

# Things Past

Newsletter 86

April 2015

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

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## Dates for your diary

Opening of Upper Yarra Avenue of Honour. Walk the Avenue along the Rail Trail from the Yarra Junction Cenotaph to Yarra Junction Primary School. Sunday 12 April, 11am.

'Bells of Peace' centenary of ANZAC concert for the Casey electorate. A production with music, songs and drama telling stories of this area during WWI. Saturday 18 April, Evening, Mt Evelyn Discovery Church, Monbulk Road Mt Evelyn.

History Group meeting, Monday 20 April, 7.30pm at Hardy House.

ANZAC Day Dawn Service, march back to RSL clubrooms, free community breakfast. Saturday 25 April 5.45am, Mt Evelyn War Memorial Park. Other events in RSL newsletter.

## Ken Reed and the Lion Seats

Ken Reed (Kenneth Graham Reed) was born in Carlton on 26 July 1942 and came to Mt Evelyn in 1944, when he was about 18 months old.

He started work at the age of 15 as an apprentice moulder in an iron foundry, but found he didn't like the work much. He said he'd like to have a go with aluminium. There was a place in Mitcham and he went and had a look at it, but he never took it up, he did bus driving instead. He got his licence at 18 (you weren't supposed to get it until you were 21). He started to drive buses with Bernie Doolan for Pop Adams, at first school buses around Mt Evelyn and then further afield to Mt Dandenong.



Above, the winged lioness seat, now at Morrisons Reserve. Ken Reed remembers quite a number of these seats around Mt Evelyn in the 1950s. Photo Kevin Phillips.



Above, Ken Reed at the Fire Station. Photo Paula Herlihy.

Ken later worked for the Shire of Lillydale as Superintendent of Works until the end of 1986 and served a term as a Shire Councillor. He has always been greatly involved in community work, principally for the CFA. He joined the CFA in 1956, was Captain for 28 years and is currently the Maroondah Group Officer, a position he has held for the past 38 years. He received the Australian Fire Service Medal in 2002. In 2012 the Mt Evelyn Fire Brigade honoured Ken by re-naming the Mt Evelyn Pumper 'The Ken Reed AFSM Pumper'.

Ken has worked on a part time basis for Martyrs buses for the last 15 years. From his early work in the foundry he has retained an interest in moulding forms, such as the casting

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of bronze statuary. He was Chairman of the Lilydale Cemetery Trust for ten years. As a result of his long connection to Mt Evelyn, and his position as Shire Superintendent of Works, he took notice of the winged lioness seats about the town. Ken remembers several seats:

1. The existing seat, which was located on the elongated triangle of road reserve where Snowball Avenue meets Birmingham Road/Wray Crescent. In 1986 Ken arranged for Shire employee John Harrison to move the seat to the Shire depot in Nelson Road. Ken also arranged to have the timbers in the seat replaced before he left at the end of 1986. The seat was not reinstated in Mt Evelyn but remained on the verandah of the depot.

2. One outside the entrance to the old railway station on Railway Crescent (now Wray Crescent), when Mrs Fletcher was Caretaker (1956-1965). There is a picture of one of the seats with a wire fence behind it that might have been the station fence. The picture, which unfortunately cannot be located at the moment, was taken in heavy snow. Ken can remember four or five snowstorms. He recalls that it snowed heavily in Mt Evelyn and Lilydale around 1949-1950, as he remembers having snowball fights at school in Lilydale when he was aged about 7.

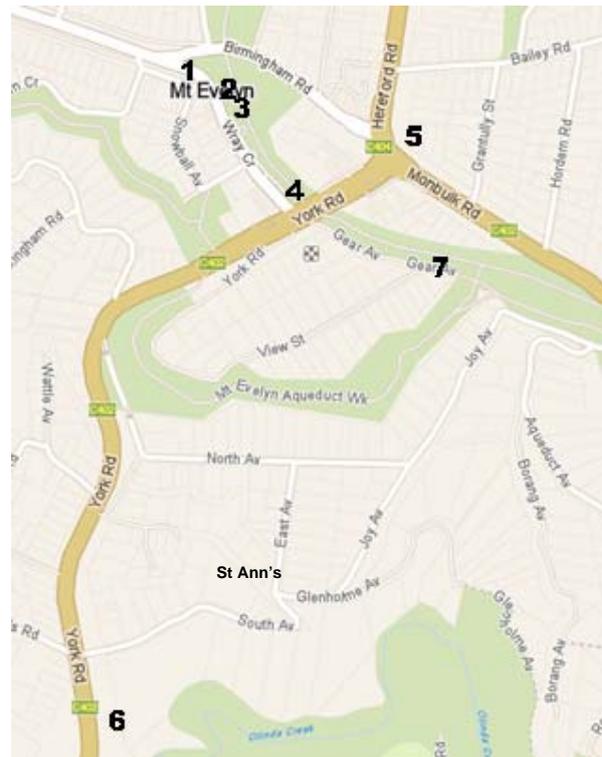
3,4. One at each end of the Avenue of Honour. The avenue had gates at each end, which could be opened or closed. The seats were just before the gates. One was at the York Road end, and the other in front of the old CFA building, now the St John building.

5. In the 1950s there was one on the Hereford/Monbulk Road corner where the petrol station currently is, near the present bus shelter.

6. At Mimosa Gardens, down near Olinda Creek, where the Adams buses used to turn around at an old bus stop in the 1950s.

7. In addition to the seats remembered by Ken, Mary Golds (Miutescu) remembers a similar seat at the peak in Gear Avenue but this one had non-winged male lions with manes. The seat was facing away from the railway line. Mary remembers buying a threepenny ice-cream at the milk bar and sitting on the seat and finishing off the icecream on her way home.

To sum up, it seems from the above list that no less than seven of these seats were part of the Mt Evelyn streetscape from at least the 1950s until the last one was removed in 1986.



Above, location of the lioness/lion seats. Paula Herlihy, background map Google 2015.

With four of them along the main street alone, they must have been quite a feature. It's surprising that only a few people remember them. Ken recalled them all in place at the same time, so it was not a matter of a couple of seats being moved to different sites. Ken also remembered that the property St Ann's in East Avenue contained a lot of garden furniture similar to the winged lioness seats.

In 2009 Ian Harris collected the last remaining seat from the Shire depot and stored it under the Education buildings at Morrison House, with the aim of making replicas as part of 'Work for the Dole' projects with Mt Evelyn History Group support. In 2013 the Men's Shed located the moulded end pieces but the wood was missing. They replaced the wood and set the seat up at Morrisons Reserve near their shed. At the end of 2013 a sub-committee of the Mt Evelyn History Group was formed to investigate the history of the seat and, if appropriate, duplicate it and install the replicas in Mt Evelyn.

**Paula Herlihy**

### Another Cave Hill painting

In *Things Past* 66 (August 1913) we listed the known art works depicting Cave Hill. Jean Edwards noticed another one on display at Coombe Cottage recently. The signature appeared to be 'Warner 1913'.

# MY LIFE WITH ST JOHN AMBULANCE 1: England

## Corps Staff Officer Jim Humphrey

I joined St John Ambulance at the age of 17 whilst still at school. Both Stan (my best friend at school) and I started together doing a first aid course at Lambeth Town Hall, conducted by Dr Paul, the Divisional Surgeon of the 41<sup>st</sup> Nursing Division, and then staying on afterwards for more training and assisting the young nurses training for a First Aid competition by acting as casualties. There were about a dozen in our age bracket, so the experience was not all that difficult. I was enamored at that time by a young rather quiet nurse called Doreen.

One day we were being treated for a fracture of the thigh which, in those days, meant the application of eight triangular bandages, and two long armpit to ankle splints. 'ACHATTLE' stood for the location and order of application. That meant ankles, chest, ankles again, thigh above the fracture, and thigh below the fracture, legs and knees, Letter E). This treatment was applied by a bevy of young beauties. We relished the sport, but once tied up like chickens ready for the oven, we were left in this manner whilst they had their tea break. This was quite disconcerting, as we had no way of releasing ourselves to join in with the refreshments.

After successfully passing the examination I joined the 99 (Lambeth) Ambulance Division on 8 April 1957 and undertook some serious training. I enjoyed this immensely, for I expanded on my first aid class knowledge and actually was able to put it into practice with the many public first aid duties that came along. We had regular local cinemas to cover, plus the occasional big city ones in Leicester Square, and the local Roller Rink, swimming pool and ice rink, along with some of the other major duties. Many of these I was able to share with Doreen, and so we managed to enjoy each other's company on first aid work as well.

I became interested in a new ambulance cadet movement that had just started at Lambeth Town Hall called C149 Ambulance Cadet Division under Ron Fletcher



Above, Jim and Doreen Humphrey on their wedding day, 3 June 1961, with Jim in St John Ambulance uniform. Below, Jim's original First Aid certificate from 1956.

and met just before the Adult Nursing Division. I started to attend that hour earlier to participate in their activities. Eventually I became one of their staff and started to become even more involved. Ron's wife Eileen, who ran the Nursing Cadets, was glad of the assistance and it was not long before I was firmly entrenched in the Cadet Division. On 10 February 1960 I became a Cadet Officer of C149 (Lambeth) Cadet Division No. 1 Prince of Wales' District, and received a certificate, signed by Major General Kirkman, to that effect.



After Doreen and I married on 3 June 1961 at Herne Hill, we moved to New Malden. I had to transfer my attention to C27 (Mitcham) Cadet Division, which was closer. This Division had a band, and numbered just over 15 members. The band seemed to be its only activity. The whole evening was taken up with band practice; first aid was secondary. I changed the system and had a separate night for band practice and another night for first aid and

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other youth activities. It was not long before our numbers swelled, and we had a three units of 18 cadets on parade each week, a total of 60 members including a band of 27 cadets. This unit became one of the larger units in South West London and, with the band, was often on call.

We also participated in First Aid competitions. One day I had attended St John's Gate for a Cadet First Aid competition. I was returning home with one cadet, when on the platform of Farringdon Street Underground, we were confronted with a man collapsing in front of us. Unfortunately, as he fell, a train came in, and his head was caught by a protruding step of the train entrances. The man did not survive, and this was a real introduction to first aid to my young cadet and myself. After this Doreen and I dealt with a drowning at Brockwell Park Lido, another one along the Thames by Hampton Court and a child in the Children's Zoo at London Zoo. All of these survived.

We moved to Kingston in Surrey, and my contact with C27 (Mitcham) became harder to maintain. Eventually I was forced to resign due to distance and work commitments. I joined 215 (Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames) Ambulance Division as a Supernumerary Officer and became one of their volunteer ambulance drivers. We supported the Greater London Council Ambulance Service of a night time, and operated an emergency ambulance service unit from behind the police station in Kingston from 8pm until 7am.

This was wonderful experience, as it really brought home the care of the injured. We were faced with many injuries, illnesses and accidents or medical situations, including a massive caravan and car collision, where we had to deal with multiple fatalities.

One of the more significant events during this time was the number of maternity cases I was involved in. Many of the other attendants would not work with me, as I always seemed to attract a difficult one and ended up in delivering prior to arrival at the hospital. Apart from those delivered at home before the midwife arrived (England had a very high home birth rate), we delivered them in the back of the ambulance and even stuck in a lift half way between floors at one hospital.

We had a call one night (we received our calls by teleprinter) that stated 'man on fire in telephone box outside Bentalls (Department Store), Kingston'. The police got the same message at the same time but we always seemed to lead them out (our garages were adjacent) and so it was this time. We set off with bells clanging, we did not have sirens those days, and as we neared the phone box in question, we could see it was full of smoke.

We naturally feared the worst, and jumped out with blanket at the ready, to be confronted, as we opened the door, with one of the local tramps cooking his sausages over a camp fire he had built in the box. We were happy to pass the problem to the police that had pulled up behind us – some two or three minutes later, I may add. Other major incidents were a house fire and a fire in one of the Underground trains (fatalities in both), and a peculiar case of belladonna poisoning.

My skills in dealing with people in trauma developed during this time and I count myself fortunate in having this experience, as it stood me in good stead for many years and later events. I became experienced in dealing with attempted and successful suicides, brain haemorrhage, burnt victims, motor accidents some of which involved multiple fatalities and children as well as the aforementioned births, and I passed my Air Attendants Course in 1968. I was called upon to deliver my third child, Janet, but that is another story.

Eventually we moved again, this time to Croydon, and my work with St John became less active. I did however participate in many competitions, managing to become a finalist in the All England finals at Croydon, and was duly presented to HRH Princess Margaret.

I also organised and ran three annual first aid disaster exercises for cadets (named Operation Albatross, Blackbird and Crow), that entailed over 100 casualties and many ambulance, police, fire, and Civil Defence personnel. Cadets from all over South East England attended these exercises and it became a highlight of the year. Each of the casualties was made up and they were scattered all over Wimbledon Common. We closed roads and had radio people (TV was very much in its infancy) reporting on the event.

**Continued next month**

# Top of the Town

A planning permit has been approved for a Medical Centre on the site of the former Top of Town opposite the end of Wray Crescent. That means unfortunately that the old shop, one of only three or four of the pre-World War II commercial buildings left in Mt Evelyn, is set for demolition.

Lilydale grocer Mr William Bowring started a bakery in Mt Evelyn, probably in the late 1920s. He was helped by his daughter Edna and son-in-law Ted Matthews.

*In 1929 on the King's birthday weekend Mr Bowring was stuck for help when his driver did not turn up. He had been enticed away by a rival bakery at Croydon and was in the process of converting customers from the Mt Evelyn Bakery to the Croydon one. Mr Bowring asked Ted to help his son Max do the delivery round to help out. ... Ted was asked to stay the whole week, then his father-in-law said, 'Why don't you come in with us permanently?' And so they moved and worked at Bowrings bakery until Mr Bowring died in 1940. (Ted Matthews interview).*

George Joy's Hay, Corn and Produce Store next door to the bakery had a billiard room to cater for workers on the Silvan Dam.

*When the dam was finished it was losing business, then one night it went up in flames and the baker's shop went with it. The Lilydale bakery were very good. They allowed them to bake their bread on their premises and helped them to rebuild. [Bowring and Ted] regarded that as a tremendous gesture.*

The weatherboard building that stands today is the re-built bakery from the 1930s.

Ted was running the bakery when Alan Reid worked there as an apprentice in the 1930s.



Above, the former bakery 'Top of the Town'.



Above, 'Top of the Town' has been painted over but can still be read. Photos Kevin Phillips.

Alan had to put in long hours of baking to feed the hordes of tourists (*Things Past* #82). Mrs Matthews made sandwiches and served the customers. Ted continued to do the deliveries.

*When he did bread deliveries in those days sometimes he had to have chains on his van. It was quite normal to be bogged once or twice a day. The tradespeople, the baker, the butcher and the milkman had, at the bottom of Hunter and McKillop Road where there was a depression in the road that filled with water, a rope attached to a tree ... . They were often around that corner at a similar time so they could help pull each other out.*

Ted inherited the business when his father-in-law died.

*Mrs Bowring had died in 1937 (worn out with caring for her mother). After his wife died Mr Bowring lost interest in everything and to Ted's surprise, when he died soon after, he left the whole business to Ted.*

After the war Ted was 'done to a frazzle', working up to 18 hours a day. Then he injured his wrist playing football and could no longer knead the dough. He sold the bakery in 1947 and bought the 20 acre farm formerly belonging to the Underwoods on Old Hereford Road. Reg Polkinghorne's sketch map labels the shop 'Bowring, Matthews and Perkins'. (*Tracks to Trails* p.81). Karl Hell remembered it as Perkins' bakery in 1950, and the delicious aromas of bread baking there each morning. Comments on Facebook from people who remember the shop through later decades have helped us reconstruct its more recent history. The shop was a general store in the 1960s. It was owned by the Watts family and

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## 'Top of the town', from p.5

still run as a general store in the 1970s. In 1972 it appeared in the background of an episode of the TV series *Matlock Police* filmed in Mt Evelyn (*Things Past* #68). Nola Burrows ran the shop as a milk bar in the 1980s.

Top of the Town was featured in a *Herald-Sun Weekend* article 'Mt Evelyn's Great Divide' by Ted Hopkins in the 'Melbourne Postcard' series in 1996. An elderly couple ran the shop at that time. Who named it 'Top of the Town', and when, is not certain. Until recently the shop sold pet supplies but is currently vacant.

This simple building dominates the main shopping street of Mt Evelyn and embodies fond memories for many people.

### Sources

**Karen Phillips**

Janice Newton, interviews with Ted Matthews & Alan Reid.

William Bowring obituary, *Healesville & Yarra Glen Guardian* 31/8/1940, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/60674854>

*Tracks to Trails*, Mt Evelyn History Group, 2001.

Karl Hell, letter in *MECR* 22, Autumn 1996.

Ted Hopkins, 'Mt Evelyn's Great Divide', *Herald-Sun Weekend* 2/4/1996.

Comments on History Group Facebook page.

## Pearson's belt: non-AIF

Lenore Frost forwarded the following reply from the Australian War Memorial about Ernest Pearson's belt (see *Things Past* 54, 84 & 85).

'After consultation with a colleague in our Military Heraldry and Technology section it does not look like the type that was issued as standard to troops in the First World War. A couple of examples of the type that was can be seen here:

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/REL30046/>  
Even more common as it was issued to artillery, supply and other units was this type:

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/REL29984/>  
The object ... looks to me like the "carriers, cartridge, rifle (mark I)" or "carriers, cartridge, rifle (mark II)".<sup>1</sup>

Ms Frost was therefore quite correct in saying that the ammunition belt was not AIF issue. By slightly enlarging the group photo of the 37<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, she was able to show that the ammunition belts worn were the AIF issue pouched belts, not the 'frilled' article like Pearson's belt.

<sup>1</sup> Bandoliers used during the Boer War: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/REL27378.001>; also Rick Landers 1998, *Saddle Up! Australian load carrying equipment*.

She did not think Pearson would have had the belt with him during the war. 'The original label only said that Pearson owned the belt, not that he used it during the war, so there is no provenance that this is what happened. The reason I don't think he took it with him is well illustrated in *Tony Robinson's WW1* on SBS. In this they look at the training of British infantry men (which was the same as Australian infantry men) in laying down rapid fire with the WW1 bolt action rifle. You could not do it with that sort of ammunition belt, it would only hamper you.' <http://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/video/415022147965/Tony-Robinsons-WW1>

## Rotating sculpture for Museum

Last year Yarra Ranges Council received \$90,000 from the State Government to commission a new artwork in the Castella Street area. Following a submission process, Cameron Robbins and his proposed work *Millkulture* were selected from a shortlist of significant Victorian artists.

*Millkulture* is a kinetic sculpture that will activate the space between the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum and the Harvest Café, and will celebrate the stories and history of the region. Like a windmill for art and culture, *Millkulture* will slowly rotate, over the years, turning its clocklike mechanisms and drawing marks on the indoor concrete wall.

## From Kev's rain gauge

Rainfall for March 2015 for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, Melbourne and Melbourne average.

| Mt Ev  | McK    | Melb   | Melb Av |
|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 39.1mm | 40.0mm | 23.0mm | 50.1mm  |

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

**Kevin Phillips**

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