per month. The vehicles undergo a safety inspection every 10,000 kms or 3 months and must have a road worthy Inspection every year. Their attention to fleet presentation was demonstrated when the tour went through the gigantic bus wash and detailing shed.

Last year, the Senior Director Mr Collins Dyson was awarded with a Medal of the Order of Australia as part of the 2017 Queen's Birthday Honours for recognition of his community involvement and work in the transport industry. Mr Collins Dyson is also a long time member of our Historical Society.



Mr Collins Dyson in front of a vintage bus.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By John Waghorn

"CRAVENS ROAD" *Mernda*

This street is shown on the original maps of the Separation Estate as '*Cheapside*'. (Cheapside, I believe was the name of a ship that carried migrants to Australia). It is shown as '*Shank's Lane*' in the 1855 Broadbents Map, and as '*Cravens Lane*' sometime between 1866 and 1871 (as per Rate records), then '*Cravens Road*' since 1871.

I can find no Council recognition of '*Cravens Lane*', or '*Cravens Road*', Mernda, so it could have been that the residents grew tired of the name '*Cheapside*' or just did not like it. Who would like to say that they lived in '*Cheapside*' ?

Newel CRAVEN was born in Yorkshire in 1795, married in 1824 and migrated to Australia in 1842. He was living at Tollerton Forest (which he named from the Yorkshire Parish in which he lived his early life) around 1850.

Later he transferred to the Separation Estate , buying 13 allotments circa 1870 (448/450 and 483/492 from **Orr FISHER**). The rate records of this period show that he was the owner of a house and ten acres of land at Mernda. **Newel CRAVEN** had married in 1824 a **Mary FISHER**, who had been born in County Antrim, Ireland, but the records do not show the births of any children prior to his death in 1883 aged 88 years.

REAL ESTATE HISTORY

It always pays to have a look at the real estate section in the local paper. Sometimes you may find a piece of local history that is on the market and they tend to give a little bit of information as to the background of the building.

A case for example appeared in The Northern Weekly on October 7th ,2008.

BROOKLANDS HOMESTEAD 920 Wallan Road , Whittlesea.

*" In 1851, William Gardiner and his son Alexander arrived in Victoria from Scotland aboard the **Eagle**. Gardiner tried his hand as a shearer in the Grampians, a gold miner at Fryer's Creek and a sheep drover in Queensland before returning to Victoria on a bullock dray.*

*In 1873, Alexander married Margaret Butcher and they raised 10 children on a 670 acre property north of Whittlesea. In 1910, he built **Brooklands Homestead**. It was a four bedroom Edwardian property that also included a dairy and hay sheds and a schoolroom where a governess tutored the Gardiner children.*

Fast forward almost a century, Brooklands still stands although on a more modest 32 acres and has been enjoyed by the Stiles family for the past 20 years who have bred thoroughbred horses in the paddocks."



WHITTLESEA'S SENIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR 2018

In the Australia Day Awards for 2018 in Whittlesea, a long time member of the Whittlesea Historical Society was awarded the prestigious title of Senior Citizen of the year.



Margaret Jolly was described as a dedicated and tireless contributor to the community through her involvement in a wide range of associations and groups.

Over the years she has been extremely active in the Whittlesea Courthouse, Whittlesea Opportunity Shop, Christ Church Whittlesea, the Whittlesea Agricultural Show and the Whittlesea Historical Society. She also assisted the Whittlesea Fire Brigade to organise its 50 year reunion and the Whittlesea Football Club's 100 year reunion.

Well done Margaret !!! Greatly deserved.

WHITTLESEA'S COMMUNITY FESTIVAL 2018

This year the Whittlesea Community festival took place on the grounds in front of the Whittlesea Council offices in South Morang. The Whittlesea Historical Society was invited to participate with a marquee stall at the Sunday March 18th event.

Despite inclement weather at the start, the afternoon saw the sun come out along with the crowds. Members of the Historical Society Wendy Lowry, Neil and Andrea Johnson, Cheryl Mullens and Heather Mann were in attendance to show off our photo display and selection of artefacts along with several kids activities of long ago.



Heather, Neil, Cheryl and Wendy in the tent.

OLD RED GUM TREE , MERNDA

The Whittlesea Historical Society is leading a community push to save a three hundred year old Red Gum tree opposite the Bridge Inn Hotel from the firing line of the duplication of Plenty Road.

Our Vice-President Mr Neil Johnson and member Judy Clements have had several meetings with the Vic Roads Project manager and the Road contractors along with communication with the Whittlesea Council.

The Society is not against the duplication of the road but there is considerable support for the retention of the tree and its historical significance to the area.



Watch this space!!!



Cheryl and Heather making the yarn dollies.