

WHITTLESEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

ABN 46019570463

2016 AGM

The Whittlesea Historical Society held its 2016 Annual General meeting at the Whittlesea Bowling Club on 9th October last year,

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

President	Mr Bruce Batten
Vice President	Mr Ross Mugavin
Secretary	Mrs Dawn Allen
Treasurer	Mrs Margaret Mann
Research Officers	Mrs Gwen Hawke & Mrs Maureen Doyle
Editor	Ms Wendy Lowry

Our Guest Speaker was Mr Paul Ballassone from Melbourne Water who gave an interesting talk on

The Eastern Hill Water Tower

While the construction of the Yan Yean Reservoir was underway in 1853, there arose a need to make water readily available in the event of fires and to afford some relief to those inhabitants living furthest from the river.

The Government had purchased a second hand 40 horse power steam engine and issued instructions to the water board to erect it near the Yarra river and provide the best supply possible.

Matthew Bullock Jackson had been appointed as the Engineer in charge of establishing a water supply to Melbourne following the untimely death of James Blackburn. Jackson prepared plans that consisted of an inlet conduit leading in a straight line from the river to the engine house in Flinders Street at the foot of Spring Street, where the water was then pumped into a tank at the south east corner of Victoria and Gisborne Streets at Eastern Hill.

NEWSLETTER Number 25 **May 2017**

Editor Wendy Lowry

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



The tank was located on a 5 acre site previously reserved for water supply by Mr Richard Hoddle, the Surveyor-General. Note St Peter's Anglican Church in the foreground.

The 100,000 gallon tank was built from cast iron panels bolted together and it rested on bluestone arches supported by massive hand-worked pillars. The works for the temporary supply were completed towards the end of 1854 and revenue from it was first received at the beginning of 1855.

Scale of the charges were:

- * Water for fires between sundown and sunrise 6d per load to carts (later changed to free gratis for fires occurring at any hour)
- * Water for domestic use between 6am and 6pm 1/- per load
- * Watering Bullocks 6d per team
- * Watering Horses 1d per bucket

In addition to supplying Melbourne, water from the tank was piped to Sandridge (now Port Melbourne) for the use of shipping.

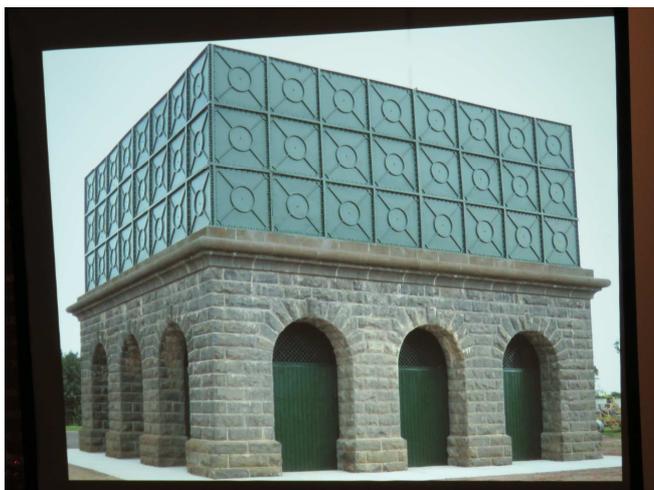
In a report tabled before Parliament in 1856 it was revealed that the cost of providing the temporary supply to Melbourne was £53,179.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THIS WATER TANK?

The Tank at Eastern Hill was in continuous service up till the opening of Yan Yean Scheme in December 1857. It was retained for some years later as an auxiliary supply in the event of a failure of the Yan Yean supply.

The engine house in Flinders Street was demolished in 1870 but it was not until 1892 that the tank and its bluestone stand were dismantled and re-erected at the Board of Works Metropolitan Farm at Werribee. There the tank stands today, an incredible relic of Melbourne's early water supply and a monument to the craftsmanship of the master mason John Davies , the man who built it.

In 2005 a project was undertaken to restore the old structure by stripping and recoating the panels, painting and remodelling the bluestone stand for other uses. This project was completed in 2009. The tank although not filled with water has a new lease of life.



WHITTLESEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

Subscriptions Single \$15 / Family \$20

Website

www.whittleseahistoricalsociety.org.au

WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?

"HOLDING THE PURSE STRINGS"

At one time a purse consisted of a leather pouch drawn to a close with a string. '**Holding the purse strings**' ensured that you controlled when the purse was opened and therefore when money was spent or deposited in it. The design of purses may have changed over time but the metaphor still holds true.

"NAVY"

The word 'navvy' made its first appearance during the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century when gangs of labourers were engaged in the construction of earthworks for canals and later railways across the British Isles. The Canals were called 'navigations' and the men who dug them were referred to as 'navigators'. This was soon abbreviated to '**navvy**' and the word was adopted to describe anyone working on an excavation.

"PARAPHERNALIA"

At one time the word '**paraphernalia**' was a legal term that covered the personal possessions of a married woman which they could legitimately claim as their own, since these items were not part of the dowry paid to the husband at the time of marriage. The word is formed from two Greek words *para* (beside) and *pherne* (dowry). These days '**paraphernalia**' covers a wide range of personal possessions and no longer applies exclusively to married women.

"DEAD AS A DOOR NAIL"

The '**door nail**' is the large, broad headed metal stud on which the door knocker strikes. Anything on the receiving end of such constant and unrelenting rapping is reckoned to be well and truly dead.

LIFE BEHIND THE GRAVESTONE

By John Waghorn

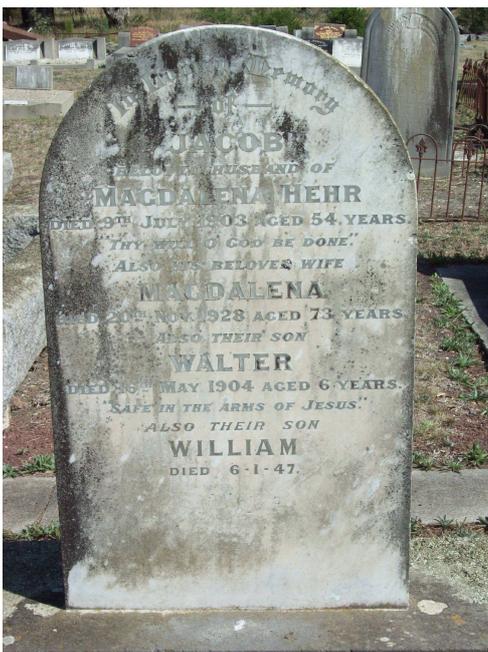
HEHR Jacob and Magdalena

Christian Hehr and his wife Dorothea and several children arrived in Australia from Wurtemberg, Germany in 1856. The Hehr's were living in Brunswick in 1860 when Christian was naturalised but they purchased 76 acres at Wollert in 1866 and established a dairy farm.

On Christian's death in 1892 aged 85 , the property passed to a son Jacob. here Jacob and his wife Magdalena raised a family of seven boys. Walter , the youngest died of influenza in 1904 aged six, however the other boys all grew up to either farm at Pine Park, as the property became known, or purchase dairy farms nearby.

Two sons, Henry and Ernie, were particularly interested in the breeding of Clydesdale horses and for many years were very successful in their classes at the Whittlesea Show.

Hehr's Pine Park farm with its bluestone farmhouse , milking shed, stables and dry stone walls still survives. It is considered to be historically significant on a regional level and architecturally significant on a State level for the remarkable intactness of the dairy and horse breeding structures.



Gravestone is at the Epping Cemetery.

A PLACE TO VISIT

PLENTY GORGE PARK

Geologically, the basalt plains and the Plenty Gorge were formed in recent times between about 10,000 and 2 million years ago. Volcanic activity to the north and north-west of the Plenty River re-shaped the river's course.

Located within the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people, the Plenty River and its Gorge provided numerous flora and fauna for food and a permanent source of fresh water. Evidence of the Wurundjeri people's use of the area still exists due to the survival of a number of scarred trees.

The thinly timbered landscape and readily available water source attracted European pastoral settlers in the 1830's. Sheep and cattle grazing were the main agricultural practices along with flour milling. The Plenty Valley became the food bowl for Melbourne.

Plenty Gorge Park offers a wide range of natural , cultural and historic experiences and is only 20km from Melbourne at South Morang. The spectacular gorge sets a back drop for stunning landscapes and an abundance of native wildlife. It is now surrounded by residential housing estates but when you are in the park you could be in the middle of nowhere out in the country.

The Park has various picnic spots.

Hawkstowe Picnic Area which houses the historical Le Page Homestead.

Red Gum Picnic Area which has a children's adventure playground and walking tracks to Morang Wetlands.

Yellow Gum Recreation Area which has walking tracks to the Blue Lake.

Middle Gorge Picnic Area which has spectacular views from the viewing platform and walking tracks to the river.

Yarrambat Picnic Area which has views to the Kinglake National Park and Mt Disappointment.

DID YOU KNOW?

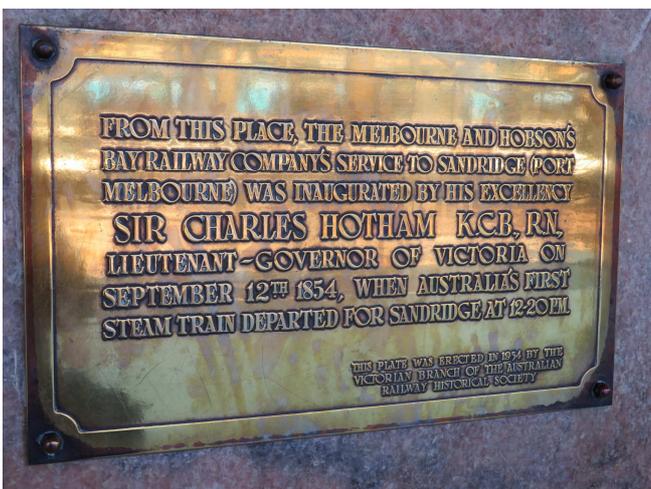
VICTORIA'S FIRST PUBLIC RAILWAY

The Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company opened the first public railway between Flinders Street and Sandridge (now know as Port Melbourne) on the 12th September 1854, with the first train departing at 12.20 pm.

The Company was formed in August 1852 to build a 2¼ mile railway to Sandridge. On the 20th January 1853 it received Royal Assent and construction commenced shortly afterwards with rolling stock being ordered from Great Britain. Unfortunately there were delays in delivering the engines and a simple locomotive was constructed locally using probably a steam driven winch engine. Details recorded include that the engine was calculated to be able to haul 130 tons at a speed of 25 mph. It was completed in 10 weeks and was tested on the 9th September 1854.

The event was treated as a gala occasion with thousands of people lining the route to Sandridge. The Lieutenant Governor (Captain Sir Charles Hotham) and his wife Lady Hotham were ceremoniously received at Flinders Street and boarded the train which comprised one second class and two First class carriages plus an open carriage for the band of the Victorian 40th Regiment to play music enroute. The first train left Flinders Street at 12.20pm and reached Sandridge 10 minutes later.

Next time you are waiting at Flinders Street Number 1 platform for your train to South Morang, see if you can find the brass plaque that commemorates this historical event.



WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

By John Waghorn

CHURCH STREET , Whittlesea

This "*Church Street*" must be the only one in Victoria that does not have nor ever did have a church in it. How did this come about? Well it goes back to 1853 when Whittlesea Township was first surveyed and land in *Church Street*, between Laurel and Lime Streets was reserved for the use of the Church of England. In 1863 however, the Anglicans were donated a 15 acre block of land in Wallan Road by Thomas Wills, and their church (Christ Church) was erected there instead of in *Church Street*.

This Church's foundation stone was laid in July 1864 and officially opened on the 25th February 1866. Meanwhile the *Church Street* site was used for a Church of England School, now long demolished, so perhaps the name should be changed to School Road.

WYNTOUR STREET , Whittlesea

This seems a strange name for a street, but it was named after **Wyntour Development P/L** who sub-divided the '**Pint Pot Estate**' in 1888.

Pint Pot derived its name from an old Pint Pot (about half a litre) which had been found there in earlier days and the area became known as '**Pint Pot Hill**' .

Other streets in this estate were *James Street* (named after the owner of the land prior to the sub-division) and *Macmeikan Street* (named after John and Percy MACMEIKAN, the auctioneers of the Estate.

RESEARCHING YOUR HOUSE

By Wendy Lowry

People spend hours looking up their family ancestors to discover where they came from and where they lived. There is also a lot of information for the Genealogist if they do locate the address where their ancestors resided. As well as family history, if you have moved into an established house, there is the curiosity to find out the history of how that house came to be and who had lived in it prior to you.

This article will be providing places and websites that will help you in researching things about your house. The information was collected from a presentation talk by Graham Thorley at the Ivanhoe Library last year.

Land Records

Land Victoria- 570 Bourke St. Melb.

Certificates of Title

History of the ownership and dealings with land County and Parish maps

Sub-Division plans

Website : landata.vic.gov.au

Public Records Office (PROV)

99 Shiel St. North Melb.

General Title to land pre 1862 - Memorials

Website: prov.vic.gov.au

Historic Homes Guide to researching your house.

Wills and Probate Records

Victorian Probate Office, Level 2

436 Lonsdale St. Melb.

Land owned by a deceased person requires

Probate be obtained by the Executor.

Wills and Probates are held at the Public Record Office from 1841 to 2014.

(1841 to 1925 are digitised online)

(1926 to 2014 are indexed)

Post Office Directories

Sands and McDougall Melbourne Directories from 1862 to 1974

Wise's Victorian post Office Directories from 1884 to 1916

Bailliere's Post Office Directories from

1868 to 1881

Addresses and residents names.

Street Directories

Old Historical Street Directories , digitised for period 1912 to 1952

Melway Street directories digitised from 1966 to 1999

Both available from **State Library of Victoria 328 Swanston St. Melb.**

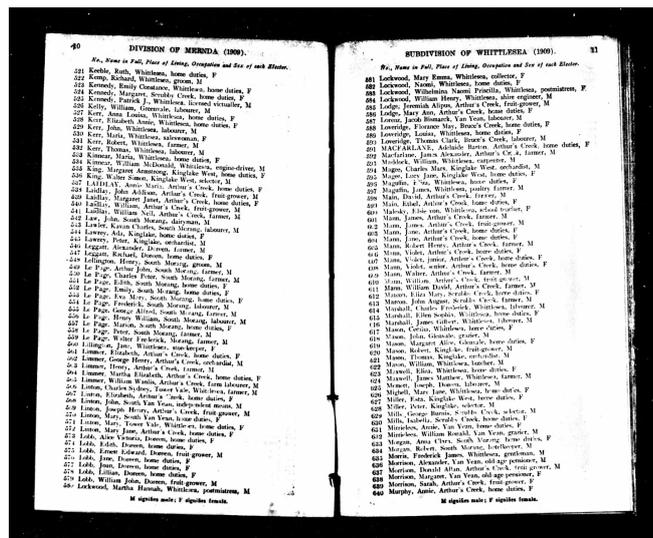
Website: slv.vic.gov.au

Electoral Rolls

Lists Voters and their addresses.

State Library hold historical rolls.

Ancestry.com website accessible via the library.



Mernda Electoral roll 1909

Local Council Records

Council Rate Books

Building permits

Council Parish Maps

Older years are held at the Public Record Office Heritage Overlay plans and registers.

Heritage Studies

Victorian Heritage Database- Lists the State's most significant heritage places

Heritage Council of Victoria

Website: vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au

Local councils do their own heritage studies too.

Heritage Victoria website lists 37 styles of architecture from the period 1836 to 2000.

Website: heritage.vic.gov.au

Local Historical Societies

May have local maps and information.

Collections of photos.

Website: whittleseahistoricalociety.org.au

Local Libraries

Yarra Plenty Regional Libraries

Website: yprl.vic.gov.au

Books on the local area.

Local photos

Local newspapers.

National Library of Australia

Access to TROVE which is an online database of newspapers and material.

Website: nla.gov.au

Also FAQ - How do I trace the history of my house.

MMBW - Metropolitan Board of Works

Base Plans for water pipes and sewerage showing property boundaries.

On website of the Public Record Office

Photographs

State Library collection .

Picture Victoria.

Website : picturevictoria.vic.gov.au

Local Historical Societies

Local Libraries

Google Earth

Aerial photos.

Compare Melbourne area 1945 to now

Website: 1945.melbourne/NathanielJeffrey

Estate Agents Brochures

Individual Estate Agents websites for house sold or on the market.

Real Estate.com website has sale history of properties.

Good luck with your research into your history !!!!

VALE

Billie Robinson (Nee Towt)

96 Years. Former District Nurse and old Whittlesea identity

Andrew Eugene Long

89 Years. Lived in Epping and long time member contributor to the Historical Society.

ODD SPOT

BUSHMAN RETIRES

From the Whittlesea Leader Date Unknown.

"News went around that Len Dunn was retiring from his post as inspector in the Yan Yean watersheds area. He had joined the Board in 1946 and is an expert in the dying art of lead joining large diameter, cast iron water mains. Many of the Board's old cast iron mains were lead jointed in the days before welding became universal and it is often more efficient to restore a lead joint than to attempt a replacement weld.

Len Dunn of Whittlesea is a man of many parts. He was born in Tasmania, moved to Victoria aged 21 and worked in Timber mills in and around the Powelltown and Kinglake areas. There, his father, an expert bushman, taught him the old skills of bushcraft, including tree climbing, timber squaring with a broad axe, post railing and paling splitting. Len became a competition axeman winning many trophies."

LUCKY ESCAPE

One of the earliest cases where a condemned person survived the hangman in England was that of Miss Inetta de Balsham, who was sentenced to death during the reign of Henry III for harbouring thieves.

She was hanged at 9.00 am on Monday and continued to dangle until the following Thursday when she was found to be still alive.

Apparently De Balsham's windpipe was deformed and had become so ossified that the rope failed to stop her breathing, King Henry was so amazed by her survival that he gave her a pardon.

IMPONDERABLES

Why do overlook and oversee mean the opposite?

Do infants enjoy infancy as much as adults enjoy adultery?

Why is the man who invests all your money called a broker?