

Whittlesea Historical Society Inc.

Est. 1975

Newsletter



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

No. 30

WHS Committee

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***** VALE *****

Matt Dickinson

Our beloved member, Matt Dickinson passed away in August. Matt was a prolific writer, an avid photographer and a really lovely person. He had been a long-time member of the Whittlesea Historical Society. He gifted many photographs over the years to the WHS and had written many stories for the Town Crier. He also wrote a book about the Tramways.

He and his wife had come out to Australia as ten-pound poms with three children in the 1950's. He had got a job with a bridge gang working for the Country Roads Board. As a labourer, he was working on the repair and maintenance of wood decked bridges around Whittlesea where he and his family settled.

An article below is Matt's last contribution to the WHS. He will be sorely missed.

Whittlesea Historical Society – Annual General Meeting
Sunday 15th October 2023, 1:30pm

Whittlesea Bowls Club
101 Church Street, Whittlesea



WHITTLESEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

wishes to invite you to our

Annual General Meeting

Being held at the Whittlesea Bowling Club at 101 Church Street.

Commencing with lunch at 12 noon. Pay for your own meal and drinks.

The AGM will start at 1.30pm followed by guest speaker Mrs. Lucy Ellem, Author, Art Historian & Co-founder of Plenty Valley Arts.

Theme: "The history & development of Plenty Valley Arts"

The Secretary: email – whittleseahistorical@gmail.com

New WHS Members

Whittlesea Historical Society would like to welcome the following new members.

Virginia Greenwood
Meredith Bright
Michael Trinadad
Graham Murray
Christine Stonehouse
Shayne Beachamp
Franco Santorini

We look forward to your contributions towards the society.

Upcoming Events

WHS Fundraising Days

Diamond Creek Rotary Tram Café

1 October 8:30am – 4:30pm
28 Main Hurstbridge Road, Diamond Creek



Bunnings Sausage Sizzle - MERNDA

29 September 9:00am – 4:00pm
1405 Plenty Road, Mernda



Donations Welcome



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

whittleseahistorical@gmail.com
or
PO Box 75, Whittlesea, Victoria, 3757

Your History, Our Vision – WHS Seminar

By Barbara Miller, Karen Wilson & Matt Christie – WHS Members

Back in June, members of the Whittlesea Historical Society held a seminar hosted by Jacinta & Carol Walsh from Whitehaven Receptions to discuss the importance of creating an historical & arts precinct with the inclusion of a historical museum and art gallery.

Guest speakers on the night included Professor Richard Broome, President of the Historical Society of Victoria, Dr. David Harris, Department of Archaeology & History, La Trobe University and Rosemary Cameron, Executive Officer of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.



Professor Richard Broome

The night was a huge success with a large crowd of people from all over the city of Whittlesea attending. The current problem for WHS is not one of succession faced by many other societies, as they have a dynamic group of younger people in the Society ready to create an exciting future over the coming decade.

However, the Society, now 48 years old, has never had a home, temporary or otherwise. While almost all historical societies across the state have a home, often supplied by the local council, the WHS is homeless. Its significant collection remains precariously stored at various sites on private property.

Jacinta Walsh, Founder and Artistic Director Ballet Arts Australia, and a passionate Whittlesean, opened the proceedings with a plea for a brighter future for the Whittlesea Historical Society. Jacinta recently decided to settle back in Whittlesea after an international ballet career.

RHSV President Richard Broome spoke on the 'Power of Place' and expressed his astonishment and bitter disappointment at the Society's homeless situation and urged action. Either the Council, a Whittlesea philanthropist, or local developers needed to step up to help find the WHS a home. The members are prepared for hard work and are ready to embrace change, but need help. Without a home the memories and identity of Whittlesea may be lost.

Rosemary Cameron spoke on 'What Made for a strong Historical Society'. She argued it was not about numbers, but commitment and the partnerships the society forged with the local community and with the local Council. The WHS, and indeed all societies, need to take every opportunity to engage with their local community through having a table at all local events, and to continually lobby council and build relationships with councillors once appointed.

Dr David Harris from La Trobe University's History Department spoke about how a community in Mitcham saved and now runs the former German farmhouse of 'Schwerkolt'. The community agitated for ownership of the farmhouse, which was bought by the City of Nunawading in 1964, and restored by volunteer labour. It opened as a local history museum in 1965 and since then new buildings have been added, making for a magnificent complex ([Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex](#)).



Local Historian David Ovenden spoke of his connections to Whittlesea and how Whittlesea had a lot to offer as a tourist destination, in which enterprise the historical society could play its part.

It was a powerful and inspiring meeting.

The live stream is at:

<https://www.vividstream.com.au/live/whs>

Homeless documents since 1975

Epping Cemetery Tour

By Wendy Lowry – WHS Member

On Saturday 19th August, the Whittlesea Historical Society conducted a Cemetery Tour of the Epping Cemetery which is located on the corner of High Street and O'Herns Road Epping. The Vice President, Mr Bruce Batten along with member Tanya Gook who had done all the research, gave an interesting account of 14 graves within the cemetery that outlined information about the family buried and their cause of death as well as photos of the deceased and their homes. The audience was impressed with the courage and fortitude of these early pioneers from the district.



Bruce and Tanya welcoming the visitors to the tour.



Tanya recounting the story of the Scales family

Chris Scull's Facebook - Thomastown – Lalor – Epping Area Local History

Lalor 1981

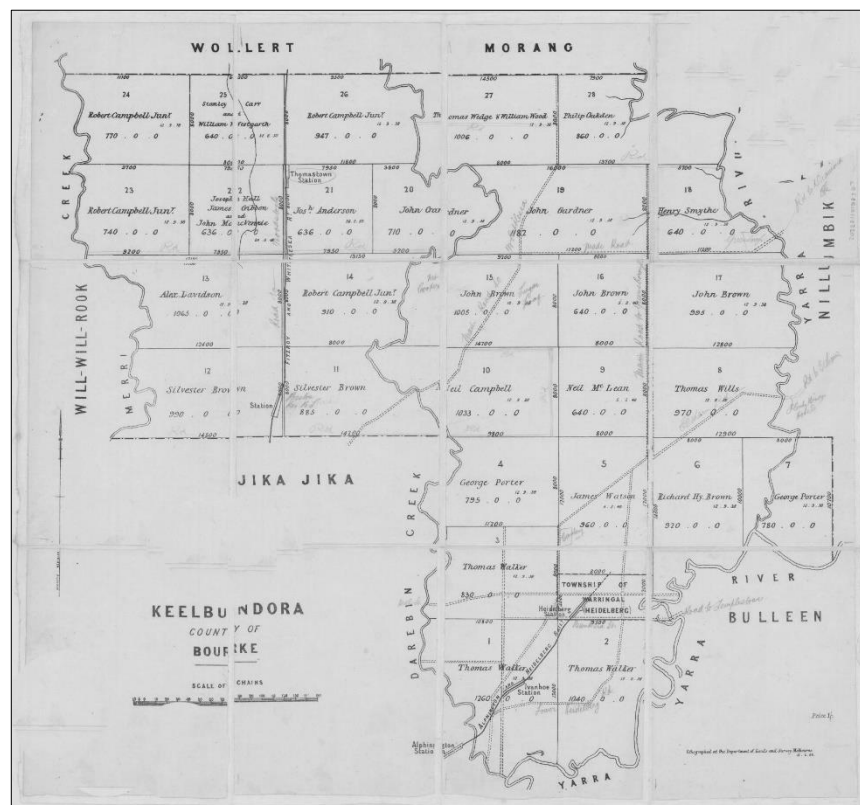
The Peter Lalor Mall at the Lalor Shopping Centre. On the left is the old Music Centre where we bought our records and tapes. The wall with the mural was (at the time) the Commonwealth Bank.

The mural was painted over 10 weeks by students at Lalor High under the direction of Ross Dean. The mural was titled "With Our Own Hands" and I will be posting additional images or a slideshow in the coming weeks. The photo was taken back before the roof over the mall was completed. The mural has been gone for many a year now, I'm unsure exactly when it came down or what happened to it.



Photo courtesy of Chris Scull's Facebook page

Historical Map of Janefield



Keelbundora, County of Bourke
(Photo courtesy of State Library of Victoria)

Historical Newspaper Articles

Evelyn Observer, Friday 17 February, 1911

Whittlesea (From A Correspondent)
DEATH OF MR. JOHN DANIEL

It is with deep regret that I have to report the death of one of our most respected residents, namely, Mr. John Daniel, whose remains were buried on Monday, the 13th February, at the Whittlesea cemetery. Mr. Daniel who was 75 years of age, had been suffering for a few months with an inward complaint, so his death did not come unexpectedly to his many friends.

He was a man who took a keen interest in horses. Forty years ago he had such horses as Royal Charlie, Lord Lyon, and others that have left a name for themselves; horses of the type hard to find at the present time. For many years he was on the committee of the Victoria Agricultural Society, Heidelberg, also of the Royal Melbourne, and a good member of the Whittlesea Society. He was a member of the Whittlesea Council for many years and took a keen interest in municipal matters. I may mention here that on the 12th November, 1891, an address was presented by the by the Council to the late Earl of Hopetoun. The Council then consisted of the following



John Daniel
(WHS Photo PD0737)

gentlemen:-Messrs. A. Nelson (president), W. Thomas, Jas. Andrew, Jas, Morris, T, Harmer, J. Daniel, W. Timms, W, Reid, R. Bassett, W. H. Lockwood (shire engineer), James Ryan, sen. (shire secretary).

So you will see, Mr Editor, six of the councillors and their secretary have passed away. Ever since Mr. Daniel came to reside in the Whittlesea district, about 22 years ago, he took a leading interest In the Presbyterian Church, and his place will be hard to fill,

A large number of friends of the deceased followed his remains to their last resting place, and the following gentlemen acted as pallbearers:- Messrs. Cotchln, Coulthard, Sassella, Cornfoot, Everist and Johnston (of Melbourne).

The funeral arrangements were carried out by Mr E. T. Apps, of Fitzroy.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/60653521?searchTerm=%22john%20daniel%22%20whittlesea#>



Grave of John Daniel, Yan Yean Cemetery
(WHS Photo PD0738)

The Aqueduct

By Matt Dickinson – WHS Member



Drop on Aqueduct near Whittlesea
(WHS Photo PD0785)

Not so long ago, the aqueduct from Toorourrong to Yan Yean flowed swiftly and deep, after rains on the ranges. We lived near to where the Aqueduct crosses Kinglake road. This is on the out skirts of Whittlesea. It was the outskirts of Whittlesea then, times have changed. Whittlesea has expanded beyond belief.

At that time, while lying in bed at night, I could hear the pleasant sound of the water, as it poured over the aqueduct waterfall drop on the north side of Kinglake Road. Now, there is very little flow in the aqueduct, sometimes a mere trickle of water, making its way to Yan Yean for Melbourne.

A wet year, the aqueduct was running to its capacity with fast flowing water. Ideal for Melbourne for water supply, but it meant trouble for this lady farmer. She was on her own, having recently lost her husband.

Not that that fact hindered her, no, she was a very determined little woman. She was originally from Norway. Definitely Viking breed.

In her youth she had been a stewardess on a Norwegian ship. That was many, many years ago. Now she was an old lady, dressed in yesterday's clothing, of long skirts and jackets and large floppy hat for the sun.

This morning, she went out as usual to feed the animals. Feeding and fattening black Aberdeen angus calves, in the field, alongside the aqueduct. But this morning, things were not right. A young Aberdeen Angus calf was out of the field and over the fence and beside the flowing water of the aqueduct.

The old lady got over or through the fence wires. She tried to drive the calf back to the gap in the fence where he had got through in the first place. Being forced back, the calf became excited and ran away from the fence. It tried to jump the aqueduct but ended up to his legs, in fast flowing water.

Now the old lady was really alarmed at the prospect of the calf being swept away, over the twelve foot water drop. This drop, a mere twenty yards downstream, from the calf's position. The old lady got back through the wire fence and rushed into the house. On reaching the phone, somehow she got the reservoir work gang phone number. After getting her to calm down, the man got the message. A calf was in their aqueduct, she thought it was in danger of drowning. "Yes, he would send help straight away."

Now to organise a truck and men would take time, I would think a half hour at least before the men would arrive at the scene of the calf in the aqueduct. Things had further developed since the phone call for help. Can you imagine the men's surprise, when they, not only find a calf in the water in the steep sided aqueduct, but also this little old lady, fully clothed was now also in the aqueduct between the calf and the 10 feet water drop.

She had climbed, or maybe slid in on her bottom, into the aqueduct in beside the calf putting herself in danger. I don't know how deep the water was flowing.

How the men or it may have been one man got the calf and the old lady out of the V shaped stone block aqueduct. It must have been very difficult, but they managed it. How long had that old lady been in that cold flowing water, I have no idea.

She said to the men, "I am OK I'm not too wet.", while standing there dripping water. All's well that ends well and neither the calf nor the old lady suffered any ill effects from their adventures.

There are lots of things happen in the country, which nobody ever hears of. I heard of this incident and thought it is well worth recording. Not everybody would get into an aqueduct to help a calf, as did this determined old lady.

Unlocking your family history with State Library Victoria

By Daniel Giddens – WHS Member



Where do you start when trying to uncover that person in your family that you do not know enough about, or exactly where your family once lived? That was what I was faced with when I began the journey myself. There are many resources available online now, but which is best for what purpose? Even as a librarian myself, I sought guidance from colleagues at State Library Victoria (and now I find myself working there) and in the process uncovered resources I did not know about, and by also becoming a member, could access many other databases for free. So I thought I would share, and encourage you to explore more of what is out there.

State Library Victoria

SLV Librarians have put together a range of online guides with information and resources on family history topics. If you want to research your ancestors from Great Britain and Ireland, the goldrush, where you lived, or how to find items in newspapers (very popular), you will find a guide to help. Take a look at the list at <https://guides.slv.vic.gov.au/familyhistoryguides>

Still overwhelmed? Our Family History team offer introductory webinars, such as Finding Families, helping you take those first steps, Welfare Records For Family History exploring these specialist resources available from our collection and how to access them. Other examples include Newsworthy, taking you through newspaper resources, while Introduction to the Library and Your Library Online are good overviews for those who haven't used the Library before. The best part is that these are all free and just the beginning of what we offer. Check out <https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/whats-on/filter?type=1018> for more.

You do need to be a member to access our subscribed electronic resources and be able to order items from our onsite and offsite storage (did you know that only 2% of the Library's physical collection is on open access, and that is still a substantial number). [Access membership](#) is free and is the option many of our users choose. Signing up takes minutes and you can do it from home.

Onsite we have a dedicated [Newspapers and Family History Reading Room](#) with Library staff available, computers, newspapers, seating, print scan and copy equipment, and microfilm and microfiche readers. Physical tours of the space can be [booked](#).

As well as coming into the Library for help (if you do, why not stop into the [World of Book Exhibition](#)), you can [contact us](#) by phone or submit an online enquiry. Keep up to date with what is happening at the Library by subscribing to a [newsletter](#).

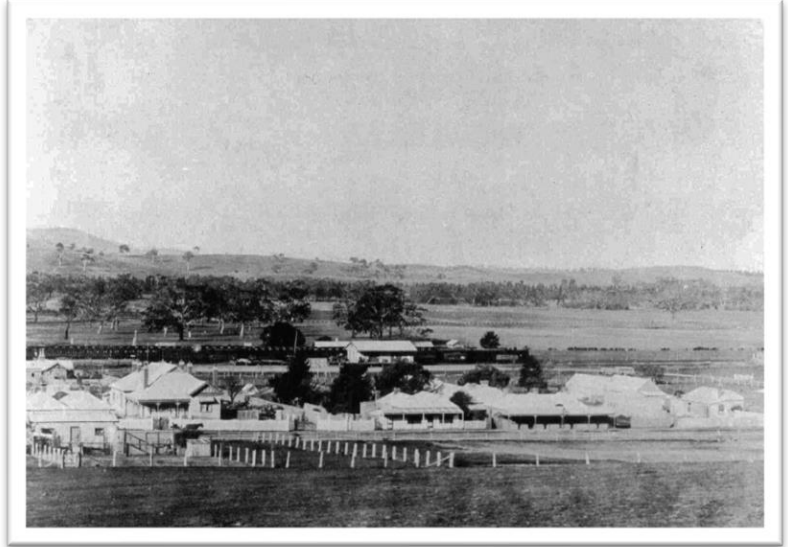
170 Year Anniversary of the Whittlesea Township

By Judy Clements – WHS Member

In September this year, the Whittlesea Township will celebrate 170 years since it was surveyed which was then followed by the sale of the first lots.

It was reported in The Argus, Melbourne on Thursday, 22nd September, 1853 that the first lot of blocks were to be sold and following this announcement, the sale of 30 blocks took place in October of that year.

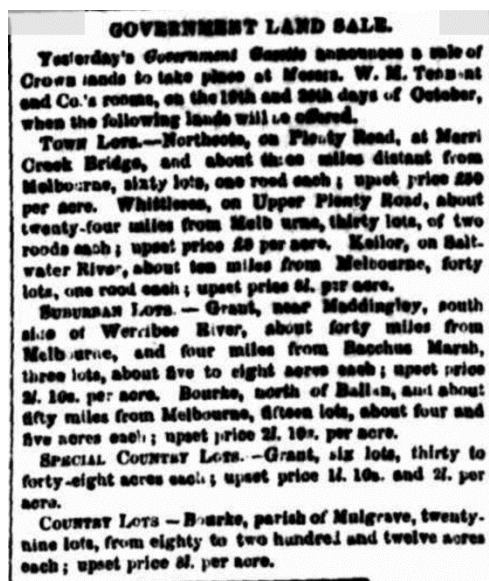
The Hoddle Survey of Victoria named the parishes for various locations and our district was named the Parish of Toorourrong. The most southern part of the Parish was noted as the Toorourrong Village Reserve, now the site of Whittlesea.



Whittlesea Township
(WHS Photo PD0175)

The surveyor was Mr. Robert Mason who was responsible for the layout and naming of the streets as they appear today. Around this time they announced the name of the township of Whittlesea, the name he gave based on Whittlesey, England from where he came. He noted the resemblance between the two locations, of swampy country and at the base of the mountains. It was the construction of the Yan Yean and Toorourrong Reservoirs and the fresh water channel connecting both which later changed this feature.

Thank you to David Ovenden, WHS Member for providing the information.



The Argus, Thursday 22 September 1853, Page 5
(Trove)

Old Time Recipe

WARNE'S MODEL COOKERY AND HOUSEKEEPING BOOK, LONDON: FREDERICK WARNE AND CO, 1869

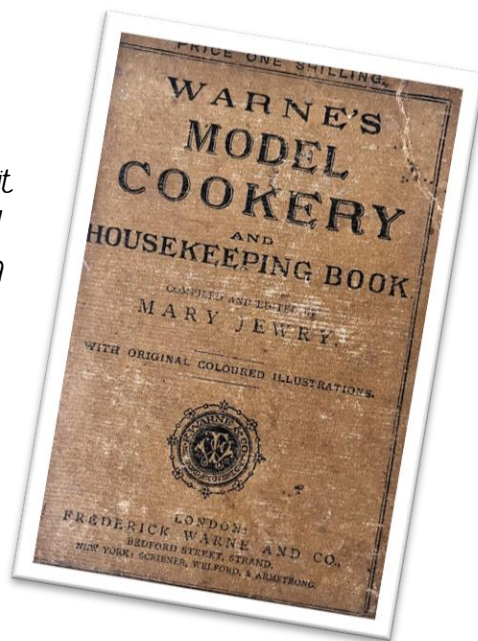
ROAST HAUNCH OF MUTTON

Time, a quarter of an hour to each pound of meat.

Take a fine haunch of Southdown, Welsh or Devonshire mutton, hang it up for ten days or a fortnight, trim off the skin which covers the fat, remove the shank bone, and cover it with two or three sheets of buttered paper, place it on a spit, or in a cradle spit; set it at about fifteen inches from the fire, and roast it for two hours very slowly to warm it through, basting it with dripping every five minutes.

Draw it gradually nearer and nearer to the fire to brown, but take care it does not burn. Sprinkle it with flour and baste with a little butter, which will give it a fine frothy appearance.

Pour good brown gravy over it. Serve it with red currant jelly sauce.



Tit-Bits – Why are you still single?

In 1889, *Tit-Bits* magazine offered a prize to the spinster who could provide the best answer to the question: Why are you still single?

“Because I do not care to enlarge my menagerie of pets, and I find the animal man less docile than a dog, less affectionate than a cat, and less amusing than a monkey.”

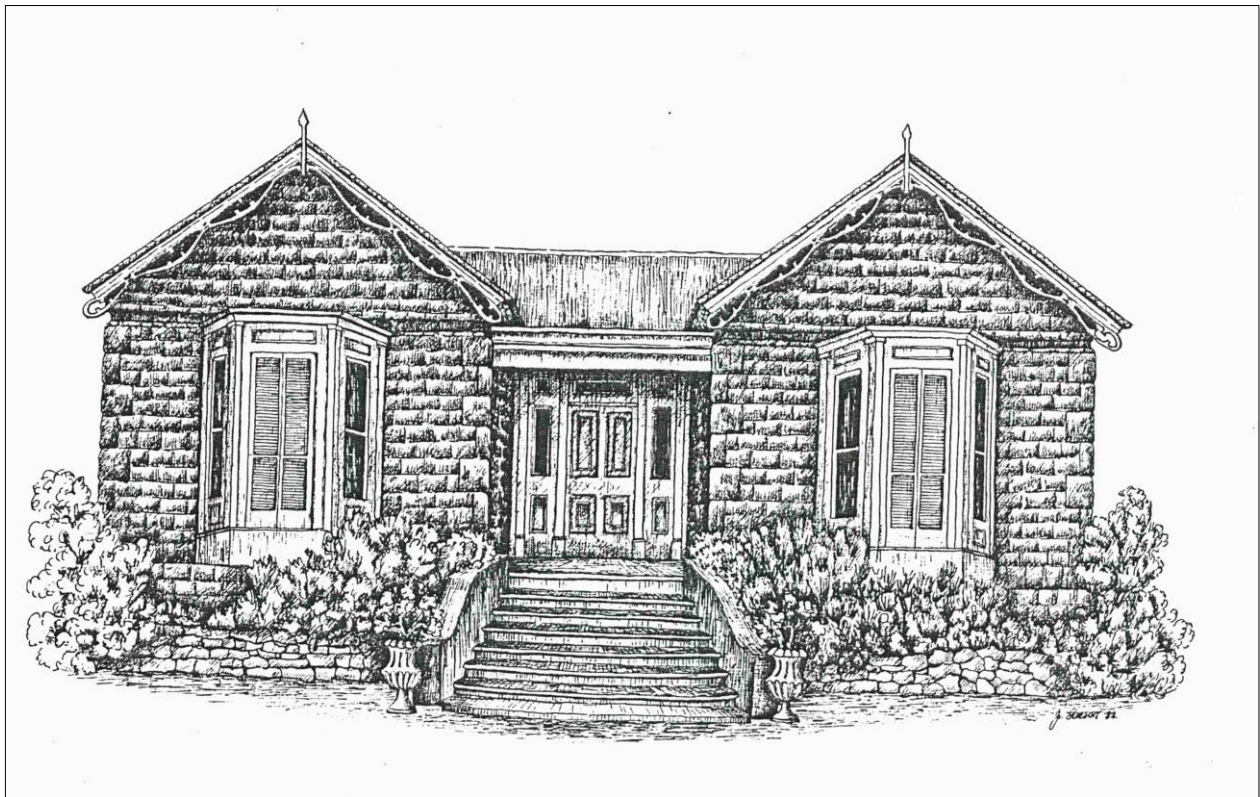
“I am now only a dairymaid. If married I should be wife, mother, nurse, housekeeper, chambermaid, seamstress, laundress, dairymaid and scrub generally.”

“Because I have other professions open to me in which the hours are shorter, the work more agreeable, and the pay possibly better.”

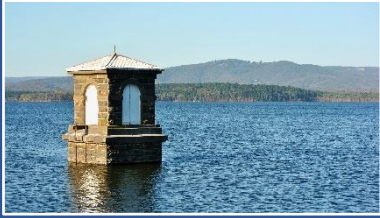
“For good men are scarce, but fools there are plenty, that’s why, I am single at seven-and-twenty.”

“Because men, like three-cornered tarts, are very pleasing to the eye, but on closer inspection, prove hollow and stale.”

<https://www.ranker.com/list/victorian-spinsters/garri-chaverst?fbclid=IwAR1zquMZE4fZVZhUqgmwSx2fBcYkQhs1V8TOheRaqmiv4eM0B4PpSlebklQ>



“Braemore”, Beveridge



Whittlesea Historical Society Inc.

Incorporation No. A0017979G ABN: 46 019 570 463

Est. 1975

Membership Application Form

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

Member Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Post Code: _____

Email (please print): _____ Phone: _____

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 am happy 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 Inc.

(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

Email: whittleseahistorical@gmail.com