

Things Past

Newsletter 59

January 2013

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

PO Box 101 Mt Evelyn VIC 3796 A0051327F



Dates for your diary

NB: NO History Group meeting in January. See p.8 for 2013 agenda.

We host AOEHS meeting, Saturday 2 February, 1.45pm for 2pm start, Hardy House. The authors of *Aborigines in the Yarra Valley & Northern Dandenongs* will give a presentation.

History Group general meeting Thursday 28 February, 7.30pm Hardy House.

James Raeburn, Selector

James Raeburn was born 20 March 1832 and baptised before the congregation on 7 April at Cockburnspath, Berwickshire, Scotland. He was the son of James Raeburn and Barbara Blair. The family were agricultural workers who went from farm to farm in the East Lothian and Berwickshire area. The 1851 census shows that family were working on the Chirnside farm at Hoprig, which is just out of Cockburnspath.

At this time Andrew Chirnside was visiting his parents and recruiting labour for his property in Australia. The Chirnside brothers Thomas and Andrew were very wealthy squatters with extensive land holdings, their prime property being at Werribee. James Raeburn obviously embraced the idea with enthusiasm, as in 1852 he migrated to Australia on the *Wanata*, arriving on 4 October. He went, by private agreement, to the Chirnsides at Geelong.

On 20 March 1855, James Raeburn married Catherine Aitken at the Manse of the Scots Church in Melbourne. This seems to be the time when James Raeburn started using the name 'Reaburn'. Their son James was born 20 January 1856 at Collingwood. His birth was registered at Donnybrook, where his father was working on the Bald Hill farm owned by the McDonalds. James' second son John was born at Pentridge (Coburg) on 10 February 1858. It appears that James was probably working as a quarryman at this time. By the end of 1858 he was able to buy his first property at Russell Street Collingwood. His



James Raeburn or Reaburn (1832-1911), one of the original selectors in what is now Mt Evelyn. As James appears to be in his sixties here, the photo probably dates from the 1890s.

daughter Catherine was born there on 9 February 1863.

The family had moved to Malmsbury by the time his second daughter Margaret was born on 27 June 1860. At that time quarrymen were

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How did cumbungi get so hard to find?

Mount Evelyn History Group launched its book *Aborigines in the Yarra Valley and Northern Dandenongs* in December 2011. As part of that project, I was reading again in *Koorie Plants, Koorie People* how the cumbungi (bulrush) was a staple vegetable food in our area.¹

Having grown up in Yarra Glen among the billabongs, I knew the cumbungi well and I decided to whip out for a few photos for the book. I thought I would just check the Internet first to get some background. I'm so glad I did!

There are three species of *Typha* that people call 'cumbungi' but only two, *T. domingensis* and *T. orientalis*, are indigenous to Australia. *Typha latifolia* was introduced into Tasmania (where it is now a weed) to provide light fluffy kapok-like seed heads to compress into floats and lifebuoys. Just my untrained luck, I thought, that I would photograph *T. latifolia*.

Phil Watson writes that, 'telling them apart is difficult for the amateur'. The flower head of *T. latifolia* is dark brown. Although its leaves are distinctly shorter (one metre long compared to two metres for the indigenous varieties) the amateur (e.g. me) should wait until summer and check out the colour of the flower heads.²



In this photo from the wetlands beside Swansea Road, the dark flower heads of the cumbungi show them to be the introduced species, *Typha latifolia*. Photo Kevin Phillips, December 2011.

Excellent descriptions of the two native species can be found in the Yarra Ranges Local Plant Directory.³ I contacted Council but they couldn't direct me to a known pocket of the indigenous species. Sadly, it now looks likely that all the bulrush in the Olinda Creek wetlands along Swansea Road is the introduced species. I put a photo of a rusty-coloured seed head, taken along Swansea Road, into the book in error, thinking it was *T. domingensis*. The photo above, taken at that location by Kevin Phillips in December 2011, shows all the flower heads as dark, almost black.

Margot Healey supplied me with some technical information from friends of hers who identified *Typha* species around Yarra Glen, but could not state any location of a stand of indigenous *Typha*. Graeme Lorimer was also extremely helpful, but had no photograph of the indigenous plant. I was starting to wonder if the native *Typha* even grew here, much less was a staple food of the Wurundjeri.

Shire Officer Ben Sheffield was able to tell me where the native varieties could be found around Lillydale Lake but agreed that they were probably planted there and not endemic. I took the pictures at left on 13 December 2012 at Lillydale Lake. The pictures confirm the lighter colouring of the indigenous species compared to the photo above.



Above, indigenous cumbungi photographed at Lillydale Lake, December 2012. Thought to be *Typha orientalis*, left, with chestnut coloured flower head, and an immature flower spike of *T. domingensis*, right. Photos Paula Herlihy.

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Typha domingensis has generally longer and thinner female flower heads, of a cinnamon brown colour (photo on the right, p.2 – an immature spike). The flower head of indigenous *Typha orientalis* (photo on the left, p.2) is more chestnut brown.

Around here we call the plant cumbungi or bulrush/ bullrush, but it is known by many different Aboriginal names across Australia. Zola and Gott state that 'there were six separate names for different parts and conditions of the plant'.⁴

Wikipedia says the term 'bulrush' may refer to a range of wetland plants and suggests four in the sedge family (*Cyperaceae*)⁵, as well as *Typha*, a genus in the *Typhaceae* family. This makes it likely that the word 'bulrush' is a variant of a more general word, 'pole-rush' or 'pool rush', for a range of wetland plants. These plants are known in Britain as bulrush, bullrush, or reedmace, in America as cattail, catninetail, punks, or corndog grass, and in New Zealand as *raupo*.

Initially I assumed the American name 'corndog grass' referred to their appearance but, according to the American question & answer newspaper column 'The Straight Dope',

Cattails ... can be enjoyed in at least three different ways. The favored cut of the cattail is the inner portion of the stem, called, for unknown reasons, 'Cossack asparagus'. The outer covering of the stalk is removed by pulling down on the leaves that cover it, breaking off the shell near the roots and exposing anywhere from one to twelve inches of the succulent white pseudo-asparagus. It can be washed and eaten raw, chopped up for salads, or cooked in a stew. The best plants for harvesting are the younger sprouts, two feet tall or so, in the early spring, but the stems are edible all summer long.

*Some woodland epicures also collect the pollen of the cattail, which starts to flow in the middle of the summer. The powder is used as a seasoning, or mixed with flour for pancakes, cookies, and so on. Finally, the roots can be dried, ground up, and used as flour. In the spring, the roots are covered with small, potato-like bulbs, which can be boiled, dipped in butter, and served up to the delight and amazement of your city slicker friends.*⁶



Above, Aboriginal scar tree near Olinda Creek. The creek and its wetlands provided many food sources for the Wurundjeri – but was the native cumbungi one of them? Photo Kevin Phillips.

The ARKive website on the bulrush states: '... in Nevada (USA) the Paiute Indians based their whole economy on this species; the yellow pollen was used as flour, and the stems and leaves were used to make boats.⁷ One reference cites evidence that bulrush leaves were being used as food in Italy 30,000 years ago.⁸ In many northern hemisphere survival books, bulrush is presented as one of the 'big four' survival foods (the other three are grass, pine trees and oaks).⁹

I would appreciate any evidence on how cumbungi was used by the Wurundjeri and if indeed it is indigenous to the Yarra Valley.

Paula Herlihy

¹ Nelly Zola & Beth Gott 1992, *Koorie Plants, Koorie People: Traditional Aboriginal Food, Fibre and Healing Plants of Victoria*, Koorie Heritage Trust.

² Phil Watson, 'Cumbungi', <http://dbellamy.customer.netspace.net.au/bog/native/cumbungi.html>.

³ http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Residents/Trees_Vegetation/Yarra_Ranges_Plant_Directory/Yarra_Ranges_Local_Plant_Directory

⁴ Zola & Gott, *Koorie Plants, Koorie People*, p.62. The word *cumbungi* comes from the Wemba Wemba language spoken along the Murray.

⁵ The ark of bulrushes in which the infant Moses was set adrift is thought to be paper reed (*Cyperus papyrus*).

⁶ Cecil Adams 16/6/1976, 'The Straight Dope', <http://www.straightdope.com/>.

⁷ ARKive, <http://www.arkive.org/bulrush/typha-latifolia/#text=Biology>.

⁸ A. Revedin *et al* 2010, 'Thirty thousand-year-old evidence of plant food processing', *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 107 (44): 18815–18819.

⁹ 'Survival and self sufficiency', http://www.survival.org.au/bf_typha.php.

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in high demand as the aqueduct was being built at Malmsbury, as well as numerous important buildings in Melbourne.

On 24 March 1865 James bought more land in Collingwood on the corner of Park and Studley Streets. His daughter Catherine tragically died of diphtheria on 13 April 1866, while they were living at their Russell Street property. This property was sold to the Council on 9 August 1866, presumably for the railway line that was going through this area. On 11 August 1866 James bought a property in Wellington Street, through to Cambridge Street opposite Little Smith Street (now Singleton Street). At this time he was a dairyman. His last daughter, Mary Jane, was born here on 30 December 1866. He bought the next door property on 5 April 1873.

On 13 March 1875, James applied for a lease of allotment 31 in the Parish of Mooroolbark, County of Evelyn. The detail on the lease shows the land as being heavily timbered, very poor stringy bark ranges, covered with bayonet grass and most of it unfit for cultivation. There was a road running through the land (Old Hereford Road), 'the line of which is only lately settled', this being the excuse why his land was not fully enclosed. He had built a house and outbuildings, cleared 6 acres and sown them with clover and grasses. He had planted and harvested one and half acres of raspberries and planted a half-acre of orchard. In his second year of cultivation he had planted five acres of oats and potatoes, while in the third year he had planted three acres of oats. In his application he had stated that he had lived there more or less continuously, his other abode being in Wellington Street Collingwood. His other business was as a dairyman but his son was running the business. Part of the family resided with him and part resided in Collingwood. He purchased the Crown Grant title 1 March 1887 and then sold it to Robert Sutton of Box Hill on 18 December 1889.

James purchased land in Altona, two blocks in Pier Street and another in Railway Road in 1889, and three blocks on the corner of Union and Manica Streets in October 1890. His final purchase of land appears to have been on what is now the corner of Landells Road and Gaffney Street Pascoe Vale, where he bought 16 acres in his wife Catherine's name on 13 May 1895. There is now a park there named Raeburn Reserve.

James Raeburn died on 23 January 1911 at his daughter's house in Clifton Hill. He is buried at Melbourne General Cemetery with his wife, who died 30 April 1899, and their daughter Catherine. Their grandson, Archibald Duncan Raeburn (1878-1940), became Mayor of Brunswick.

**Text and photo courtesy
Marilyn Watson, Raeburn descendant**

The voyage of the schooner *Wanata* from Liverpool to Melbourne, 10 June to 4 October 1852, which brought James Raeburn to Victoria, was the subject of a parliamentary inquiry because of the high mortality rate. The ship was overcrowded, with 821 passengers (106 English, 566 Scots and 149 Irish).

The passengers from Scotland had endured a night of wind and rain on the top deck of a steamer from Glasgow. Some were already showing signs of illness when they embarked on *Wanata*. Ventilation was inadequate, provisions were poor and the water was tainted. A 'typhoid like fever', possibly meningococcal meningitis, broke out on board. 52 passengers, most of them children, died during the voyage or in quarantine after arrival at Melbourne.*

My great great grandparents and their three children came out on that same voyage of the *Wanata*. My great grandmother, aged 4, and her brothers, 8 and 2, survived the unhealthy journey. The inquiry into the *Wanata* and three other 'Hell ships', *Marco Polo*, *Bourneuf* and *Ticonderoga*, resulted in better conditions for steerage passengers.

Karen Phillips

* Great Britain House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1852-1853, vol. 68, pp.168ff, quoted in the family history *Destiny of Gold* by Shirley Ward, 1987.

From 'Country News'

The 'Country News' column in *The Argus* sometimes included snippets about Mt Evelyn. *MT. EVELYN. – Evelyn House has been purchased by Mrs. E. Kendall, of St. Kilda, from Mr. V. Morgan. – A dance in aid of the tennis club funds realised a substantial profit. – Good progress is being made with the raising of the station platform to suburban level. – The O'Shannasy [sic] water canal is to be enlarged at an early date to give double the supply now running. This is to connect with the new scheme from Silvan.*

The Argus, Monday 9 July 1923, p.13,
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/2012962>

To the Gulf of Carpentaria by Moke

Myself & Bob Higgins have just completed what I would call an adventure trip. Before I tell you about the trip, here are a few facts and figures.

37 days away.

7,350 kms Lilydale to Lilydale.

7-8 litres per 100kms fuel mileage, depending on conditions. Premium fuel (95 & 98) available everywhere except Innamincka & Boulia.

RACV total care is a must for a trip of this duration for any vehicle, not just a Moke.

Weight in your Moke is very important.

Driver: 75kg. Fuel: 48 litres = 48kgs.

Water: 17 litres = 17kgs. Swag, tent, tarp & poles, food box, utility box, chair, stretcher, spares, bits & pieces = 260 kgs.

Leaving from my place on Wednesday 20 June, it was a typical Melbourne winter's day, cold but not raining. Our goal for the day's travelling was to be at Hay by about 5pm. By the time we reached Echuca for a coffee break, Bob's battery had died. Goodyear actually had a listing for a Moke battery and had one in stock.

After leaving Echuca and heading across the Hay plains the winds were extreme and made the going hard work for our Mokes. We were finally glad to arrive in Hay about 5.15, where we booked ourselves into a cabin at the Hay caravan park.

Leaving Hay early the next morning, Bob's CB had to be disconnected because of the static even when ignition was off. Quite cold & driving straight into a head wind.

Lunch break at Ivanhoe, where we shared the cafe with the local CWA ladies (old & young). We also met Debbie, who had been told there were 2 Mokes in town and met us outside the café. She told us she is restoring a Moke from 2 old ones. She has just ordered a new hood (Chinese), tyres and wheels.

Fuel stop at Wilcannia, interesting BP service station ... old tin shed, old lady, old dogs & dirt. This town is in total decline, abandoned buildings everywhere. On to the Opal Miners' highway, a great piece of road, Whitecliffs at 5pm and good accommodation at the pub there.

First thing the next morning, Bob's rear right hand suspension was looking very low, discovered the hi/lows were winding themselves down as the lock nut was not tight.



Above, 'Osama bin Bob', ready for all conditions.

Clear and very cool as we headed to Tibooburra on great road conditions, some dirt, some sealed. On arrival we were greeted by Glenn, who is the Sector Officer for the NSW Police. He and his wife owned a Moke back in the late 70s. He also publishes the local mag called 'The Corner News' and we just so happened to have a story written about us in it.

Still fighting winds for the third day, the road from here to Cameron Corner was rough, add to that, driving into the sun & the roos, emus, cattle, sheep & goats, we were glad to see the corner gate at 5.20pm that evening, cabin for the night and a pub meal.

Out of the Corner and in to Qld (Bulloo Shire) via Santos Station road, conditions great, wide, flat and hard. Orientos Station, passed thru their gates and immediately the road conditions changed, much more narrow, sandy and quite a few wash outs, no wildlife but large mobs of beef cattle.

At Innamincka we camped for free on the common where they now have long drop toilets. Drink at the pub after dinner, quiet for a Saturday night. Scooner of beer was \$8.60.

Left late the next morning after finding Bob's steering problem was loose U-bolts on the rack, explains the noise. Standard fuel was \$2.10 per litre.

Up to the Dig Tree turnoff, crossed the Coopers Creek, heading north to Arrabury thru huge grasslands and valleys. There were major roadworks and very little wildlife, we were now in the Barcoo shire.

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Later in the day we came across one big waterhole that was completely across the track, it was deep and very soft but we found a way around it between some trees and we just made it. Camped overnight at a large billabong about 30 kms south of Haddens Corner, birdlife aplenty, a cool, clear and windy night under the stars, not another vehicle for 18 hours. On to the main Birdsville road, 222 kms to go, new by-pass road at Betoota, Corrdillo Downs road still closed because of flooding. Came across a dead dingo that was set up on the side of the road as a 'marker' complete with a VB can beside it.

Powered sites at Birdsville caravan park, where we stayed for the next 2 nights. The extra day here was used to catch up on some domestics and also repairs to Bob's Moke, points & CB, it now works sometimes. My Moke had developed a slight fluffy miss down low in the RPMs, then it would vanish again (fuel or plugs).

Lots of 4x4s and bike groups with their support vehicles, preparing to cross the Simpson Desert. Relaxed and looked around the town and had a great meal at the pub at night, it was packed out but the wait was worth it for the meal.

Glenn Golds

Continued next month.

'Honeymoon Island'

Where, and what, was 'Honeymoon Island'? R.H. Croll's *The Open Road in Victoria*, 1928, p.31, describes a walking route from Evelyn to Belgrave by way of Olinda Falls and the Lookout Path. Croll still calls the town 'Evelyn', though the name of 'the pretty little station' had by then been enlarged to Mt Evelyn, 'contrary to all railway practice'. He mentions a notice board beside the road to Silvan bearing the alluring sign: 'To Honeymoon Island'.

The Tourist Guide to Warburton & District, 1920s, p.35, mentions 'Wattle Flat', 'Honeymoon' and 'Valinda Cascades', east (upstream?) of Mistletoe Bend. If this 'Honeymoon' was the same as Croll's 'Honeymoon Island', we can place it along Olinda Creek between Mt Evelyn Reserve and the Cascades, accessible from Monbulk Road.

Was it an island in the creek? A camp site? A beauty spot?

The Tourist Guide can be downloaded from the State Library <http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/>.

'Wandin South Station'

Reporting a Lillydale Shire Council meeting, the *Healesville & Yarra Glen Guardian*, Saturday 27 July 1907 p.2, mentions a letter, *From Railway department, stating that the council's requests that a man be placed in charge of Olinda Vale station, that goods shed accommodation be provided there, and that the station be re-named Wandin South were receiving attention.*

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/60288410>.

The 'Wandin South' naming proposal was rejected and the station name changed to 'Evelyn' on 2 December 1907.

There might have been further correspondence with Victorian Railways on the subject. If we could locate reports or minutes of Council meetings between July and December 1907, we might finally learn why 'Evelyn' was chosen.

Mayor's Award for Dr Bill

Dr William Hardy has been awarded the Mayor of Yarra Ranges' Lifetime Achievement Award 2013, posthumous. Anthony McAleer nominated Dr Bill for his distinguished contribution to the community since the 1950s.

Heritage Register Criteria

On Thursday 6 December 2012 the Heritage Council endorsed the Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Thresholds Guidelines.

The guide outlines key considerations in determining whether a place or object is of state level cultural heritage significance and could be included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). It is intended to assist:

- * members of the community who are nominating a place or object for inclusion in the VHR;
- * heritage assessors and advisors who assess the cultural heritage significance of places and objects; and
- * statutory decision-makers who determine whether places and objects should be included in the VHR.

The Heritage Council agreed to review the Guidelines after twelve months. The Guidelines can be found on the Department of Planning and Community Development website:

http://www.dpced.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0020/126308/HV-VHR_Criteria_and_Thresholds_Guidelines-2012.doc

Heritage Council of Victoria

Vale Bill Harrison

The President of the Mt Evelyn RSL is sad to announce the passing of a former member – William 'Bill' Harrison.

Bill Harrison enlisted in the Second AIF in 1941 while still a teenager. At the time he lived in East Brighton but spent much time in this area, as his family had a 'weekender' at Mt Evelyn during the 1930s & 1940s.

Bill was first allocated to an artillery unit and sent to train at Puckapunyal. Soon after the Japanese entered the war, a call went out to all branches of the Army for volunteers for a new military force that had been formed for special duties, the 1st Independent Company. This unit was being trained to a high standard in irregular warfare with the idea they would be used in sabotage and reconnaissance roles.

Bill arrived at the Guerilla Warfare School at Tidal River, Wilson's Promontory, in January 1942 to begin a six week training course. The terrain surrounding the centre consisted of a number of high rugged mountains, swift streams and swamps. This was felt to be ideal for training soldiers in the art of irregular warfare. There is a memorial at Tidal River to all of those who survived the hardships of this training.

While Bill completed his training, the main force of his unit was sent to Rabaul and New Britain and tragically ended up being either killed or executed by the invading Japanese forces. As a result he was transferred into the Second 5th Independent Company, later to be known as the Second 5th Commando Squadron.

In May 1942 they were sent to New Guinea and deployed to Wau. While most of the unit was flown in, Bill was with a small group who were sent by native canoes up one of the rivers into Dutch New Guinea and ordered to walk across the thick jungle mountains to join the rest at Wau. Bill later said it was the hardest walk he ever did in his life.

At Wau the unit was sent to observe the Japanese landings at Lae and Salamaua. From here they spent the next year harassing the Japanese in the area with hit and run guerilla tactics. Despite appalling conditions, enduring soaking rain, pests, diseases, lack of supplies, food and medication, they did an extraordinary job, hitting the Japanese in the area from the Markham Valley to the Bitol River. Bill said they were constantly on the move and they didn't taste European food for about seven months, the natives teaching them how to live off the land.



Above, William Harrison.

After 14 months surviving in the jungle fighting the Japanese, Bill succumbed to tropical diseases including malaria, dysentery and scrub typhus, and was sent to hospital. For four days he rode on the back of a mule with a number of native helpers. As they had no food they had to eat the mule and from then on the natives carried him. When he arrived in Port Moresby he only weighed four stone six. They put him on to the hospital ship *Centaur* and sent him to Australia. The Japanese sank the *Centaur* on her next trip from New Guinea.

Bill's unit was eventually sent back to Australia and stationed in Queensland for over a year. Once Bill recovered, he was sent to the Canungra Jungle Warfare Centre as an instructor.

In mid-1945, attached to the Australian 7th Division, Bill participated in the Borneo Campaign. He landed on Green Beach on Balikpapan on the first day of the battle. From here they fought their way up the Vasey highway into the nearby hills, overrunning a number of Japanese positions along the way. Once securing the coastal area, he was involved with patrols into the jungle up until the end of the war, and then was involved in mopping up operations around the island.

Bill was discharged from the army in 1946 after five years war service. He was a member of the Mt Evelyn RSL about 15 years ago. He passed away in December at Mooroolbark.

From Anthony McAleer

History Group Activities 2013

January **NO MEETING**

Saturday 2 February 1:45pm for 2pm start, Hardy House, Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. AOEHS meeting hosted by MEHG. Janice, Paula & Karen will reprise their ERL talk on **Aborigines in the Yarra Valley & Northern Dandenongs.**

Thursday 28 February 7:30-9:30pm Hardy House, Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. General business meeting.

Saturday 23 March 1:30pm Hardy House, Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. Speaker: Ian Stewart, author of website 'Heroes of the Aqueduct', www.oshannassyaqueduct.weebly.com.

School Vac

Saturday 20 April 1.30pm Hardy House, Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. Launch of **The Happy Hermits.**

May **NO MEETING**

Thursday 27 June 7:30-9:30 pm Hardy House, Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. General Meeting.

School Vac

Saturday 27 July 1.30pm Hardy House, Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. Speaker TBA

Thursday 22 August 7:30-9:30 pm Hardy House, Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. Annual General Meeting followed by General Meeting.

Saturday 28 September 1.30 pm Hardy House, Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. Speaker TBA

School Vac

October date TBA Yarra Ranges Heritage Network event.

October at Mt Evelyn Exhibition Space Exhibition and social event inviting members, friends and history people to a 'morning tea gathering' or some such – suggest we meet for coffee and view the display.

October date TBA Street Party stall & display.

Thursday 28 November 7.30-9.30 pm Hardy House. General meeting.

December date TBA Meet at Morrisons or Kurunga for coffee, short meeting and breakup.

Allan Watkins

History Group member Allan Gordon Watkins passed away on 6 January after a long illness. Our sympathy to Bev and all the family. Donations in Allan's memory may be made to Animal Aid, Coldstream.

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From Kev's rain gauge

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

Mt Ev	McK	Melb	Melb Av
33.1mm	34.35mm	30.0mm	59.5mm

After the welcome heavy rains of April-May-June, this 3 months (153.85mm) was only slightly wetter than the equivalent period in 2002 (152.25mm). It is the 3rd driest Oct-Nov-Dec since we started records in 1981. No wonder there is huge leaf-fall! **Jean Edwards**

Total rainfall in mm for 2012 & 2011 for Melbourne, Mt Evelyn, McKillop & Three Bridges.

	Melb	Mt Ev	McK	3Br
2012	601.8	856.8	1036.95	1281.5
2011	833.4	1242.4	1432.75	1637.1

Kevin Phillips

* McKillop readings courtesy Jean Edwards. Melbourne figures Bureau of Meteorology: <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/>

Opinions expressed in *Things Past* are those of the writers, not necessarily those of Mount Evelyn History Group.