

Things Past

Newsletter 76

June 2014

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

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Dates for your diary

History Group meeting Monday 16 June, 7.30pm Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road.
Athenaeum Tour: Anthony McAleer will lead a tour of Lilydale's historic Athenaeum Building, Saturday 26 July, 1.30pm. Afternoon tea to follow at the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum Harvest Café (optional).

'Uncovered: The Yarra Ranges Collection', Saturday 2 August – Sunday 2 November 2014, The Box Gallery, Yarra Ranges Regional Museum, Castella Street Lilydale.

HISTORY GROUP AGM followed by general meeting, Monday 18 August, 7.30pm Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road.

Memorial Infant Welfare Centre

One of the items on the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum's 'Uncovered' list is a plaque from the Mt Evelyn Memorial Infant Welfare Centre (right).

In March 1945, when a Memorial to WWII servicemen was discussed, a Preschool and Baby Health Centre were decided on. An Infant Welfare Centre was already operating, but in inadequate premises in the St Mark's Guild Hall. A 'Mt Evelyn Infant Welfare League' was mentioned in 1938 (*The Argus*, 26 July 1938).

The Pre-school opened at the beginning of 1946 in the Church



Above, plaque with laurel wreath from the Memorial Infant Welfare Centre. It appears to be painted on tile. Photo courtesy of Yarra Ranges Regional Museum Collection.



The original scales, above, probably date from the 1960s. Photo Liz Gibson.

of England Guild Hall but the development of the Infant Welfare Centre had to be postponed. In 1947 the Preschool moved to the old band practice hall in Birmingham Road, where it has operated ever since. Further fundraising in 1958-1960 finally made the Infant Welfare Centre a reality.

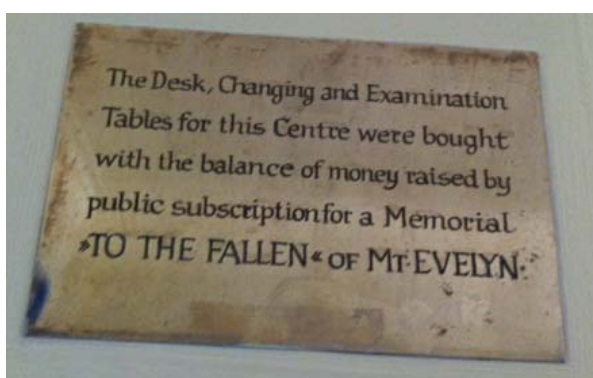
The Centre opened in 1960 in an architect-designed building on the Memorial Preschool land. The architect was Mr Hipwell and the builder was Mr James. Dr Hardy and others from the community built the ramp and laid bricks. Another plaque states that the tables were bought with the balance of funds raised for a 'Memorial to the Fallen of Mt Evelyn' (p.2).

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Liz Gibson sent photos of this plaque and the scales to Mt Evelyn Maternal and Child Health Nurse Cindy Dale, who had worked out of the Memorial building for many years. On seeing the photos, Cindy replied:

The photos brought back fond memories of 1st permanent position as a Maternal and Child Health Nurse. This plaque was on the change table that was in the waiting room of the Birmingham Road centre. The scales are the ones I used until I moved to the Fernhill Road centre in 1994. They are probably the scales used since around the 1960s or even earlier. We only got digital scales in the early 1990s.



This plaque, above, was on the old timber changing table in the Memorial Infant Welfare Centre waiting room.

Liz and Cindy hope the old scales can go on permanent display somewhere and not just be placed in storage and forgotten. At present Liz has them for safe keeping until a decision can be made on their placement.

The building at Memorial is no longer used as an Infant Welfare Centre but is hired from Council for use by several Mothers' Groups.

Tour of museum collection store

History Group members were fortunate to be given a tour behind the scenes at the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum collection store. Curators Karlie Hawking and Alex Gerner showed us around and explained the principles behind the Museum's collection.

The collection was started in 1976 under the Lilydale and District Historical Museum and since then has grown to reflect the whole of the Yarra Ranges region. It comprises 'approximately 8,500 items, including 2,000 photographs, oral history recordings, artworks, personal, domestic and commercial objects, as well as a small collection related to

Coranderk Aboriginal Station and Aboriginal Australians of this area'. Only a tiny fraction of the collection can be displayed at any one time. Memorabilia relating to Dame Nellie Melba makes up one of the most important and treasured parts of the collection. It would come high on the list of things to snatch to safety in the event of a natural disaster. The curators also care for Council's other heritage collections, such as the McLeod Gift Collection of Aboriginal artworks (displayed at Burrinja Gallery, Upwey).

The collection is housed in a climate controlled building where the humidity is kept constant – too damp and too dry are both detrimental to documents. Natural light is excluded. An airlock helps to keep out dust and insects, and avoid sudden changes of temperature. One recent acquisition required the airlock to be opened to get it in – a Furphy water cart. Like all new arrivals, the cart was wrapped up in quarantine bags to avoid contamination.

Each document or photo is stored in a separate sleeve to minimise handling, which is a major cause of damage. All items are scanned or photographed, described and catalogued. The intention is to make the catalogue available online.

We saw the original of the Memorial plaque (p.1) and an interesting map that will also be part of the Museum's 'Uncovered' exhibition. It showed one of the early proposals for Lilydale's water supply that would have involved a 'water main' (pipeline) following Olinda Creek from just below Hunter Road. As we know, the system that was eventually constructed carried water along the contours via an open water race.

Local Historical Societies have had the opportunity to contribute information on the weird and wonderful items to be included in the exhibition. 'Uncovered: The Yarra Ranges Collection' will be on display from Saturday 2 August at The Box Gallery, Yarra Ranges Regional Museum.

Cave Hill documents

We mentioned last month that documents relating to the planned redevelopment of Cave Hill were online. Some have since been removed from the site (temporarily, we hope). Jean has printed out copies for members to read, available from Karen.

Recollections of Mt Evelyn – the Doig family

Like the Freeman family (*Things Past* 75), we came to live in Mt Evelyn in the mid-1950s, but had spent many school holidays and Xmas vacations at the property from about 1945.

In those days the 'home' was a little two room shack with no amenities like power, gas, water etc. We had to make do with Tilley lamps, an Agar stove, tank water and the outside pan toilet. Sleeping arrangements were not what we were used to in a five bedroom house in Brighton but, with bunks and single beds, all the women (three girls and Mum) were in one room and the men (two boys and Dad) in the other. Even with the stove burning, in winter it was cold, and in summer it was hot. With no fly screens, we had the unwelcome company of flies, mosquitoes, spiders and even bats. The visits of bats were a bit scary and the girls would hide under the blankets while the boys would try and chase them out.

Living a few miles out of town, it was closer for us to walk to the Warburton Road to get the bus to school, both the Primary School and the High School in Lilydale. And I well remember the fire that destroyed most of the High School, and then having to walk all over Lilydale for classes during one of the coldest winters on record. The Parish Hall, The Court House, the old Secondary School in Clarke Street, the Melba Hall and others were all used for classes.

Mum didn't drive so it was difficult to do the shopping. But in those days the butcher (Arch



The Mt Evelyn House 'Weemalla', above, after the first renovation, c. 1956.

Carswell), the grocer and the green grocer would take our orders on Saturday mornings and deliver to home during the week, and of course the milk was delivered to the front gate daily. Fresh bread was delivered to Ladson Corner (where Evans Grove meets the Warburton Road) and we would collect it on our way home from school. My, how times have changed.

The home is just opposite the Pony Club grounds in Bailey Road (Graham Colling Reserve). The Reserve used to be the public tip and before that it was where the pans (from outside toilets) were disposed of. I well remember the horse-drawn cart coming down the road. The man would unhitch the horse, plough a couple of furrows, empty the cans, and then back-fill the furrows, before hitching up the horse for his return (some say he then changed the cart and did the bread delivery around Mt Evelyn).

The country side has changed much since our first memories in the late 1940s. The area had been completely cut out for timber – mostly fence palings, as the timber wasn't much good for anything else. There was the remnant of a saw mill on the property and heaps of saw dust. From the house there were clear views across to Mt Donna Buang, the fire tower at Toolangi and looking west all the way to Old Gippsland Road and Old Hereford Road. Regrowth and the spread of suburbia have at least seen most of the area re-vegetated.

Apart from 12 months or so, I have now lived in the same house for nearly 60 years and yes, it has been extended and



Above, the Doig family at Mt Evelyn, c. 1949. L to R: Eugene holding Sylvia, Douglas, Mum (Jean), Richard, Elaine. Photo by Jim Doig (Dad).

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renovated a couple of times. Back in the days before letter boxes and street numbers in the bottom half of Bailey Road, the house name 'Weemalla' would always find us. The wrought iron sign is still on the veranda near the front door. I think 'Weemalla' means 'place of distant views'.

My sister Elaine worked at the chemist shop in Mt Evelyn before the fire that destroyed Millard's Joinery. The girls now live in Brisbane (Eugene), Wangaratta (Elaine), and Sylvia lives at Choclyn near Camperdown. Douglas is deceased.

My wife Bev is a country girl, having been reared on Tesselaar's bulb farm in Silvan (her father Stan ploughed the fields with a horse team). Her family moved to Cooring Yering in Lilydale when her father became a farm hand for Lindsay Nicholas, who at that time had a dairy and later raised beef cattle. We now live on 13 acres in Bailey Road with plenty of bush around us. Bev has never lived in suburbia and we have no inclination to do so. Where in suburbia could you have kookaburras, kangaroos, owls etc on your doorstep?

Our two children attended Mt Evelyn Primary School and Lilydale High School, and our grandson is now at Lilydale High School, making it our third generation at the school. Some of those that went to the High School will remember the Bristol Wing. My father worked for the company that designed and manufactured those rooms. I'm so glad that they have now gone and been replaced with rooms that can be heated and cooled.

In recent years a number of our High School mates have been getting together for a



Above, the Doig family home today.



Lilydale High School Reunion. L to R, standing: Greg McDonald, Leigh Brown, Adrian Williams, Norbert Nissan, Richard Doig, David Clayton, Derrick Stone. In front: Graeme Low, Bruce Shaw.

luncheon, at which there is a lot of reminiscing. If there are readers that were at Lilydale High School in Forms 3-6 in 1957-1960, we would like to hear from you. **Richard Doig**

Classmates can contact Richard by email: richarddoig@internode.on.net or phone: 9736 2008.

Shire Roll of Honour

Anthony McAleer has compiled a list of service people associated with Yarra Ranges from all conflicts, which YR has converted to an Excel spreadsheet.

You can find and download the database here: <https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B5uZJZ-PdpjsS3Q2Y2U1cFFaeEk&usp=sharing>

As well as the main database, which is a sortable Excel spreadsheet, there are also instructions for use, and the original word document provided by Anthony. The word doc has the same data as the spreadsheet in a different format.

The Museum will also have a copy of these documents available for use in our resource room. **From Gabby Haines, Heritage Officer**

Note: the documents are hard to open online but you can download, save and read. **Ed.**

*

A page for local history has been added under 'Connect' on the Yarra Ranges Arts, Culture and Heritage website:

http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/ach/Connect/Research_Local_History

Winged lions, gryphons and sphinxes

Members of the Gryphon Seat Sub-committee have been busy dating the seat and tracing others of similar type. Maria McCarthy writes of the silver seat, below right:

This seat is in my girlfriend's front entrance. I contacted Jeremy Frances from Cloudehill Nursery in Olinda. He was given this mould by Graham Foote about 7-8 years ago. Judy McAlister, who has since passed away, her family from Toorak imported the original Doulton bench seat, before the company became 'Royal Doulton', around 1900. This type of Gryphon is believed to be from around 1820.

He then suggested that I talk to Graham Foote of Surrey Hills Post Office, Gargoyles, who now runs Hawthorn Gallery. Graham did the mould of this seat about 15-20 years ago. He then returned the mould back to the family. Have since found this link:

<http://www.liveauctioneers.com/item/5089648>

A ceramic winged lion seat was produced from a terra cotta original attributed to Lambeth Doulton c.1860: <http://issplateandstone.co.uk/product/winged-lion-bench/>

Compare our winged lions (top right) with the red and white sphinxes from outside Box Hill Town Hall. They are different creatures but the style is similar. They are likely to date from the same period. The Box Hill seat was a 'Centenary Gift' (thought to be Victoria's centenary in 1935). Paula's research indicates that our seat was likely to date from the 1920s-1940s.

The seat has been called both 'the lion seat' and 'the gryphon seat'. The King of Beasts appears in many mythical combinations. As an aid to identification, *Things Past* brings you:

A lion-related bestiary

Chimera (Greek myth): a monster combining lion, goat and serpent or dragon.

Gryphon or griffin: a beast with the body of a lion and the head, wings and talons of an eagle. The gryphon represents valour and magnanimity. A gold gryphon on a blue ground is the emblem of the Evelyn family and of Yarra Hills Secondary College (co-incidence, we think).

Lamassu (Assyrian): a creature with a human head, wings, the body of a bull and feet of a lion. Often seen in palace doorways: www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/32.143.2

Sphinx (Egyptian): a creature with a lion's body and the head of a pharaoh.



Mythic beasts, from top: Mt Evelyn's lion seat (a.k.a. gryphon seat); buxom Greek spinxes outside Box Hill Town Hall. Right: plaque from the Box Hill seat. Below: classic silver sphinxes purchased from Cloudehill Nursery. Photos Maria McCarthy and Kevin Phillips.



Sphinx (Greek): a creature with the body of a lion, the head and breasts of a woman, wings and a serpent tail. The red and white seat and the silver seat above both feature Greek sphinxes. And check out these modest,

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Old stores in Monbulk Road

Jean Edwards sent us photos of the old store next to Mt Evelyn Primary School, before and after the Clegg Road intersection was made. The Italian restaurant on the site of the store is currently the subject of a planning permit. The photo at lower left proves that the trees on the corner were not cut down for the road



Above, top: the McKillop Store with MEPS in the distance, May 1978; bottom, the Clegg Road intersection and embankment with the trees still in place, July 1980.

Below, Mt Evelyn Garden & Produce Store, demolished about March 2008. Photos courtesy Jean and David Edwards.



works but later, when the carpark was made. Jean hopes that the trees can be replaced. The old produce store on the other side of MEPS was demolished in 2008.

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ladylike sphinxes in Elizabethan ruffs and Victorian draperies: http://www.1stdibs.com/furniture/building-garden/statues/pair-of-composition-stone-sphinxes/id-f_1141518/

Winged Lion: There doesn't seem to be any specific name for the lion-with-wings combination. The Mt Evelyn seat has winged lions – or rather lionesses, as they have no manes. The winged lion is a symbol of St Mark and of Venice, but the ancient winged lion statue at St Mark's, Venice, pre-dates Christianity: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lion_of_Venice

Siting the seat

Suggested locations for our seat: 1. the top of the RSL Memorial Garden, near the Rail Trail. Anthony McAleer suggests dedicating it to the migrants who have settled in this district. 2. opposite the top of Snowball Avenue, looking towards Mt Dandenong. This would be close to its former site.

From Kev's rain gauge

Rainfall for May 2014 for Mt Evelyn, Melbourne and Melbourne average.*

Mt Ev	Melb	Melb Av
70.8mm	33.2mm	56.0mm

* Melbourne figures Bureau of Meteorology: <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/> Figures for McKillop held over.

Kevin Phillips

Contact us

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