

Things Past

Newsletter 83

January 2015

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

PO Box 289 Mt Evelyn VIC 3796 A0051327F



Dates for your diary

History Group meeting Monday 16 February, 7.30pm at Hardy House.

Bottle collector Ron Nutt will speak on Saturday 21 March, 1.30pm at Hardy House.

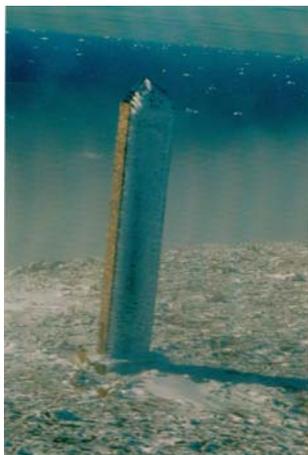
Trip to the High Arctic

There were 96 of us from 16 countries. All come together to witness Canada's High Arctic. No one went home disappointed.

We gathered in Ottawa on 29 August 2005 and then the next morning headed out on a First Air charter flight for Resolute Bay, 74° 39' North, 94° 54' West. As we approached Resolute Bay the pilot treated us to a little flightseeing. Below us we could see the Parry Channel and the treeless landscape of Cornwallis Island with our ice breaker, the *Kapitan Khlebnikov*, at anchor in the bay waiting for our arrival.

Resolute Bay was created as a weather station in 1947. Present population between 200 & 300. It is the most northern point in Canada to which you can take a regularly scheduled commercial flight.

Once we were on board the ship our first stop was Cummings Inlet, where we explored the edge of the glacier and climbed up along its edges, looking at the interesting rocks that it had deposited, marvelling at the thickness of the ice and at the blueness of it. The blue colour was one of the things we continued to marvel at throughout the trip.



Then we were bound for Cape York on the



Above, the intense blues of Cummings Inlet Glacier. Below left, the Peary Monument seen from the helicopter. Below right, Qaanaaq village, north-western Greenland.

west coast of Greenland, where there are more ice bergs than you could count in a month of Sundays. Each one a work of art. Some entirely blue in colour and all surrounded by a wonderful tropical turquoise colour as the ice under the water reflects the light. High on the headland of Cape York stands a huge obelisk erected to explorer Admiral Peary by his daughter Marie. It is engraved with a huge letter P and can be seen from a very long way off.



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Our next stop was Qaanaaq (pronounced Kanak) or sometimes known as Thule (pronounced 'Tooly'), a reference to the ancestors of the modern day Inuit people. The most northern settlement on western Greenland, with a population of about 600.

Just north of Qaanaaq we made a visit to the Greenland Ice Cap. The helicopter dropped us off. And there we were, on the top of Greenland looking out and seeing the sea far below with millennia of ice underfoot.

Then there was a helicopter landing at Etah fjord. The water was so calm it was like glass and the yellow, greens and coppers of the hillside reflected perfectly in it. There is a



Etah Fjord, Greenland, with perfect reflection.

hunting camp here where there was evidence of a recent kill and many successful hunts in the past. We scrambled like mountain goats up a very steep grassy hillside, to be rewarded for our efforts by the sight of a group of musk ox. Shaggy, sure footed creatures who seemed to know that they could out-manoeuvre us without any difficulty.



Remains of Northumberland House, Beechy Island, the last known camp of Sir John Franklin. Franklin was a former Governor of Tasmania.



Ancient Thule site on Skraeling Island.

Then it was full steam ahead through the ice to see how far we could go and on 4 September at about 1:30pm we made 82° 31' North before we had pack ice in front of us. We were in the Lincoln Sea, a part of the Arctic Ocean, and we had Canadian Forces Base Alert off our port side. The captain made the decision to turn south and, following the east coast of Ellesmere Island, make our way back to Resolute Bay.

It is an interesting experience going through the ice. The ice cover on the water, that is the amount of water surface covered by ice, is measured in tenths. At 82° 31' North we had 9/10 coverage. But, no matter what the coverage, the captain always picks the path of least resistance. Nevertheless, from time to time the ship must break ice and when it does there is a resounding thud and the whole ship, which is especially designed to go through ice, lurches and shudders from the force of the impact.

You can imagine how easily the ice must have crushed the wooden vessels of the early explorers. As we headed south we stopped at the places where American explorer Adolphus Greely had spent two winters in his search for the Northwest Passage in the 1880s. And at Pim Island, known as Starvation Camp, where Greely and six others of his original party of 25 remained to be rescued, the others having starved to death.

Northumberland House on Beechy Island was the last camp where Sir John Franklin was known to have stayed, in the winter of 1845-1846. In September of 2014, after 168 years, Franklin's ship *Erebus* was finally found. The location of his second ship, *Terror*, remains a mystery.

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St John Ambulance in Mt Evelyn

St John Ambulance in Mt Evelyn had close links with the CFA, which formed shortly after the 1939 bushfires.

The CFA grew both in membership and the respect it earned as an active and vibrant group. It was this group that the newly installed Doc Bill Hardy joined as Preventive Medical Officer in the 1950s. He used to tell stories of rising with the alarm sounding, taking with him a pair of side-cut shears to cut through the clothes lines that could decapitate rushing firemen as they attempted to put out fires. He had a huge nut on a string to throw over any electric wires and pull them down so that the water hoses could be directed on to a house fire with safety.

Naturally the CFA realised that Doc might not always be available in the area of need in a major fire and asked him to arrange for members of the brigade to undertake first aid training through St John Ambulance. This was arranged and those newly trained first aiders were distinguished by the attachment of a red cross on the rear of their helmets so that they could be immediately identified.

In January 1962 Mt Evelyn was surrounded by massive fire fronts on three sides and in much danger of being burnt out. In the aftermath of the bushfires, it was decided that a St John Ambulance unit be formed to provide support, not only in fires, but to the many local events throughout the year.

The first gathering on 15 February 1962 met as a Section of Ringwood Division, meeting at the Ringwood Guide Hall with just 10 men and one woman. They had much more training to do however. Not until November 1962 was Mt Evelyn recognised as a separate unit, although still part of Ringwood. Registration



The original Mt Evelyn St John Ambulance vehicle. Photo courtesy John Stroud.



Above, Mt Evelyn St John Ambulance personnel including Dr Hardy (second from left) and Superintendent Genie Stroud (centre), 1970s. Photo courtesy John Stroud.

was approved by the Chief Commissioner on 6 March 1963.

Original members were: Dr William Hardy, Divisional Surgeon; Eric Gray; William Ellis; Norman Haines; Edgar Winney; Bernard Doolan; Brendan Doolan; Wesley Cox; Ian Carswell; Robert Armstrong; Patricia Sanders.

Mt Evelyn continued as a Section of Ringwood until it formed as a Division in its own right, within 8 Corps, at a meeting at George Street Wandin in June 1965. Its Registration was approved as Mt Evelyn Combined Division on 1 March 1966.

The group's membership had grown by this time and now numbered 13, with the Wandin Fire Captain Robert Keith Armstrong as Divisional Superintendent. Thus it can be seen it was still very much associated with the CFA. Dr Hardy was still acting as Divisional Surgeon, as he was also acting as the Mt Evelyn CFA Medical Officer.

Membership at this time consisted of: Norman Haines, a celebrated local artist, William Ellis, Clarence Oliver, Eric Gray, Wesley Cox, Bruce Oliver (who was entered twice on the Brigade Registration Form), Harold Souter, Francis Spencer, Glynne Beaumont, who continued as a member right up until its closure as Mt Evelyn Division, Kenneth Foord, who later became Cadet Officer Mt Evelyn Ambulance cadets and later as Divisional Superintendent of Upper Yarra Division, Dr Hardy, Rob Armstrong, Mrs Winifred Martin, and Miss Margaret Heemskerk. Obviously many of these were also CFA members.

The Brigade Form 1 for 1965 showed that Wesley Cox, Harold Souter and Clarence

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Oliver were no longer members and the membership had dropped to just 10 members. Duty hours amounted to 126, but were marked down as being served as CFA members.

1966 showed an increase in membership, although still mainly CFA members, to 17. We can now see an influence of the local football members, with many of the ladies auxiliary for the Mt Evelyn football teams, Eugene (Genie) Stroud, Eileen Watt, Joyce Cuffe, and Joyce Chapman all becoming members on 18 October 1966. Duty Hours had also increased slightly to 168, but again were mainly CFA hours.

1967 saw a change in activities, from a CFA to a St John role, although the Division was still heavily involved in CFA activities. These included 43 call outs, and a bush fire role from 11.30am on 18 February to 2.00pm on 21 February. Unfortunately no records of these fires are available.

1968 showed no real increase in membership or duty hours, the only thing of note was that Genie Stroud, who later became the Divisional Superintendent, was holding the rank of Sergeant.

1969 showed the completion of the role change, as very few CFA members were still part of the Division, with Robert Armstrong resigning, and Genie Stroud in command with the rank of Divisional Officer. Ken Foord was also showing the rank of Sergeant. Five of the 14 members were female and mostly involved with the local Football club.

It is rumoured that about this time, the Division met in a local bus stop for a short while, and because of its heavy CFA involvement knew little of the rules and roles of the St John Ambulance Brigade. However duty hours increased quite significantly to 762. Some of these were as trainers at the local football meetings. Two members, Genie Stroud and Ken Foord, contributed over 100 hours each during the year and two others, Bill and Evelyn Cuffe, contributed 98 hours each. All four were heavily involved in the Mt Evelyn Football Club activities.

1970 the Division consisted of 12 members under Divisional Officer Genie Stroud. They were meeting regularly and contributed 1346 hours of public duty.

1971 the Division membership jumped to 19, with six being female. They were meeting once

a week, apart from January and public holidays, and contributed 1377 hours. They were also holding regular First Aid classes conducted by Dr Hardy.

1972 seemed to be the highlight of the Division's first ten years of service, when its membership reached 21. **Jim Humphrey**

Jim and Doreen Humphrey joined the Mt Evelyn Division in the 1970s, having previously served in England for many years. Both served as Superintendents of Mt Evelyn Division.

Morrison House catch-ups

The launch of Morrison House Changed a Community gave staff and students such as Sharon Betridge a chance to reminisce.

The first half [of the book] is such a memory trip for me. I was less involved once I started at Melbourne College in 1985. After that I just took Naomi to some of the after school and holiday sessions. So many people I had not thought of for a long time. At your book launch I had a quick catch-up with Madeleine Kennedy (O'Rourke). It was so lovely to see her and hear about her family.

I have always remembered the CAE book discussion group. Various situations over the years have brought me back to extracts from Margaret Mead's autobiography. I was very



Naomi Betridge in a smock made by Paula young with very limited life experience and it made a big impression on me. Also we read a biography on Matthew Flinders. I really enjoyed that book group and on the strength of that experience joined another a few years ago.

I enjoyed reading about the Toy Library. I think I must have been on the committee for a year or two. I remember I was the roster person for a while, maybe a year. So often I'd get a phone call in the morning from someone saying that they'd been up all night with a sick child and couldn't do their rostered duty. I'd do a bit of a ring around but young mothers were always very busy and often I'd just pack Naomi into the pusher and do it myself. I used to get the bus up there and then walk back. Even now Naomi will occasionally mention toys that we

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The last belle wore clematis

Continuing 'Weddings at Coranderrk'.

Newspaper reports indicate goodwill, at least on these happy occasions, between Coranderrk residents, Healesville townfolk and even settlers on former Coranderrk land. Some distinguished guests attended.

A most interesting and pleasant marriage ceremony took place at the Coranderrk Aboriginal Station on Friday afternoon last, when Mr. Edward Foster and Miss Betsy Banfield, daughter of one of the chiefs of the Goulburn tribe, were united in the bonds of wedlock by Pastor Herlitz, of Melbourne. After the ceremony, a large number of guests, including almost all the residents of Coranderrk and several of the neighboring settlers, sat down to a really sumptuous repast provided by Mrs. Shaw, wife of the superintendent of the station, and other ladies.

Mrs. Bon, of Wappan Station, near Mansfield, who had known the bride's parents in the olden days, and who always took a great interest in the welfare of the natives, came over specially, and was one of the prominent guests on the occasion. The bride was presented with a handsome wedding dress by this lady, which was admired by all the lady friends of the happy bride.

A thoroughly enjoyable evening was spent after supper in singing and dancing, and Coranderrk, for the time being, wore an extremely gay and lively appearance. We wish the happy couple long life and prosperity in their new sphere of 'double blessedness'.

Healesville Guardian (HG), 7/6/1895

A double wedding took place with Seville Sunday School children in attendance.

DOUBLE MARRIAGE AT CORANDERRK. *Friday 28th ult., was the scene of gay doings at Coranderrk settlement, the occasion being the union of Mr. E. McDougall and Miss Dinah Hunter (the former is well-known in the football field, and the latter an old acquaintance of many townfolk), and Mr. Thomas Fenton with Miss Eliza Hammond, of Germantown. Both brides were gaily attired in white, while the bridegrooms looked ready to do the block at any moment. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Pastor Herlitz, of Melbourne, who has already united sundry couples at the station, and amongst those present were ...*



Above, Albert Carl Darby & Ellen Gibbs' wedding photo, *The Australasian*, 17/7/1909.

many visitors and friends from Healesville, in addition to a large contingent of the Seville Sunday School picnic party, the small chapel being crowded to its utmost capacity. After the ceremony the Scotch custom of breaking the shortbread caused some amusement, and a breakfast, followed later on by a dance, ended one of the gala days of Coranderrk Aboriginal Station.

HG, 6/3/1896

On another occasion the venue was the Badger Creek School, where both Coranderrk and settler children were pupils.

An interesting aboriginal wedding took place on Thursday, at the Badger Creek State School, which was very prettily decorated by the school children for the occasion. The contracting parties were Mr. Peter Hunter and Mrs. Terrick, and the Church of England marriage ceremony was performed by the Rev. A. O. F. Gates. The bride was given away by Mr. Councillor W. Smith, and was attended by Misses Louie Hunter, Maggie Terrick, and Lily Paterson [sic] as bridesmaids. The ceremony was witnessed by a large crowd of friends and visitors from Healesville. A social evening and

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dance were afterwards held. Healesville & Yarra Glen Guardian (HYGG), 18/2/1905

Those who were widowed tended to remarry within a short time.

A very interesting aboriginal double wedding ceremony was performed at Coranderrk on Tuesday afternoon when Mr E. Foster and Mrs. Rose Anna McLellan and Mr Albert White and Mrs Dinah McDougall, were united in the holy bonds of matrimony. The ceremony, which took place in the station chapel, was performed by the Rev. Spittal, and was attended by a large crowd of spectators, including not a few from Healesville, and the wedding party were treated to the usual showers of rice and confetti.

In the evening a social was held in the school room, and a very enjoyable time was spent in singing, step dancing, reciting, &c., by the aboriginals and the youngsters, the latter being trained for the occasion by Miss Shaw. It is interesting to note that the brides and bridegrooms were respectively widows and widowers. HYGG, 1/7/1905

Young people of mixed race had been excluded from the reserve from 1886. In most of the weddings reported in the press, the couples were of full Aboriginal descent.

ABORIGINAL WEDDING AT CORANDERRK - The union in holy wedlock of Mr Albert Darby and Miss Ellen Gibbs, two full blooded [sic] young Australian aborigines, was solemnised at Coranderrk on Friday afternoon last by the Rev. James Spittal. The ceremony was carried out according to the rites of the Presbyterian Church, and as it was in its way an interesting and unique event, there was a large assemblage of visitors from Healesville, in addition to the superintendent and matron of the settlement, Mr and Mrs C. Robarts, and a full contingent of their dusky charges. The Coranderrk church was crowded to the doors, and its interior was prettily decorated.

The bridegroom is a son of Mr and Mrs Albert Darby, sen., who came to Coranderrk from Gippsland some years ago, and Miss Gibbs is a daughter of Mr and Mrs John Gibbs, who are well known old local identities. Each of the contracting couple is about 19 years of age. The bride wore the orthodox European wreath and veil, and was gowned in white spotted muslin. There were three bridesmaids – the

Misses Lizzie Hamilton, Cissie McLeod and Violet Manton; and Mr Henry McCrae officiated as groomsman. The bride was given away by her cousin, Mr Jim Mullett. The Wedding March was played by Miss Holt. In the evening an enjoyable time was spent by the guests, concluding with a sumptuous supper. Mr. and Mrs. Darby, jun., who have now settled down to the routine life of the station, received many useful presents. HYGG, 18/6/1909. Photo p.5.

The same surnames recur in the reports. A different Ellen Darby remarried the following year. Once again, a prominent guest presented the bride with the wedding dress.

ABORIGINAL WEDDING: PRESENT FROM A BARONESS An aboriginal wedding took place at Coranderrk on Thursday, between 'Johnny' Terrick, a widower nearly 70 years of age ... and Ellen Darby, from Lake Tyers, a widow of 35 years of age. Mr. C. A. Robarts, superintendent, performed the ceremony. Baroness de Pury made the bride a present of the wedding dress for the occasion.

The Argus, 11/7/1910

The most charming account of all was the latest Coranderrk wedding report I could find.

AN ABORIGINAL WEDDING "ORANGE BLOSSOMS" – MULLETT-MANTON. A very pretty and popular wedding took place at Coranderrk last Thursday afternoon, when Miss Violet Manton was united to Mr Alick Mullett by the manager, Mr C. Robarts.

The weather was remarkably fine, the bride was comely, and the bridegroom as happy a man as you might meet in a day's march. There was a great gathering of guests and visitors. The little church, gaily decorated with ferns, dogwood blossom, and trails of clematis, was thronged, and the singing during the service most enjoyable.

The bride wore white muslin, trimmed with embroidery, a pair of neat white shoes, and a net veil, and carried a shower bouquet of roses from the manager's garden. But the loveliest feature in her costume was the use made of the native clematis, now in full bloom beside the Coranderrk River, the white, starry clusters on their slender green trails being twisted into a wreath for her dark hair, and trailing in a shower from the roses and maidenhair of her bouquet. She was attended by two pretty bridesmaids, the Misses Maggie Wandin and

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Emma Patterson, also dressed in white, with wreaths and bouquets of roses and maidenhair. Mr Alick McCrae and a cousin of the bride acted as groomsmen.

Mr and Mrs Mullett afterwards held a reception at the house of the bride's mother, where the many pretty and useful presents were displayed. No fewer than five wedding cakes furnished forth the subsequent banquet and dance held at night in Coranderrk Hall. The wedding party was much photographed by both local photographers; and already there are many inquiries for mementoes of the happy occasion. HYG, 28/10/1910. Photo SLV online.

Another report of the same wedding in *The North Western Advocate and Emu Bay Times* (Tasmania) 1/11/1910 states that the bride, Violet Manton, was only 16, and calls her last of the 'black belles' of Coranderrk.

An Aboriginal wedding at Carlton in 1917 provided another slant on youthful romance.

Marrying a Minor: At Carlton Court (Vic.) on Friday Claude B. Nevin, 24, was charged with having unlawfully married a person under the age of 21 without having previously obtained a written consent as required by the Marriage Act, 1915. Martha Nevin was charged with having unlawfully made a false statement before a minister of religion as to her age.

Jemima Dunolly, married woman, of Coranderrk Station, Healesville, said Martha Nevin was her daughter, and was 19 years of age. Witness told Nevin he could marry her daughter if he found a home, but she did not give her consent in writing. The accused were living together happily at Fitzroy. Nevin was a returned soldier. Rev. D. Gilchrist, Presbyterian minister, said the parties were married at his manse, Carlton, on 3rd January last. Martha Nevin said she was over 21 years of age. Accused were committed for trial.

Daily Telegraph, Launceston, 19/6/1917

Mrs Jemima Dunolly, formerly Mrs Wandin, was the matriarch of the Wandin family. The young bride, nee Martha Wandin, was a great-niece of William Barak. The trial at the Criminal Court ended happily for the bride and groom.

MARRIAGE TO A MINOR: Claude Buby Nevin pleaded guilty to having married a minor without the consent of the girl's mother, and his wife, Martha Louise Nevin, pleaded guilty to having made a false statement to a minister of religion. Consent to their marriage had been

withheld by the wife's mother until Nevin had bought a block of land and built a house. This he had done since marriage. After reading the depositions Mr Justice A'Beckett discharged the accused The Argus, 17/7/1917

The couple's daughter, Julia, would also marry at 19, presumably with her parents' consent.

Compiled by Karen Phillips

Morrison House catch-up, from p.4

borrowed from Toy Library; her favourites were a large 'Miss Piggy' puppet and a dolls pram. All this 'remember when' over the past week has had me thinking of the Montessori playgroup. Remember when we first formed, the struggle to find suitable premises and the delight when we secured the house out towards Silvan.

Then Morrison House certainly did change my life. I attended a short course at the end of 1982. The course was a return to study course facilitated by Box Hill TAFE. From that I went on to do some year 12 (TOP) subjects then applied to teacher's college. **Sharon Bettridge**

Many Mt Evelynites will remember Susan Cleminson from Russell Crescent, who was one of the early Morrison House 'girls' and sold bread for years at the House. Susan is now Susan McDonald and has run AllTrails Bicycle Tours (<http://alltrails.com.au/>) with husband Phil since 1997.

For part of Sue's birthday celebration, she and Phil rode the Warby Rail Trail from Lilydale to Warburton and back on the Cup weekend in 2014, staying two nights at a B&B in Yarra Junction. 'The rail trail is wonderful, such a great family activity. We had rain and hail on the Saturday but that didn't seem to matter, we were prepared.' On the Monday they had a late lunch at the 'library café' in Mt Evelyn. Granddaughter Lucy took this photo of them in front of the Mt Evelyn sign. **Paula Herlihy**



Phil and Susan McDonald on the Warby Trail



Skraeling Island in the Canadian Arctic, site of ancient Thule dwellings. Skraeling was a Norse name for the ancestors of the Inuit.

And in between those sites of suffering and desolation we saw some of the most beautiful country imaginable. Mountains permanently covered in snow and carved by time. Glaciers reaching for the sea no matter which way you turn. Meadows of tundra where tiny flowers still bloomed under the dusting of early snow. Flocks of snow geese gathering to head south. A walrus cow resting on an ice floe with her calf, slipping into the water as our ship approached and then popping up her head to make sure that we were continuing on our way. The cliffs at Coburg Island filled with fledgling Kittiwakes and thick billed Murres, their hundreds of voices calling out in a cacophony of sound and, high above, enormous white clouds formed by birds in flight against a clear blue sky.

A polar bear swimming along side our ship at 4:45 in the morning (and all of us standing on deck in our pjs, with a light snow falling on our sleep-dishevelled heads). What a sight he was, swimming with such ease and strength, quite obviously curious about us, his very

sensitive nose trying to make sense of it all as he swam beside us for a good 15 or 20 minutes and at least 10 miles from shore.

What a unique experience. Everyone should see it for themselves. **Catherine Yestadt**

Melba Centre moves

Melba Centre has relocated to the former Swinburne Campus at Lilydale. The site off Monbulk Road, which opened in 1977, will become a meditation centre. Melba's shop-front will remain in Wray Crescent Mt Evelyn.

Corrections

In *Things Past* 82 p.3, 'Jim Lowe's fruit and vegetable shop' should have been Jim Low's. The photos of the book launch (not specifically credited) were of course by Joy Carrick. **Ed.**

From Kev's rain gauge

Rainfall for December 2014 for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, Melbourne and Melbourne average.

Mt Ev	McK	Melb	Melb Av
50.7mm	57.45mm	42.2mm	51.0mm
Total rainfall for 2014 & 2013 for Melbourne, Mt Evelyn, McKillop & Three Bridges (in mm).			

	Melb	Mt Ev	McK	3Br
2014	465.8*	766.1	907.0	1298.5
2013	617.8	762.4	982.75	1285.8

* Figure compiled by regularly checking the website. The Bureau's yearly 'adjusted' figure is 475.2mm. The 10 year average for McKillop is 978.345mm.

Kevin Phillips

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

Contact us

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