

Things Past

Newsletter 47

January 2012

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

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Happy New Year! There are no 'Dates for your diary' this month, but stay tuned. In February we will be arranging our move into the RSL Hall, Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road. One of our members will serve on the Committee of Management for the building.

We look forward to working with the RSL and believe both organisations will benefit from the arrangement. We will send out an agenda of planned activities and dates for the year as soon as possible. There may be changes to our meeting nights or times.

Glimpses of Mt Evelyn 50 years ago

Thanks to Vicki Harrison for these photos, from slides belonging to her grandfather, Norman Haines. The photo at right is of the bushfires of 14-16 January 1962, 50 years ago this month. The others are undated but are probably from around the same time.



Above, the old Post Office (with red phone booth) on the corner of Birmingham Road and Snowball Avenue. The PO operated from this building until 1987. Below, Snowball Avenue as an unmade track.



Above, Vicki's father, Russ Ellis, 'blacking out' after the 1962 bushfire. 'You can see how close it came to our house (in Sycamore Grove) and what sophisticated equipment Dad used to fight the fire!' Vicki wrote. The fires devastated large areas of the Dandenongs, claiming 8 lives and over 450 homes. They prompted calls for more fire tankers, as knapsack sprays were of little use against fierce fires.



Above, Russ Ellis and neighbour Bill Ellis (no relation) billy-carting in Warrawee Road.

AME Bale – family connections

Those who enjoyed Liz Ward's talk on artist AME Bale (and those disappointed at missing it) will be pleased that Peter Perry's book *AME Bale, her Art and Life* is now available from the Castlemaine Art Gallery Shop.

We have never known AME Bale's source for the history of Grantully, as told to Ernest Buckmaster. The book may offer a clue from the ownership of Bale's painting 'The lilac bunch'. Exhibited in 1935, 'The lilac bunch' was purchased in 1937 by Melbourne High School. Grantully was said to have stood originally at Forrest Hill, South Yarra, on the site of the school.

At the time of the sale, conversation may have turned to Miss Bale's interest in historic buildings. We can imagine the school's representative remarking, 'There was a significant house on the Melbourne High School site ... imported by Superintendent La Trobe ... now in Mt Evelyn ...' (I'm making this up, but the dates would fit).

Miss Bale might have come to Mt Evelyn and sketched the house. She may have thought of buying it to save it from demolition, as she did with another historic house in Castlemaine. When Buckmaster visited her about 1939, he saw the sketch and heard the history of the house. He was on the lookout for a home to buy. At Miss Bale's urging he viewed the almost ruinous house and later bought and restored it.

Another point of interest concerns Bale's family home at 83 Walpole Street Kew, built by her parents William and Marion Bale. The family took up residence in 1886 and named the house 'Walden'.

AME Bale's father, William Mountier Bale, was a founding member of the Field Naturalists Club in 1880. Years later, he would have met younger members Charles Barrett and Brooke Nicholls. In 1903, Barrett, Nicholls and their friend Claude Kinane rented an old bark hut beside Olinda Creek as a base for their bird-watching and photography. They called it 'Walden Hut'.

I'm not arguing that William Bale directly influenced the choice of the name. It's more likely that all were kindred spirits who found inspiration in Henry Thoreau's *Walden*. Still, I was chuffed to find this family connection between two of my historical obsessions, Grantully and Walden Hut.

Karen Phillips

Hints on style – 1875

Avoid all extravagance and mannerisms, and be not over timid at the outset. Be discreet and sparing of your words. To deserve the reputation of moving in good society, something more is requisite than the avoidance of blunt rudeness. Strictly keep your engagements. Punctuality is the essence of politeness.

A man is often judged by his appearance, and seldom incorrectly. A neat exterior, equally free from extravagance and poverty, almost always proclaims a right-minded man. To dress appropriately, and with good taste, is to respect yourself and others. A gentleman walking, should always wear gloves, this being one of the characteristics of good breeding. Fine linen, and a good hat, gloves, and boots, are evidences of the highest taste in dress.

Ladies' dresses should be chosen so as to produce an agreeable harmony. Never put on a dark-coloured bonnet with a light spring costume. Avoid uniting colours which will suggest an epigram; such as a straw-coloured dress with a green bonnet.

The arrangement of the hair is most important. Bands are becoming to faces of a Grecian cast. Ringlets better suit lively and expressive heads. Whatever be your style of face, avoid an excess of lace, and let flowers be few and choice.

In a married woman a richer style of ornament is admissible. Costly elegance for her – for the young girl, a style of modest simplicity. The most elegant dress loses its character if it is not worn with grace. Young girls often have an air of constraint, and their dress seems to partake of their want of ease.

Never be without a handkerchief. Avoid extreme patterns, styles, and colours. There is considerable art in using this accessory of dress and comfort. Hold it freely in the hand, and do not roll it into a ball. Hold it by the centre, and let the corners form a fan-like extension.

From *Enquire Within*, MDCCCLXXV

Nether Wallop

I refer to the snippet re 'Nether Wallop', a house in Kookaburra Lane [*Things Past* 45]. I had a wedding reception [at this house] in 1986. At that time it was owned by Hans and Jenny van Dreven. Jenny was raised in Box Hill when her family migrated from Europe (Holland I think).

Our association came about because we both had homes destroyed by fire – mine in 1984

Continued p.4

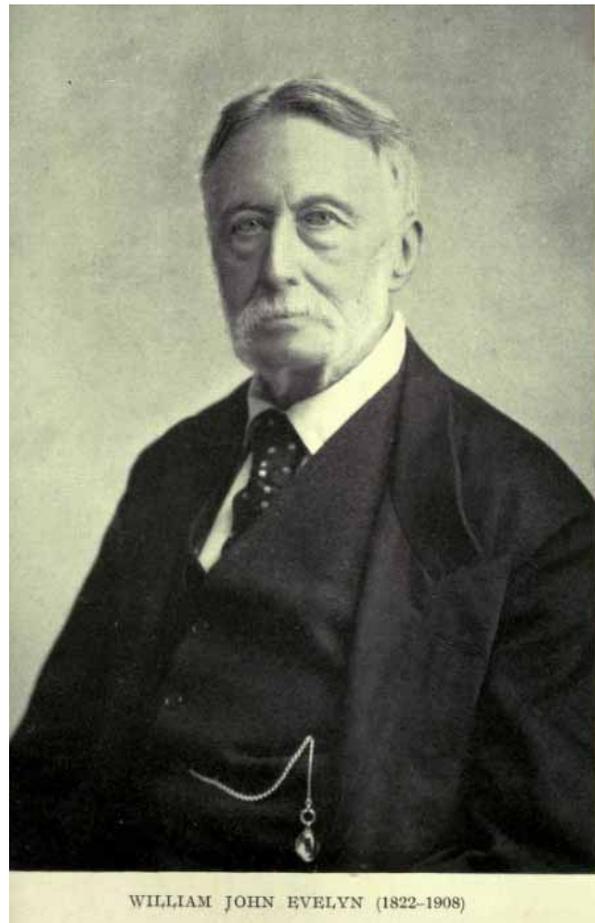
Evelyn family history online

The History of the Evelyn Family by Helen Evelyn (1915) can now be read online through the Open Library. The book begins with the legendary genealogy of the Evelyns.

The family of Evelyn is traditionally descended from the French family of Evelin. This family took a prominent part in the Crusades, and in fact took its name from Ibelin [Yavne], a locality in Palestine lying between Joppa and Ascalon. A 'French Herald's Book' was brought over to England in 1650 by John Evelyn It relates that a member of the family went to the Holy Land with Robert, Duke of Normandy, and became possessed of Baruth [Beirut], a seaport. It also states that the Evelins inter-married with the royal families of Jerusalem and Cyprus. A member of the family, Henri Evelin, returned to France in 1475 and bought a fief in Normandy which he called 'Eveliniere' (p.11).

The female line boasted some exalted forebears. Maria Comnena, who married Balian of Ibelin, was 'from the Byzantine imperial Comnenus dynasty, and was descended from the kings of Georgia, Bulgaria, ancient Armenia, Parthia, Persia and Syria' (Wikipedia).

The history includes a memoir of William John Evelyn (1822-1908), MP for Surrey West 1849-1857, by his friend W.S. Blunt. William was a newly elected MP when the County of Evelyn was named after him in 1849. He won another term in Parliament as the Member for Deptford, 1885-1888. 'He was essentially a Conservative, by temperament and tradition, but he had the old-fashioned view of national freedom as opposed to Imperialism' and 'the Irish blood inherited through his mother gave him a special interest in the Irish cause' (p.268; p.266). A man of varied interests, William Evelyn was a poet, linguist, gardener, 'a devoted student of nature', 'a great proficient' at chess and 'a truly honest man such as it does one good to see' (p.267). Blunt gives the following description: *In many ways his character was far more Irish than English, and he had in very marked degree the dreamy, poetical imagination of the Celt, joined to a warm-hearted and emotional impulsiveness, partially veiled, however, by a certain shy reserve The most salient points of his character were his kind-heartedness, his unbounded generosity, his intense affection for his children, his hatred of any injustice and eagerness to put it right, which often made*



William John Evelyn in later life, from *History of the Evelyn Family*, opp. p. 450, Open Library.

him enemies, his sincerity and nobility of character, and his utter freedom from meanness of thought or action. In appearance he was not tall and rather broad, and he had singularly refined and beautiful features, his nose aquiline and his eyes the colour of forget-me-nots (pp.468-469).

Our station name was changed from 'Olinda Vale' to 'Evelyn' in 1907. If it was named after the County of Evelyn (which remains unproved but seems the most likely explanation), then Mt Evelyn's name comes indirectly from William John Evelyn. He was still alive at the time of the name change. I wonder if he knew about it. He must have taken some interest in Australia, as his exotic pets included a mob of kangaroos.

The book contains a portrait of William in 1884 opp. p.382 and a family portrait of young William, his mother and brothers, opp. p.292. <http://www.archive.org/stream/historyofevelynf00eveluoft#page/8/mode/2up>

See also *Things Past* 16 & 42 and Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ibelin>

Karen Phillips

History Group blogspot proposed

Joan Vanderhorn is looking at setting up a blogspot for us. Here is her action plan.

While working on Clyde History <http://www.clydehistory.comyr.com>, it became apparent that there were issues unique to Clyde. I also became aware that I could easily overwork myself by being the History Source for every Clyde family researcher. Thus I came up with the idea of the Family History Tools, <http://clydehistorytools.blogspot.com>.

Could we adapt this idea for the Mt Evelyn situation? Here is how I see it could work.

1. Set up blog name and editors' email address.
2. Joan to search out possible designs/templates for the blog.
3. Mini workshop for the editors – how to upload material to the blog.
4. Committee meeting – what topics do we want on this site? Committee members could be offered the opportunity to write but the editors will upload to the blogspot. Decisions need to be made about maintaining the blogsite and what happens to inquiries via the site.
5. Joan to upload some initial pages to set it up.
6. Karen & Paula to edit the material for future posts and upload them as they come to hand.
7. Promote the blog with a Mt Evelyn History Workshop. Advertise the blogsite and workshop in local newspapers, our newsletter, Mt Evelyn web page, other history groups etc.
8. Reporting: regularly inform the committee about the number of 'hits' the blogsite receives. Google has a tracking device on each blogspot that informs the 'owner' as to the number of 'customers' and their countries.

From Joan Vanderhorn

From p.2

in Mountain Crescent, Montrose and the van Drevens in Kookaburra Lane at an earlier date [possibly in the Ash Wednesday bushfires of 1983 – Ed.] Our children both attended Mt Evelyn Christian School and Jenny sought me out on hearing about my house fire.

As far as I remember, their house 'Nether Wallop' was just about completed in 1984 after being redesigned and rebuilt due to their fire. The new home was a lovely two storey house on a large block. I think the original building was single storey and it may well have been a rest stop for coaches, however I do not have its earlier history.

Robyn Taylor

Our station: the 'other' side

Paula has acquired this unusual photo of Mt Evelyn station, showing the entrance from the Wray Crescent side. The building, which would have housed the ticket office, stood about where the carpark is now, between the two surviving sections of platform.



'Entrance to Mt Evelyn station 1948'.

From Kev's rain gauge

We are now in *Biderap* (Dry Season, January-February), with hot, dry weather. *Bowat* (tussock-grass) is long and dry. Female Common Brown butterflies are flying. The Southern Cross is high in the south at sunrise. From 'Seven seasons of the Kulin people', <http://museumvictoria.com.au/forest/climate/dry.html>

Rainfall for December 2011 for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, Melbourne and the Melbourne average:

Mt Ev	McK	Melb	Melb Av
93.1mm	118.75mm	82mm	59.3mm

Total rainfall 2011 & 2010 (in mm) for Melbourne, Mt Evelyn, McKillop & Three Bridges:

	Melb	Mt Ev	McK	3Br
2011	833.4	1242.4	1432.75	1637.1
2010	730.6	1074.0	1154.65	1390.9

McKillop figures, Jean Edwards. Melbourne figures, Bureau of Meteorology.

Kevin Phillips

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