

# Whittlesea Historical Society Inc.

## Newsletter



Covering news & history of the City of Whittlesea, outer northern suburbs of Melbourne

No. 29

### WHS Committee

**President**

Bruce Whitchurch

**Vice President**

Bruce Batten

**Treasurer**

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**Secretary**

Dawn Allen

**Website**

Bev Moore

**Media**

Matt Christie

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Barbara Miller

**Acquisitions Officer / Newsletter**

Karen Wilson

### Contact Us

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Incorporation No. A0017979G

ABN: 46 019 570 463

PO Box 75, Whittlesea, Vic, 3757

**Website** [www.whittleseahistoricalsociety.org.au](http://www.whittleseahistoricalsociety.org.au)

**Email**

[whittleseahistorical@gmail.com](mailto:whittleseahistorical@gmail.com)

**Bank Details**

Net Bank

BSB 063 855

Account No. 10028927

**Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/whittleseahistoricalsociety](http://www.facebook.com/whittleseahistoricalsociety)

**Next Meeting – All Welcome**

Whittlesea Bowls Club

101 Church Street, Whittlesea

16 July, 2:00pm

### Message from our new member Daniel Giddens

I'm Daniel Giddens and I'm very happy to be joining the Historical Society team and hopefully putting my research skills to good use. I have been a Librarian for 16 years, having recently started working for State Library Victoria, and prior to that worked in the academic and TAFE Library sector at William Angliss Institute and RMIT University.

I share a long family history with the district, having always had a side interest, but more time on my hands during COVID, allowed me to dig a little deeper and uncover some really great stories and resources, and now I can't seem to get enough of it. Being a Librarian who loves detective work doesn't hurt either! I have used WHS' research service in the past and thought it was time to give back.

The name Giddens has a long association with Mernda/Yan Yean, my being the great-great-great grandson of Edward and Mary Giddens, who began a connection to the area some 170 years ago and which continues today. My paternal grandmother was a Green/Ryder/Fleming of Arthurs Creek and Mernda, whose connection is still evident today, named for Green's Road, Arthurs Creek and her grandfather, Bartholomew Ryder donated the land for the Arthurs Creek Catholic Church, which was dismantled and moved to Loyola College in 1990, where it still stands today. Maternally, I am a Robinson, who have had connections to Yarrambat, Kinglake and Mernda.

Outside of work and my family history interest, I enjoy reading a good autobiography and have an eclectic taste in music.

## New Members

The Whittlesea Historical Society would like to welcome new members Chris Scull and Daniel Giddens.

## Upcoming Events

### WHS Fundraising Days

#### Diamond Creek Rotary Tram Café

1 July 2023 8:30am – 4:30pm

26 August 2023 8:30am – 4:30pm

2 September 8:30am – 4:30pm

1 October 8:30am – 4:30pm



28 Main Hurstbridge Road, Diamond Creek, Vic 3089

WHS is serving up all kinds of treats as a fundraising activity, so come along and say hi to us!

### WHS Epping Cemetery Tour

#### Presented by Tanya Gook – WHS Member

Come and find out the history of the Epping Cemetery and hear stories about some of the past residence.

19 August 2023 1:00pm

Miller Street, Epping

\$15.00 per person

Net Bank

BSB: 063 855

Acc. No: 10028927

Ref: (Surname) ECT



## Donations Welcome



If you have what you consider to be historical items relating to the City of Whittlesea, it's people and places and would like to donate them to the WHS, please feel free to contact us at:

[whittleseahistorical@gmail.com](mailto:whittleseahistorical@gmail.com)

or

PO Box 75, Whittlesea, Victoria, 3757

## Monument for Lieutenant Colonel Robert Garrick Wilson



Back in April, a monument was erected in honour of Lieutenant Colonel Robert Garrick Wilson in the garden bed behind the Soldiers Memorial on the corner of Church & Laurel Streets in Whittlesea thanks to the research of Lindsay Mann, WHS Member, and the efforts of the Whittlesea RSL.

Robert Wilson was the highest ranking and oldest serviceman from Whittlesea to serve during the First World War.

He volunteered for service with the Australian Imperial Force on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 1915 and established the A.I.F. Canteen Service which still operates today. Whilst in Cairo, he died of illness on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 1916.

Rest in Peace.

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## Historical Newspaper Articles

Advertiser, Friday 21 December 1928

### BELMONT HOTEL, THOMASTOWN

*After having been owned by members of the same family – it is said for 90 years – the Belmont Hotel, Thomastown, has been sold to Mr. David Scott, of Epping. The hotel, built by Mr. Peter McCoy early in the settlement of Victoria, is only 13 miles from Melbourne. It was sold by Mrs. Bridget McCormack. Mr Scott already own the hotel at Epping, and he intends to improve the Belmont Hotel.*



**C. 1920, Belmont Hotel, Thomastown**  
(WHS Photo PD0774)

\* The Belmont Hotel was demolished in the 1990's to make way for the Ring Road through Thomastown.

# Facebooks Thomastown – Lalor – Epping Area Local History

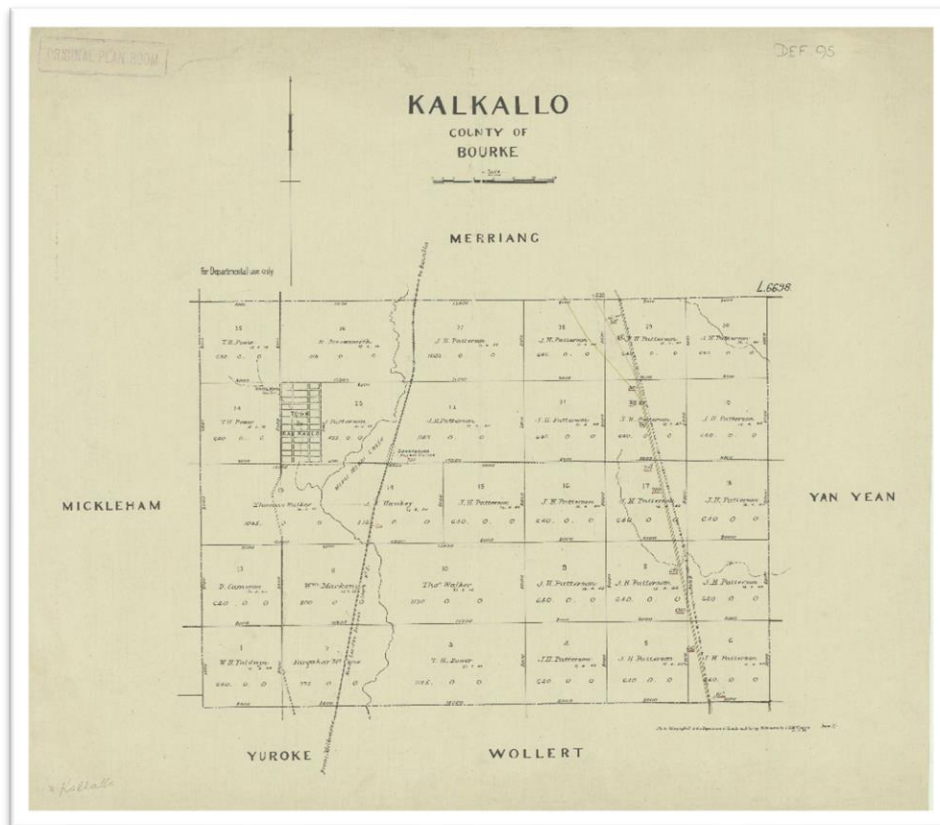
by Chris Scull, WHS Member



That's the old Glen Waverley station relocated to Epping for the November 1964 re-opening. The original station was at the end of railway Parade, and on the other side of the tracks, closed in 1959. I could be wrong, but I think Epping is the only suburban station to have lived in 3 different locations.  
- Allan Woolcock

1967, Epping Railway Terminus  
(Photo courtesy of SLV)

## Historical Map of Kalkallo



Kalkallo, County of Bourke  
(Photo courtesy of PROV)

## History and Closure of Christ Church Whittlesea after 157 years

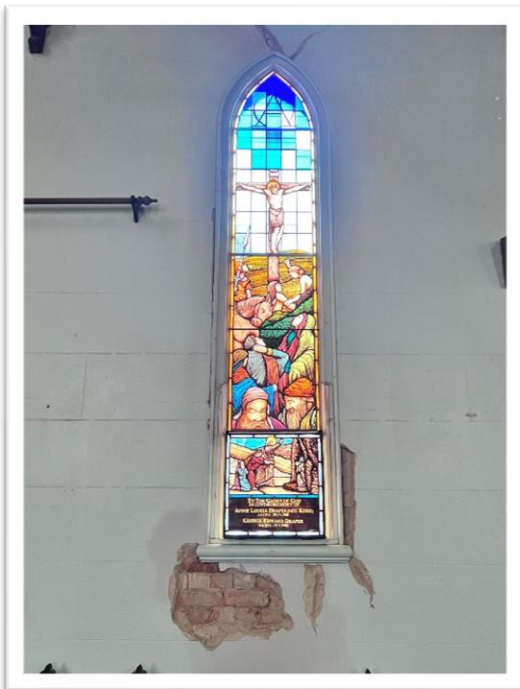
In 1863, land was donated by Mr. Thomas Wills for the express purpose of accommodating a “building for public worship” and a “dwelling for the minister duly appointed”. Tenders were called for, and the Church was ready by 1866, having its first service on the 25 February 1866 conducted by Archbishop Charles Perry. Made of bluestone foundations with brick walls and a slate roof, the church featured a 208 pound bell.

However, in 1909 the bell was removed from the tower due to its weight endangering the building, and now hangs in a structure beside the Church.



**C. 1890 Christ Church Whittlesea**  
(WHS Photo PD0073)

Christ Church features 12 beautiful stained glass windows. The window behind the Communion Table depicts Christ surrounded by a selection of people associated with his ministry, and is in memory of those from the Parish who fell in the Second World War. The five windows along the left side of the Church depict the life of and passion of Christ and the five windows along the right side, Old Testament characters of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ruth & Naomi, and Abraham, point towards the promised Messiah. The newest window over the entrance porch depicts Creation and the New Jerusalem with the theme of Christ as Beginning and End (Alpha and Omega). The stained glass window artists include William Kerr-Morgan, Joseph Stansfield, Don Ferguson and more recently, Bruce Hutton.



**One of the stained glass windows inside the church. Photo also shows some of the render deterioration.**

(WHS Photo PD0755)

On 30 April this year, Christ Church Whittlesea had its last service held in the hall next to the church. The church had been closed for a number of weeks due to interior and exterior erosion, as the church has become a danger to the public. It is still unknown if the Anglican Church will be saved and restored to its former glory.

The Whittlesea Historical Society hopes, views, supports towards positive outcome for this historic building.

## Yan Yean – Burnside Dairy History

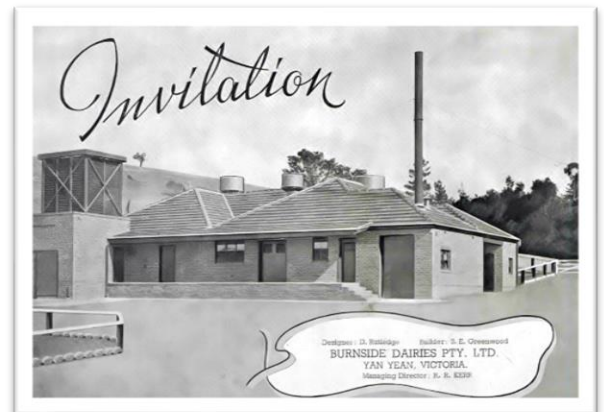


**R.R. Kerr "Burnside" Yan Yean**  
(WHS Photo PD0759)

When he moved, Kerr brought 46 milking cows from the Banyule Stud and soon set about improving both pastures and buildings. Over the years Kerr enlarged his farm. In the 1930s he introduced the use of clover and superphosphate on to Burnside. The innovations had a dramatic impact upon pasture quality and also the quantity of milk produced; other farmers, seeing the results soon followed suit.

By 1934 Kerr had commenced supplying milk to Melbourne's public hospitals.

In 1938, the new Burnside Dairies (designed by W. Rutledge and built by S. E Greenwood) were opened by the Minister for Agriculture, Hon. E. J (Ned) Hogan. The local paper reported that "Between 400 and 500 guests were present at the official opening on Monday of the new pasteurising and brine cooling plant at Yan Yean". The property was 326 acres, a heard of 340, produced 1000 tons of ensilage and 100 tons of grass hay per year, and gave employment to thirty people.



**Invitation to the opening of the dairy built in 1938**  
(WHS Photo PD0760)

Water for the Burnside Dairies was supplied from a steel tank erected nearby on Sheoak Hill. The tank had been imported in sections from England and held 50,000 gallons pumped from the Yan Yean Aqueduct. The Burnside plant was the first outside the metropolitan area to pasteurise milk, and its capacity was able to treat the entire district's production.

Today, the building is operating as the Yan Yean Stock Feeds on Donnybrook Rd.

<https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/media/1759/city-of-whittlesea-heritage-study-volume-1.pdf>

## Eden Park History

By Matt Dickinson – WHS Member

### **WHITTLESEA'S INVISIBLE FARMERS, by Matt Dickinson from his book "Glimpses of Life"**

Yes, Whittlesea has invisible farmers, women working farms and doing so very skilfully. At Mernda there was Mrs. Graff, whose cows were often watched and in her care on the side of Plenty Road. This was when there were far fewer cars, and more good drives. This grazing would supplement the feed from her small acreage farm.

Her Mernda cows won prizes for cream at the Whittlesea show. Another lady farmer from Eden Park was Alice Murphy. She had a cattle farm and ran it very successfully. At the time I knew her, I was on low wages and had a family of 6 children to support. At hay harvesting time, I worked weekends and evenings hay carting and I helped with this on her farm.

As well as being a competent farmer, Alice was a sentimental person. She loved and recalled her folks often in conversation. In the area at the side of the house stood a strong gum tree bole. This post had been used by Alice's father for training his horses. He used it as the central tether for controlling the unbroken horse. I presume he was of Irish stock from his name, Murphy. The Irish are often skilled at horse training work. Of course, now it is all tractors and the Clydesdale are almost extinct.

I hope that tethering post still survives, as it is an item from the districts past. One year, when we carted her hay, she entered a bale of hay in the Melbourne show and got a prize for the quality of the hay in the bale.

Alice was fussy about the time of cutting and the time of baling the cut hay. This particular year in preparation for carting the baled hay we had to clean out her fairly small hay shed. There was a layer of old loose hay on the floor. I also noticed a piece of harness hanging on a peg on one of the walls where we were to stack the bales. I think it was a horse bridal but it may have been a horse collar.

Either way I thought it was in the way and needed moving. I went to the peg where this piece of harness hung with the intention of shifting it. Thankfully I didn't reach it. Alice saw what I intended doing and called, 'Don't touch that, my father put that harness there'!

I have no idea when her father died. But that harness had never been moved from that peg since he passed on.

Carting hay bales is hot thirsty work.

While working for Alice, we were always supplied with cups of tea and scones and a mixed salad. Plus water for a wash to get rid of the hayseeds and help cool down.

This didn't happen on the big company owned farms, they were a totally different story. I don't know how many years Alice worked that farm. I know she inherited it from her father and her brother had a farm, close by in Eden Park. I would think she was there many years continuing what her parents had started.

But for all of us, times rolls on and she grew old.

I lost track of her over the years, until one day I was in the Whittlesea post office and asked about Alice.

Mrs. White, the Postmistress told me Alice had died sometime previously. She said Alice was found dead in the field with her much loved cattle. I don't know but I assume it was just old age that caught up with her.

Today, more than ever we should appreciate what women are doing on the land in difficult times. Especially in drought stricken areas.



**Alice Margaret Murphy 1921 – 2003**  
(Photo courtesy of Ancestry.com)

## Pentridge Volunteer Rifles

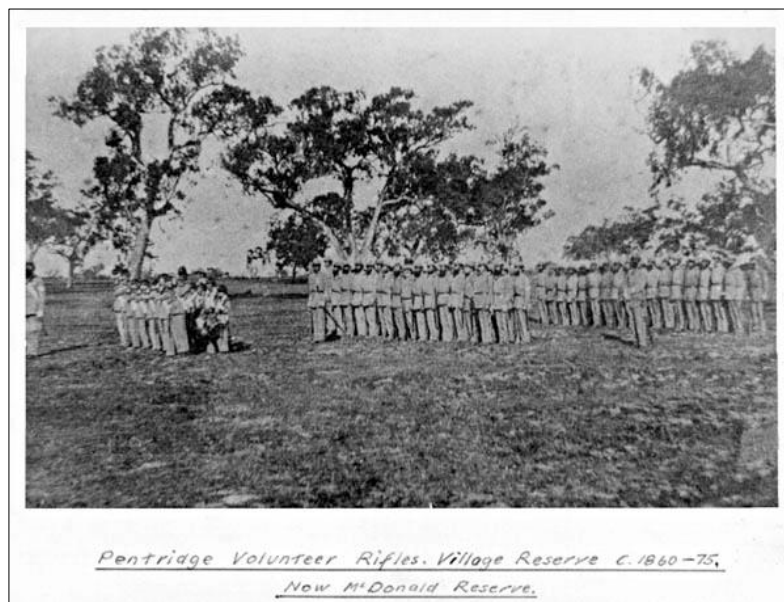
By Rob Wuchatsch – WHS Member

During the 1860s at least 18 Thomastown men, including some from Westgarthtown, joined the Pentridge Volunteer Rifles, a unit of Victoria's defence forces. They were John, George and Richard Batchelor, George Dyer, Charles Fiedler, Moses Leggatt, James Lewis, Robert Mabey, William Mahoney, James Mooney, Isaac Moore, James Olney, James and Thomas Prescott and Alfred, John, Joseph and Francis Thomas.

The Pentridge Volunteer Rifles was formed in 1859 and drills were held in a paddock there until a parade ground was constructed near the Stockade (former Pentridge Prison). Soon after a rifle range was added. Volunteers initially paraded on Thursday mornings, but later changed to evenings, so they could attend more often. Volunteers served part-time without payment but those who completed five year's service were entitled to a land grant certificate valued at £50. All but one of Thomastown's volunteers are said to have sold their certificates for £45.

Thomastown and Westgarthtown schoolboys Gustav and Robert Hempel, Julius and Louis Peters and Alfred, James and William Thomas were also recruited as members of the Pentridge Volunteer Rifles' drum and fife band during the mid-1860s and paraded with the unit on Thursday afternoons. The band practiced in a small hall behind Mabey's store on the corner of High and Spring Streets.

Some of the boys in the band later served as riflemen with the Pentridge Volunteer Rifles (known from 1872 as the Northern Volunteer Rifle Corps) and during the 1880s, other Thomastown men, including the Olney brothers, served with the Preston Volunteer Rifles.



(Photo courtesy of Coburg Historical Society)



## Old Time Recipe

By Matt Christie – WHS Member

My fascination with cookery history first began when I'd see Woman's Day magazines laying around the house and I'd jump straight to the recipe section and cut them out and add them to my collection. In later years I migrated to collecting cookery books from years gone and started collecting in 1989 from around the world and this continues to this day.

The recipe I am sharing today is one that was given to me by my next-door neighbour that I absolutely love and make on a regular basis for visitors.

Versions of this recipe date back to the great depression era (approximately).

### **Mock Chicken Dip**

Ingredients:

1 Large tomato

1 Medium Onion

1 Egg

¼ Cup of grated cheese

¼ Cup of fresh cream

¼ teaspoon of chicken seasoning

(Salt/Pepper for seasoning if required only)

### **Method:**

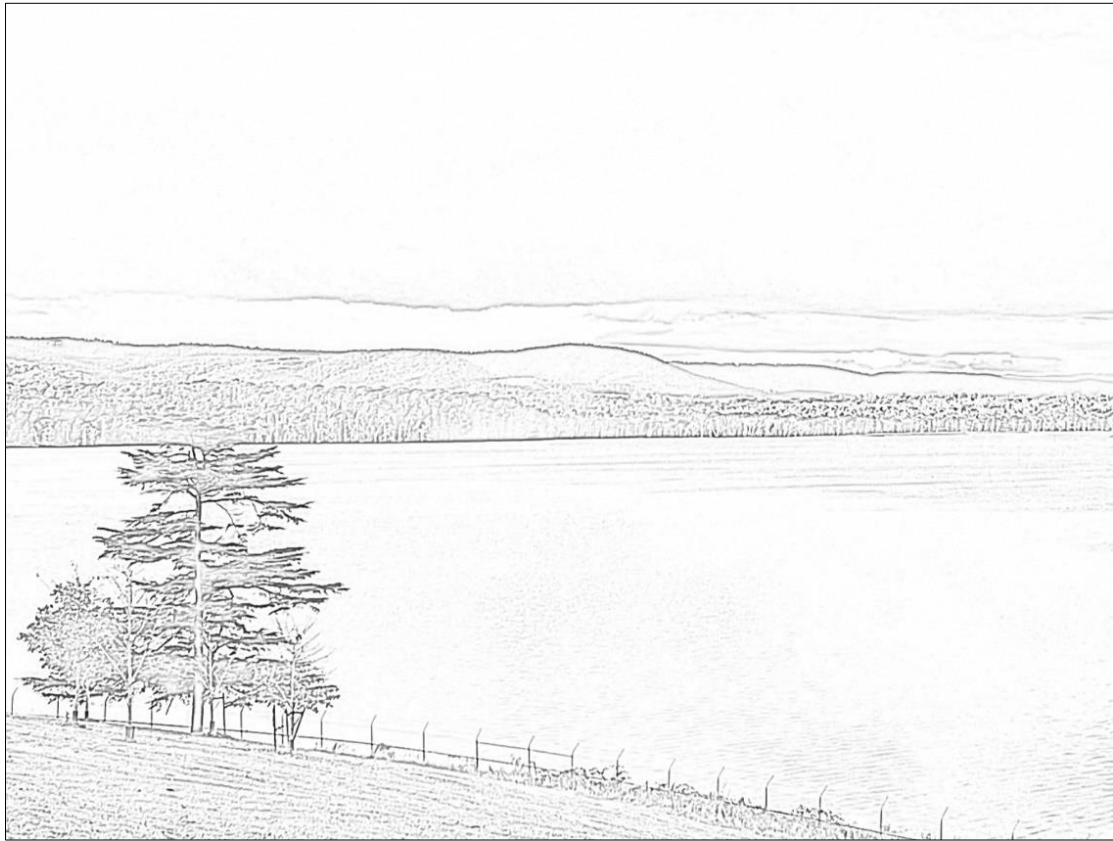
1. Chop tomato into small cubes and cook until juicy in a small frypan and remove and set to the side
2. Chop onion into small cubes and add to frypan and cook until clear in colour
3. Add tomato with onion in the frypan with the seasoning and grated cheese and cook until soft
4. Add the raw egg to the mixture in the frypan with the other ingredients and cook until scrambled egg texture
5. Set to the side to cool
6. Add cream once cooled and salt and pepper for seasoning if required and stir to get the consistency of a dip and remove and place in small bowl for serving

### **To serve:**

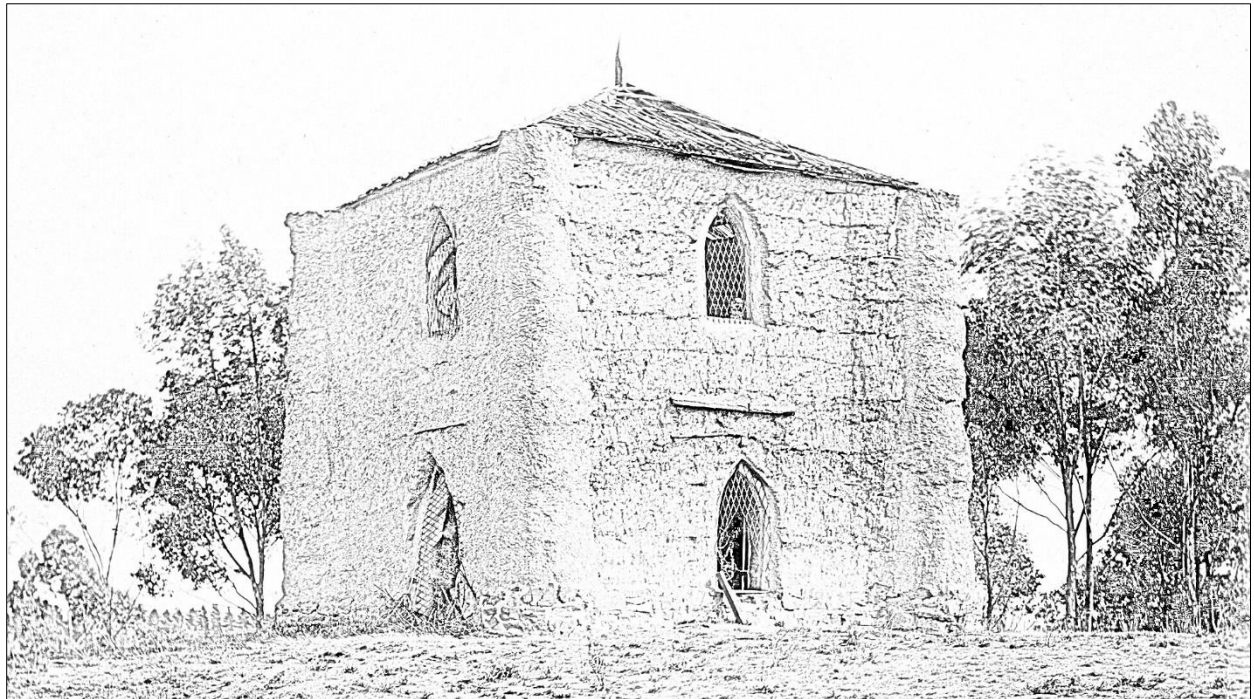
Great on Jatz biscuits or on a SAO making it a great morning or afternoon tea snack for all.

Recipe supplied by Cookery Book Collector

## Colouring In for Kids



**Yan Yean Reservoir**



**Bear's Castle**



# Whittlesea Historical Society Inc.

Incorporation No. A0017979G ABN: 46 019 570 463

## Membership Application Form

Membership gives you access to our extensive collection of photographs and documents, our WHS newsletter.

### Member Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Options

I would like to Join the Whittlesea Historical Society

I would like to Renew my membership with the Whittlesea Historical Society

**Individual**      **\$15.00**

**Family**      **\$20.00 (2 adults & 2 Children)**

### I would like to assist with:

Committee & Administration

Research

Newsletter

Other

Events

Digitizing

Grant Applications

### Payment Options

Paying by Direct Transfer  
Net Bank BSB No: 063 855  
Account No: 10028927  
Account Name: Whittlesea Historical Society  
(please ensure reference includes surname and what payment is for)

Paying by Cheque  
Please make cheque payable to the  
Whittlesea Historical Society Inc.  
and post to:  
Treasurer  
Whittlesea Historical Society  
P.O. Box 75, Whittlesea, Vic, 3757