

Things Past

Newsletter 82

December 2014

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

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Dates for your diary

Tour of Lilydale Athenaeum led by Anthony McAleer, Saturday 13 December, 1.30pm. Meet in front of the Athenaeum building, Castella Street Lilydale, next door to the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum.

History Group Avenue of Honour Sub-committee meeting, Monday 15 December, 7.30pm Hardy House.

History Group meeting Monday 16 February 2015, 7.30pm Hardy House.

Launch of *Morrison House Changed a Community*

People associated with Morrison House over its 40-year history gathered at the RSL Hall on 7 December for the launch of Paula Herlihy's book *Morrison House Changed a Community*.

Peter Sank spoke about the formation of Morrison House from the 1970s playgroups. Literacy teacher Karen Dymke remembered the 'halcyon days' of the early 1990s. Yarra Ranges Mayor Maria McCarthy reprised a moving tribute she made at Jan Simmons' farewell. Launching the book, Heather McTaggart also paid tribute to Jan: 'I wanted to be Jan!' Morrison House often attracted people at a difficult period in their lives and encouraged them to achieve more than they thought possible. Heather was elected to State Parliament and is now Coordinator of The Basin Community House.



Above, Paula signs a book for Maria McCarthy. Below left, Heather McTaggart and Paula.



Paula, in reply, spoke about the importance of volunteers to Morrison House; even the employees worked for 'ridiculously low pay'. She was motivated by the House's capacity to empower women.

Paula thanked the former Morrisons board for commissioning the book, those who shared their stories and photos, Karen Phillips for editing, Joy Carrick for book design and CEO Joe Deragon for passing on the books to the History Group. Thanks also to the speakers, MC Steve Kaylock, Jaccy Mabbett for her flower arrangements, Terry Foster for music, Joy Carrick for photography, Able Bakehouse for catering and for delivering flyers, Kevin Phillips for serving the drinks and everyone who helped set up the Hall, provided afternoon tea and tidied up.

Cr McCarthy supported the launch from Ward funds. The RSL declined payment for use of the Hall. Yolande Pickett organised the event brilliantly.

Saints on air

The Bulgarians rely on their saints in bad times. 'Along their difficult way through history, the people of Bulgaria have known violence and glory, defeat and victory. ... They never lost hope because they had great supporters – the Bulgarian saints, who, even in their earthly lives, using a sword, pen and prayer, were their protectors, teachers and preachers.'

A radio club in Bulgaria promotes a particular saint each month. Kevin Phillips recently qualified for their award: Diploma 'All Bulgarian Saints', after contacting the following saints in 2014:

LZ1950SAS Saint Serafim Sofiiski

LZ1808SNS Saint Martyr Nikita Serski

LZ1810PPW Saint Reverend Martyr Prokopii Varnenski

LZ1375IKA Saint Ioan Kukuzel Angel-voiced

LZ1164SIM Saint Ilarion Bishop of Myglen.

In previous years:

LZ833MBB Saint Martyr Knyaz Boyan Bylgarski

LZ1771SDG Saint Martyr Damaskin Gabrovski

LZ1406SK Saint Kiprian

LZ907SKB Saint King Boris

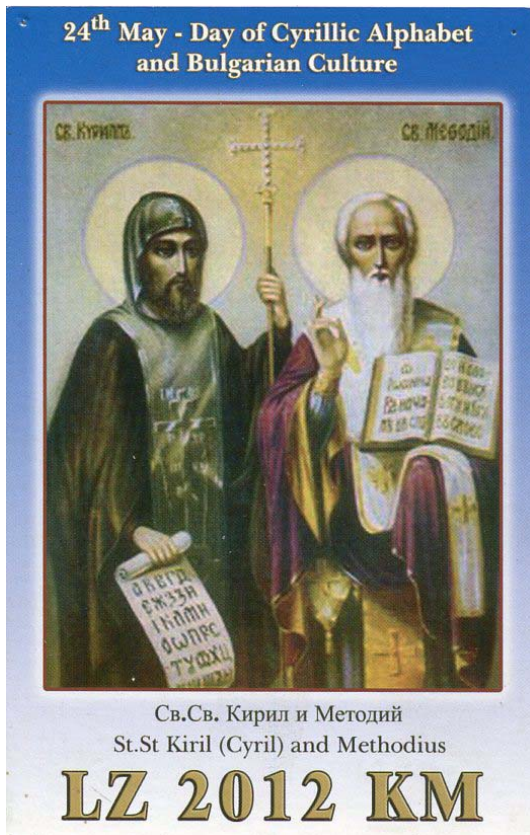
Also LZ2012KM Day of Cyrillic Alphabet and Bulgarian Culture 24 May 2012:

Saint Cyril, born 826 or 827, died 869

Saint Methodius, born 815, died 885.



Above, Kevin Phillips VK3AUQ was awarded the Diploma 'All Bulgarian Saints', 2014.



Saintly brothers Cyril and Methodius, above, devised the Cyrillic alphabet. QSL card, Bulgarian Federation of Radio Amateurs.

Query re Southleigh Cottage

Researcher Carolyn Bruyn asks about a house and a person.

My query concerns one Jane Thornton Cooper who is listed in the electoral roll for 1943 (no other year that I can track) as living at Southleigh Ctge (Cottage?), Mt. Evelyn. Occupation 'h.d.' which I assume is 'house duties'. Not sure if she was housekeeping for someone else or married to a Cooper.

She has been a very elusive lady (probably deliberately), arriving in Victoria around 1912 and then disappearing completely until her removal to the Melbourne Benevolent Home and her death in 1953. I was delighted to find her in the electoral rolls.

I am curious as to whether your group might know of Southleigh Cottage and anything about its inhabitants. Does it still exist?

Can anyone help Carolyn with information on Jane Cooper or Southleigh Cottage?

Alan Reid: From Baker to Owner Builder (1921-2012)

Alan Reid was born at Dr Short's Private Hospital in Lilydale on 18 January 1921. His father had moved to Lilydale before the First World War, and married there after he served in the army and returned at the end of the war.

Alan completed a baking apprenticeship in Lilydale, then, in the 1930s, obtained work at Ted Matthews' Mt Evelyn bakery. Initially he rode a push bike from Lilydale twice a day, in the morning to make the dough and between 9pm and three or four in the morning to bake the bread.

At that time Mt Evelyn had very few shops. There was the bakehouse where Alan worked and Jim Lowe's fruit and vegetable shop on the corner of York and Silvan roads (Ted Gerlach took this over and added petrol to the store. Ultimately it became a garage.) There were only the Methodist, Presbyterian and Church of England churches, Alan attending the last. Alan was not too impressed with his customers at the bakery.

The tourists were all over the place Holiday-makers were a pest as far as I was concerned. I used to have to sleep on the flourbags in the bake house in those days because there was no (time). I didn't have time to go back to Lilydale to sleep. By the time you got home, you'd have to turn around and come back again. I would finish baking at about 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. Six o'clock the boss would come down and say, "Righto, Alan, time to get up and start some more baking Within half an hour of the train pulling into the station at night, you wouldn't see a soul and by 8 or 9 o'clock next morning the town would be full of these bloody tourists, walking around, buying bread, coming up and buying bread. The bread used to go down like that and you'd think ... Oh no!



The old bakery, now threatened with demolition.



Alan Reid in later life.

Another customer, the Nightman, was a 'real character' who would tell stories and was master at quick repartee when teased or denigrated about his job of collecting cans from outhouses and dumping them at the Bailey Road tip.

He'd go to the bakehouse. Mrs Matthews would cut sandwiches for him and he'd smell the place out for a few hours. Down by the dam he'd sit down and have his lunch. People went past holding their noses because of the stink. 'Stuck-up bastards', he'd say. 'I'm carrying around something they can't carry around.' Flies!!! You couldn't see the cart for flies. At other times he supplied wood for ten shillings a ton. He also carted flour for the bakehouse ... but he used a different cart.

Alan met his wife Dorothy Cornell at the picture theatre in Lilydale. He went with his mates and Dorothy went with her sisters and a couple of girlfriends. At the pictures twelve people sat on a form (bench). Alan and his mates arrived late one Saturday night and none of them wanted to sit next to Dorothy. 'So the buggers pushed me in!' Alan and Dorothy married at the Wandin Church of England (now on display at Mont de Lancey) on 18 July 1942, when Alan was 21 and Dorothy 19.

A female relation of estate agent Hughie Wray, known as 'The Mayor of Mt Evelyn' owned the house the young couple first rented in Mt Evelyn (near the York, Silvan Road corner.) At first Hughie would not agree to lease the property but Alan's boss, Mr Matthews, must

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have said something to him as, eventually, he agreed. 'There was an old hut nearby where an old chap lived and he urged us to buy the block next door. So we scraped the money together.'

Alan and Dorothy also grew their own vegetables and went fruit picking in summer for 'a few extra bob'. 'We'd buy a bag of spuds and that'd keep the kids going.' He was also given produce by customers.

On the bread cart, in the season, customers used to give you fruit and veggies and all that sort of thing. They'd keep you going. The Italians were the best of the lot. They'd fill up your basket. They'd say, 'If there's any strawberries or raspberries on the table, take them.' People would use the bread runs as a type of delivery service. For example, if they had a flat battery they'd get me to deliver it to the garage and then return it when it was recharged.

Before they purchased a car in 1949, Dorothy and Alan relied on bicycles, a good bus service, the train and occasionally the car of a friend. Using such transport they managed to fit in some leisure activities. Alan played cricket.

Teddy Matthews used to take a wooden box out of the back of the utility and load [the ute] up with kids ... put my wife and kids in the front and away we would go to all the cricket grounds in the area. We were premiers one year. Warby, Powelltown, Yarra Junction, Seville, Wandin were all as keen as mustard. It was real competition in those days.

Dorothy enjoyed dancing. They caught the bus to East Wandin and went dancing there a few times. Dances in the town (Mt Evelyn) were held 'to raise a few bob' and the music was 'old time'. On Saturday nights a bus went to the pictures in Lilydale. (Alec Turner's bus started to pick up passengers in Silvan.)

Most times you had to stand up in the bus because it would be chock-a-block full of



Above, the house Alan built at 9 Silvan Road.



Above, Dorothy and Alan Reid on their 60th Wedding Anniversary. Inset, the Anniversary cake.



people going to the pictures. ... It used to go that slow, coming up the hill from Lilydale, that a lot of stupid clowns used to get off and run along side of it, sit on the bonnet of the damn thing! They were the days.

Alan eventually gave up work at the bake-house due to asthma. He bought a tip-truck and went to work at the Upper Yarra Dam between 1951 and 1957. On Friday nights he came home and continued work clearing their fully-treed, quarter acre bush block.

The clearing had to be done if you wanted to build a house. You didn't want to be paying rent. ... Either Dorothy or I would clear around the trees and cut the roots. When I came home on Friday I would hook the truck onto the trees and pull them over and then I would ring bark them every six feet. Dorothy would saw the trees up with a cross saw during the week and on the weekends I would split them up for firewood.

Like many others in Mt Evelyn at the time, Alan and his wife built their own house with the help of family friends and a few hired tradesmen.

Arthur Sheather and his wife drew up the plans for what we wanted and helped with building. We hired Allan Black from Lilydale to put the roof on and do the plumbing. Jack and Beryl Taylor supplied the timber from their sawmill near the Mt Evelyn school. Dick Knowles built the chimney. Bricks were hard to get in those days. Old Dick said 'My son Alf's got some bricks over at Wonga Park, Alan. We'll get them'. So we went over in the truck and got the bricks and Dick did the chimney for us. My wife and young brother helped with the room lining and painting. Morrie Barnes was the electrician.

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Weddings at Coranderrk

Wedding ceremonies at Coranderrk Station were often reported in the local and Melbourne press. The wedding of William Barak and his second wife, Annie, was one of the earliest but the report was not published till the following year.

On the 25th February 1865, Mr Green reported that two marriages had been solemnised at Coranderrk, and that nearly one hundred blacks and forty whites were present at the ceremony. The conduct of the blacks was good; and it was apparent that they understood the nature and importance of the proceedings. The names of the persons who were married are—William Barak, of the Yarra Yarra tribe, to Annie, of the Lower Murray tribe; and Peter Werry, of the Avoca tribe, to Eliza, of Kilmore. Mr. Green insists on the proper performance of the marriage ceremony, and it is believed that the effect on the minds of the blacks is highly beneficial. They are made to understand that ... they are entitled to take part in those ceremonials which the blacks in other parts of the colony believe are reserved only for the whites. The Argus 14 June 1866, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/5765183>

Other weddings followed in the 1860s.

NATIVE MARRIAGE AT CORANDERRK. A very interesting event took place on Friday 26th ultimo, at Coranderrk, the aboriginal station. Two of the blacks were married by the Rev. Mr Hamilton, from Melbourne. Their names were Johnnie Ferguson and Caroline. They are very clever and intelligent. There was a great muster of blacks (104) on the occasion, and all were dressed in European clothing.

The bride is a handsome half-caste. She has mixed a good deal among the whites, and has learned good manners. She speaks English correctly and readily, and behaves herself as well as any Christian girl of a well-trained family. She was dressed in new apparel of her own making. The most of the boys were dressed in new check jumpers, which were made by the black girls on the station, and a number of the grown up women had on new dresses made by themselves. ...

After the marriage ceremony came a large quantity of plum cake, about 120 lb, which was cut up, a good deal of it piping hot, and distributed, along with a pannikin of tea, to each. ... A supply of fruit and colonial wine

had been kindly sent for the occasion by P. Castella Esq., Yarra Flat.

The names of the speakers were, Simon Wonga, Sammy Hobson, William Barak and Harry. These men were all hard drinkers at one time, and it is astonishing what a change is in them now. They never touch drink, and they have a new set of ideas altogether.

The speech of Simon, who is now well-known to the public, may be given as afterwards interpreted by himself: 'This the way always—meeting together—this what I want you for—to come down here This the way Mr. Green want all the people gather here from the bad place—bring you up here to this good place—this place a home—God give the blacks this place. ...' After the speaking was over Mr Green asked them to sing a few native songs. They did so with great spirit.

Some of the tunes were very pretty and put one in mind of some of the Hebrew melodies and choral chants, which many heard in the Jewish worship in Germany. This music is very simple; the words seem very few, only a few lines constantly repeated and sung with great rapidity, and at last (I suppose when they are tired) with abruptness. The music has a regular time, to which they seem inclined to beat either with hand or foot. The prettiest of the tunes consist of a choral fugue in two parts, which has very beautiful variations from the monotonous chant of many of them. Illustrated News for Home Readers 23/2/1866, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/63169477>

Another wedding ceremony was reported two years later.

WEDDING CEREMONY AT THE ABORIGINAL STATION, CORANDERRK. The officiating clergymen on the occasion were the Rev. Robert Hamilton, Napier-street church, Fitzroy; Rev. A. M. Ramsay, St. Enoch's, Collins-street; and the Rev. S. L. Chase, of St. Paul's. On arriving on the 8th inst. we found everything in course of preparation for the ceremony. ...

The marriage took place at about two o'clock, in the large room of the station, used for various purposes, as a school, a dining-place, and a church. This chamber, thirty by twenty-four feet, was quite full, partly with blacks and partly with visitors from neighboring homesteads. The brides and bridegrooms

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stood side by side at one end, while chairs and forms accommodated the visitors at the other. The Rev. Mr Hamilton performed the ceremony, assisted by the Rev. Mr Ramsay. Everything proceeded in the most quiet and orderly manner. ...

After the ceremony, the children sang several hymns and songs, concluding with the 'National Anthem', and I assure you that not in any school did I hear the music better rendered. The room was then cleared, and the tables laid with abundance of bridecake, tea and other pleasant things, of which all partook heartily.

It appears that this is the fourth time that the ceremony of marriage has been performed at Coranderrk. The first and second times, one couple only were married; the third time, two couples; and this last and fourth time, five couples [Some of the couples previously married had fled the station to escape an epidemic.]

After the marriage, in the evening, some speeches were made by the blacks, and several native songs were sung. Simon, the chief of the Yarra tribe, spoke impressively in the native tongue Another spoke in English, and in short emphatic sentences told how much he was pleased with what had taken place, and how much he regretted that those who had been married before in the same place had gone away.

The evening was spent pleasantly and harmoniously with other speeches and songs, and concluded as usual with prayer and a hymn, all the blacks shaking hands with all the whites present. ... Illustrated News for Home Readers 25 April 1868, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/60449278>

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Continued next month

A lot of nationalities came to live in Mt Evelyn (during the building of the Silvan Dam, then later in post WWII migration). At one time it was believed more people lived in Mt Evelyn than Lilydale. There were the Dutch and the Italians. 'The Italians would have hundreds of people helping them build a house. They would kill a pig and cut it up. They made their own grappa, getting boxes of grapes from the Victoria market.' Dorothy and Alan had four children, Sandra, Fred, Cheryl and Maurice. When interviewed in 1993, he and his wife were continuing to

enjoy family holidays at Bundalong, near Yarrowonga, constantly interrupted by the need to return home for family celebrations. 'We live for our kids, don't we Mother. Like homing pigeons they are I don't regret life. I've had a pretty good time. If I hadn't met my wife, I don't know what I'd have been I don't regret coming to Mt Evelyn. We've had a good life here.' **Interview by Janice Newton**

No space too small ...



No space is too small for a garden. Above, Sam's Bollard Garden, Red Robin Milk Bar, Hereford Road. Photo Kevin Phillips, 7 November 2014.

From Kev's rain gauge

Rainfall for November 2014 for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, Melbourne and Melbourne average.*

Mt Ev	McK	Melb	Melb Av
91.6mm	76.85mm	65.4mm	60.5mm

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

Kevin Phillips

Contact us

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