

Things Past

Newsletter 54

August 2012

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

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Dates for your diary

Commemorative Lighting Switch-on, Thursday 16 August, 4.30pm RSL Memorial Garden.
History Group AGM and general meeting, Thursday 23 August, 7.30pm Hardy House.
Wayne Knoll, blogger of 'Pioneers of Silvan, South Wandin or The Mountain' will be our September speaker. Saturday 22 September, 1.30pm Mt Evelyn RSL Hall.

World War I ammunition belt

Member Liz Gibson sent us this photo and information. Anthony McAleer has added further details.

My mum was doing a big spring clean of her cupboards at her home and came across this long forgotten piece of history. It was given to her by someone at St Mary's Catholic Primary School many years ago when my younger brother and sister were students there. They are 26 years old now so it was possibly over 15 years ago that she received it.

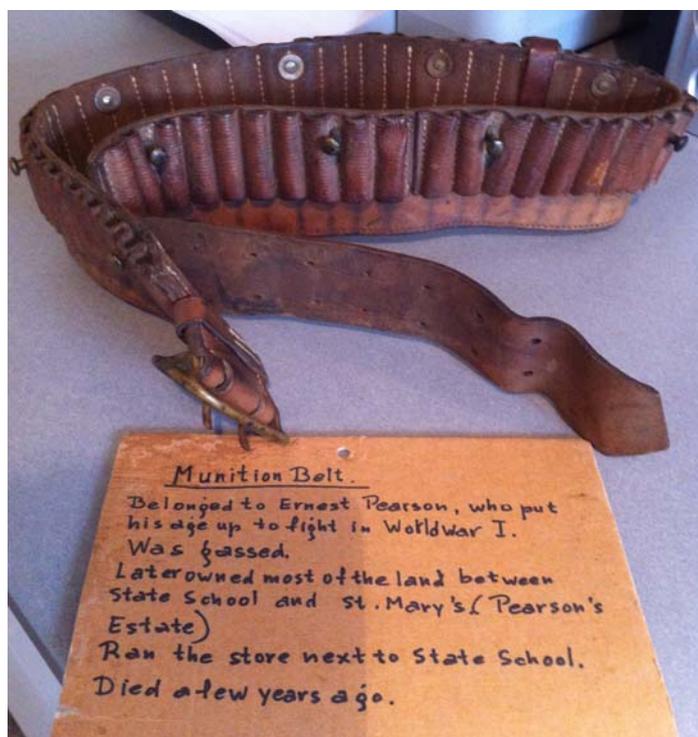
She can't recall who gave it to her or why, but mum's father served in WWII and mum has cherished my granddad's memorabilia. Perhaps the person who gave it to her thought she'd be a good recipient for it and cherish it with her father's medals but unfortunately it has been overlooked for many years!

Thankfully whoever gave it to my mum has written some details down regarding the ammunition belt and these are as follows:

'Belonged to Ernest Pearson, who put his age up to fight in World War 1. Was gassed. Later owned most of the land between State School and St Mary's (Pearson's Estate). Ran the store next to State School. Died a few years ago.'

Elizabeth Gibson

Checking the electoral roll, there was an Ernest Albert Pearson living in Mt Evelyn in the 1960s and 1970s. Then checking the military records for Ernest Albert Pearson – There was a Victorian volunteer with this name who enlisted underage (said he was 18 years)



but was found out later in France. He served with the 37th Battalion on the Western Front and won the Military Medal before he was discovered to be underage.

He then had to serve at a hospital until he was the right age, then he transferred to the Australian Flying Corps (which could be where got the belt). No mention of him being gassed though. This Ernest Albert Pearson died in 1981.

Anthony McAleer

The Mt Evelyn Primary School history mentions that Pearson did a land swap with the school in 1944. Though the exchange was to the school's advantage, the Education Department made him pay the transfer costs!

Rosemount becomes Grantully

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The Boyd family are thought to have sold Rosemount in the early 1870s. Squatter James Thomson owned the property during the 1870s-80s and his widow Cecilia in the 1890s.¹ Rosemount was described as having six rooms, with an interior 'of pretty square mouldings' and was still in perfect condition on its original site in March 1916.² That is the last we hear of it in South Yarra.

Fergus Scott, Estate Agent, appears in the Lillydale Shire Rate Books in 1911, holding freehold title to a house and 61 acres at Evelyn. As Correspondent of the School Committee, his address was 'Evelyn Park', thought to be on or near the site of Grantully. Scott sold most of the land in 1915, retaining the house and 2¼ acres. In 1916, 'House' is crossed out. The 1917 entry is again for house and 2¼ acres.

It seems likely that Scott demolished 'Evelyn Park' (or it burned down) in 1916-17, that he then bought the Rosemount house and moved it to his land. In February 1918, Grantully was advertised as a guesthouse: 'EVELYN.-"GRAN-TULLY," a perfect mountain home, lovely views, every comfort, large, cool rooms; piano, [?] Scott.'³

Scott sold the property in 1920. Grantully continued to operate as a guesthouse in the 1920s and 1930s, changing hands a number of times and falling gradually into disrepair. Ernest Buckmaster bought it from his friend Martin Peirson-Jones in 1940, using one of his paintings of Silvan Dam for a deposit.



The Buckmasters at Grantully, 1940s.
Photo courtesy Don Buckmaster.



Grantully in the 1950s. This appears to be the south-east corner of the house. The extension would then be the studio (can anyone confirm this?) A plain verandah has replaced the distinctive arches. Photo courtesy Lorraine Fairweather.

Peirson-Jones and Buckmaster restored the house from its almost ruinous condition. 'The front verandah and porch were rotten, damp, falling apart. The studio was added onto the front, right hand side. It was not possible in the war years for us to have it rebuilt ... as it was then.'⁴ Grantully was demolished in the early 1970s and replaced with the brick house now on the site. The Buckmaster family sold the property in 1996.

The combination of historical and architectural evidence confirms that Grantully was Rosemount. We have now traced the history of the house from 1856, when it was owned and occupied by Thomas Elder Boyd in South Yarra, to its demolition in Mt Evelyn in the 1970s. We can't say for certain who imported the house and when, or who erected it at South Yarra and when. If Boyd imported Rosemount (as seems probable), 1847 is more likely than the 'traditional' date of 1841. Even if the later date is correct, Boyd would not have built the house until he owned the land. Protector G.A. Robinson is thought to have sold the block when he returned to England in 1852.

Robinson is unlikely to have imported the house. He built his own fine house, 'Tivoli', on the next block, and would hardly have gone to the expense on importing another. He could however have bought the 'kit' from someone else and built Rosemount as a rental property. Should we reconsider La Trobe as the importer? Rosemount could not have been either 'Jolimont' or 'Upper Jolimont'. While La

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Bali – ‘intricate and formal delights’

I visited Bali and Java in May, travelling with my brother Steve and his family. We toured many of the Balinese sites such as the island temple of Tanah Lot and the 9th century ‘Elephant Cave’ at Goa Gajah. The cave is mentioned as one of ten Buddhist ‘principal places’ of Bali in the Javanese poem *Desawarnana* of 1365.

The first thing to amaze me about Bali was the offerings of flowers and food made daily outside businesses, and indeed outside my homestay room. By ‘outside’, I mean on the ground, to be walked on, driven over, kicked or whatever. The important thing is to have made the offering – what happens after that is fate, and unimportant. These offerings are naturally made at the memorial to those killed in the infamous Bali bombings of 2002.

The flower offerings were my first inkling of what anthropologist Margaret Mead so beautifully said of Balinese villagers: ‘their lives were packed with intricate and formal delights’. Before I went I’d had some idea that the Balinese were poor and simple. To the contrary, they are, and always have been, one of the richest groups of Indonesia. The Indonesian government has encouraged ‘transmigration’ of Balinese to other areas in order to share their skills. Evidently one of the first things a successful transmigrated group of Balinese does is send back to Bali for a gamelan orchestra. Fred Eiseman says, ‘Bali is ... extravagantly ornamented and embellished. Nothing has a single meaning. Every direction is associated



with a colour, a number, a god, a day of the week, a syllable, and a weapon. Ceremonies are loaded with ritual and symbols. The often simple melodic line of gamelan music is so highly ornamented that many visitors fail to detect it in the storm of notes’

The Balinese use three calendars that run in parallel to determine when business, personal or religious events should occur, and which days are auspicious for what purposes. In addition to our Gregorian calendar they use the Pawukon calendar, with a cycle of 210 days which endlessly repeat – cycles are not counted. The third is a lunar Saka calendar, similar to Indian Hindu calendars.

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz has said, ‘They don’t tell you what time it is, they tell you what kind of time it is.’ Pringle says, ‘Geertz goes on to explain that the Balinese find this kind of complexity pleasing and beautiful both to themselves and the gods. Manipulating the intricate forms is amusing to humans and at the same time a form of worship.’

Paula Herlihy

Quotes are from Robert Pringle 2004, *A Short History of Bali, Indonesia’s Hindu Realm*, Allen & Unwin.

Goa Gajah, Bali. Right, the elephant-demon has its eyes on Paula. Below, the bathing tank, excavated in the 1950s. Above centre, floral offerings.



From p.2

Trobe would not have needed yet another prefabricated house for his East Melbourne property, it is just possible that he (or his administration) might have imported a third house for a different site, but never erected it. In a tantalising reference to the early 1840s, the *Shire of Mornington Heritage Study* mentions that the summit of Mt Martha was reserved for La Trobe's 'marine residence'.⁵ Croll also refers to it: 'Governor La Trobe had 130 acres reserved here [at Mt Martha] for a marine residence for the Governors of Victoria The project of building came to nothing.'⁶ Croll's wording suggests that plans were made for building or acquiring a residence for the site.

There is no evidence of a connection between Superintendent La Trobe and Rosemount/Grantully. A link appears unlikely but even now we can't quite rule it out. **Karen Phillips**

Notes

¹ Betty Malone, *Discovering Prahran No.3*, Prahran Historical & Arts Society, p.7.

² Jessie Eddington, 'Early Days in Victoria', manuscript 30/3/1916, RHSV box 132/9.

³ *The Argus*, 9 February 1918, p.26.

⁴ Ernest Buckmaster, note on a painting of Grantully by Charles Salis Lloyd.

⁵ Graeme Butler & Associates 1994, *Shire of Mornington Heritage Study*, p.88; 2011, *Mornington Peninsula Shire Environmental History*, p.38; Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Mornington 1888, MAP RM 2755.

⁶ R.H. Croll 1928, *The Open Road in Victoria*, (2nd ed.), Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne, p.50.

Wartime shortages on the farm

Further to our 'Girls and Gladioli' article, Anthony McAleer has given us a letter from Mr Henderson of Silvan Road, who was struggling to obtain equipment in 1941. He first asks about parts for his pump, then continues: 'Have finished the strawberry carting now and back on the farm. Charlie has gone into camp again so things are moving very slowly here in the way of cleaning up those weeds & planting but hope to be ready to do some more to the pump in a week to 10 days time. It is high time the plants were being watered too as the ground dries out quickly after weeding. I took a run out to the munition works one afternoon to look up some glady boxes (crates) but couldn't get on to them. I was told by a carrier I know that he had seen a stack of hundreds of them but it seems these were given away to anyone who would take them for firewood. Mr Meere was the man in charge of it & he sent me on to the explosives section

but no luck that day (Cordite Avenue was about the hottest place on earth that afternoon.)

Sorry I missed these crates as I was sort of depending on them. They are fairly light for rail work and a good size, approx 3'9" by 20 or so wide and about 15" deep. I think they were brought out with black paper wrappings or something of that nature. We are picking the first patch of glads now & nice blooms too but so far the usual Xmas rush is not apparent.'

Grants presentation night

History Group members attended the Yarra Ranges Council Awards Presentation at the Mooroolbark Community Centre on 23 July. Our grant is to publish *The Happy Hermits*. We were delighted that Bronwyn Higgs, custodian of the family collection with the Hermits' photos and diary, was able to attend.



Above, Yarra Ranges Mayor Cr Graham Warren, Bronwyn Higgs, Paula, Karen, Kevin and Louise at the Awards presentation. Photo Lou Sbalchiero.

From Kev's rain gauge

Rainfall for July 2012 for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, Melbourne and the Melbourne average.*

Mt Ev	McK	Melb	Melb Av
115.3mm	111.75mm	59.4mm	47.5mm

* McKillop readings courtesy Jean Edwards. Melbourne figures from Bureau of Meteorology website. **Kevin Phillips**

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