

HERITAGE FAMILY DAY THRU THE LENS



Traditional games



Giant bubbles



Chinese calligraphy



Our furry friends



Brumbies



Cakes to procure

**NEXT
MEETING:**

Saturday, 8 October 2022 1.00pm General Meeting

Rosalie Whalen

Our Favorite Germans (and how they got here)



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Members

AFTER three years' break we achieved a very successful Heritage Family Day with a record of at least 1,600 visitors – despite cool weather. The rain held off until we were departing.

Kathy, as co-ordinator, did a magnificent job, as did Harley and all our volunteers on the day. We were very lucky to have the assistance of Sasha from the Victorian Square Dancing Association, who organised and delivered marquees for us.

Our Whitehorse Community Grant application included provision for marquees, given the Covid safety concerns; however our amount was reduced and only covered the paid activities.

We are grateful to the Forest Hill and Mitcham Rotary Clubs for the Sausage Sizzle and for donating the proceeds to our Society. We sold out of sausages and had to buy some more – and sold out of them too!

Our Devonshire tea was a great success, as was the cake stall, where we sold out of scones and all cakes too. And the Vivere Coffee Cart was also popular.

Julie Jones headed up the Council staff on her last Heritage Family Day. Rather than fund an activity this year, Council provided additional staff for parking in addition to Museum Attendants, and for Cottage Tours. Julie is retiring on 28 October after 30 years working as Heritage Programs Officer for Whitehorse Council. We wish her well in her retirement.

All paid entertainers and the volunteer activities were enthusiastically received. Animal Farm, Giant Bubbles, Brumbies Bush Band, Koorng Woodturners, Lace makers, Spinners & Weavers, Basketmakers, Chinese Brush Painting, Square Dancing, Veteran Drivers Car Club, Box Hill Community Arts Centre and Whitehorse Manningham Libraries.

After our Annual General Meeting we have lodged our new Rules with Consumer Affairs Victoria and applied for Charity status with Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission.

Vicki Jones Evans



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Schooling and plum jam

AT our recent AGM we enjoyed a treat – a talk, artfully titled “Blackburn Open Air School (or how I learned to hate plum jam)”, given by Helen Harris OAM about her schooldays at the Blackburn Open Air School.

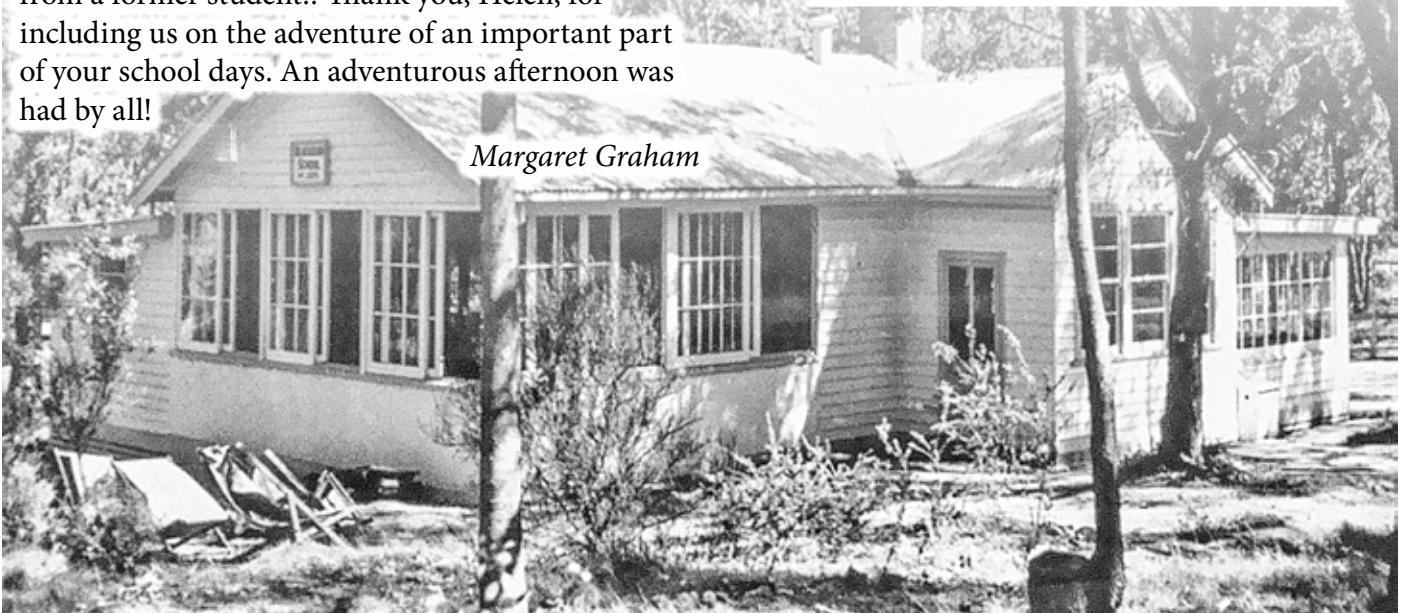
In Europe at the time, inner city children were seen to be disadvantaged by industrial development, pollution and the aftermath of war, so ‘rural’ schools were established to help these little ones back to healthy living.

Helen herself was an inner-city child, and the Victorian Education Department of the day had decided some such pupils could benefit from the semi-rural atmosphere, air, and delights of school days in country Blackburn. Hence, Helen and some of her classmates journeyed each day from Richmond to their ‘other’ school amongst the gum trees and magpies!

We can only imagine the wonder of these small children in this new world – Helen helped us share her delight in outdoor lessons, good (and not so good) food and the giggles of compulsory afternoon ‘rests.’

Sadly, there is little official written history of the Blackburn Open Air School in Victorian Education Department records – so what a treat for us to have had such a graphic and amusing eyewitness account from a former student!! Thank you, Helen, for including us on the adventure of an important part of your school days. An adventurous afternoon was had by all!

Margaret Graham



THREE SCORE YEARS AND ONE: FACTS AND FABLES OF MITCHAM AND DISTRICT Part 2

From the *Local Advertiser* 31 January 1961

LAST December's first instalment of *Facts and Fables of Mitcham* created great interest and this issue we publish the second of the series.

Trees, trees everywhere, a dusty road, and a very occasional horse-drawn vehicle. The summer heat had dried out the grass until it had become coarse and raspy.

In the 1900s a day such as this was a worry to all inhabitants. The water was not laid on. This did not happen until 1913, and the thought of fire was a worry to all. In 1903 a bushfire swept from Whitehorse road to Vermont, and the memory was still vivid.

One man was more worried than most. He had reason. Beckett was a large landholder, and employed many men to care for his land. Each summer a fire destroyed acres of Beckett's land and there was reason to believe they were set fires. Someone with a grudge.

A woodcutter was always complaining and arguing with Beckett, and year after year a fire would break out on land close to the woodcutter's camp.

"I can't stand the worry," said Beckett to his friends. "It's costing me hundreds each year. I know who it is, but I can't prove it."

One spring, Beckett built a house on an acre or so of land right in Mitcham.

"What would you be wanting with another house?" said the oldest of his friends. Houses were far and few between, and the building of the house caused much speculation.

"It isn't for me," said Beckett.

"Well, who's it for?" they all asked.

"My woodcutter," he replied.

"Your woodcutter?" they all exclaimed in astonishment. "Why, you are always arguing, and certainly could not be called friends. It will cost you a packet of money."

"We'll see," said Beckett. "I think it will be saving me more than it costs."

(continued on page 6)



Robert Beckett
(above)
and the woodcutter

Schwerkolt Cottage's stories & hidden treasures

Come and join us on Thursday 20 October 2022 to hear some Schwerkolt family stories from August Schwerkolt's Great Granddaughter, Rosalie Whalen.

You will also hear how the Cottage was saved, restored and furnished, together interesting facts and stories about the outbuildings and Cellar.

Where: Visitor Centre, Schwerkolt Cottage & Museum Complex

When: 2pm – 4pm Thursday, 20 October 2022

Cost: Gold Coin Donation

Bookings Essential: Phone or text 0409 230 058

Email: whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com

Enquiries: Kathy: 0409 230 058 Local History Room (Wednesday) 9873 4946

2022 Whitehorse Seniors Festival Event

FIRST PRIZE FOR UGLINESS

By a Naturalist.

Of all the ugly creatures found in the sea, the octopus must surely take first prize. Its appearance strikes terror into the minds of bathers, but it is only in looks that it is so offensive. It is harmless, and never has been capable of killing and devouring men, as is described by Victor Hugo.

It belongs to that class of animals known as the mollusca, in which we find snails, oysters and other shell-fish. Its food consists entirely of members of its own class, for, although some writers have stated that it feeds on fish, those who have made a study of this strange creature find that it feeds only on crabs, lobsters, oysters and other shell-fish.

A well-grown octopus is about six feet in length from the tip of one tentacle to another. It has eight arms or tentacles, and these take up most of its length. The body is in the centre when the creature is at rest, but when swimming the long trailers fall behind, and it travels head first. The body would be about the size of a coconut, and in it there are no bones. The eyes appear like oval slits of bright yellow, with black pupils. On the underside of the head is a beak, very much like that of a parrot. It is not easy to describe its color, for it is one of the smartest quick-change artists. For a few seconds it may be grey while standing in front of a grey rock, then as it moved against a background of brown sea-weed, the body becomes brown to match. If it travels over a chequered sea bottom, parts of the body take up colors to correspond with those over which it is moving. Besides this faculty, its skin changes from a smooth surface to rough ridges half an inch in depth. The octopus is a master of camouflage, and seems capable of reasoning.

On one occasion in an aquarium a fish was offered to an octopus. It swam backwards and forwards before the creature's lair, and for a time no notice was taken of it, but suddenly two long tentacles shot out, the fish was captured and held by those, and in a flash was torn in two. The octopus placed the two portions at a suitable distance on the sand in front of his retreat, then retired and waited patiently. Crabs and lobsters feed on dead fish, and it seemed as though the octopus had placed bait outside his lair.

When a crab or lobster is captured, the octopus holds it in its arms, then pulls it apart joint by joint, and with the tips of its tentacles picks out the portions of flesh, to pass these to its mouth. The shell is never broken or crushed in any way, even the fine, almost transparent shell on the inside of the hard case is unbroken, but every particle of flesh inside is neatly cleaned up.

CHARLIE CHAN DIES.

Charlie Chan, the Chinese Sherlock Holmes, whom the writer, Earl Derr Biggers, put into novels, plays and films, died recently.

Thirty-five years ago he was secret agent for the United States authorities in Honolulu, and was engaged to track down drug traffic. He huddled with opium smokers and gave away their secrets. The island was cleaned up. Chan was knifed, beaten, and left for dead on the beach. He was of medium height, and was rather fat and stocky. An expert swimmer, he spent more time in the water than on land. He used chop-sticks. Although he could speak English perfectly, he preferred to affect more picturesque pidgin English. He wore a linen coat and trousers, and a silk open-necked shirt. When not sleuthing, spying, or swimming, he liked to show visitors around the island or to play a quiet game of chess.

SUSTENANCE LABOUR.

COST TO THE SHIRE.

For the twelve months ended September 30, 1934, the total amount paid in wages out of the sustenance funds in the Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham was £7040, and the cost to the council for material, cartage, foremen, tools, etc., was £540, or about 7.7 per cent. of the work for sustenance expenditure.

The works carried out by sustenance labour included the removal of overburden and opening up of the quarry site in Quarry road, Mitcham; cutting of water tables and framing up of footpaths on public roads; cleaning up of the Recreation Reserves at Blackburn, Tunstall and Mitcham; improvements to grounds of municipal chambers and depot; cleaning up of school grounds at the various State schools throughout the municipality and the unloading of firewood from railway trucks for distribution to the unemployed.

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BOX HILL BAND.

The Box Hill Band, a valuable local institution, finds it extremely difficult to continue, owing to lack of funds, to afford as it has done for many years pleasure to the public by its music and help to the many good causes in this district. Effort is now being made to raise sufficient funds to enable the band to continue as an active asset in our district. It would be a great loss and misfortune if it is allowed, through lack of funds, to disband. While this local effort is being made to raise funds for our local band, we are advised that collectors on behalf of a band of another suburb are invading the Box Hill territory and collecting funds. Residents are strongly advised to refuse to contribute to any outside band, but on the contrary to support the local band and ensure its continuance as one of the most pleasure giving and useful bodies in our midst.

PERSONAL.

—:—

Mr. C. A. Macan, the popular teller of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Ltd., Box Hill, was transferred this week as manager to the Moonee Ponds branch. His position on the Box Hill staff has been taken by Mr. Thomas.

Mr. H. M. Lanyon, of Harrow street, Box Hill, head teacher of the Mitcham State School, who last week underwent an operation is now making good progress back to health.

Miss Jean Wilson, of Barkly street, Box Hill, has returned from a visit to Sydney and Brisbane.

Mr. T. Young, of Cambridge street, Box Hill, returned this week after an enjoyable fortnight's holiday in Sydney.

The health of Mr. Ted Hogan, senr., proprietor of a hairdressing and billiard saloon at Mitcham, is causing his family and many friends the very gravest concern. He is critically ill.

LOST.

BROWN Fur Necklet, Sunday, in Barloa road or neighbourhood. Reward on return to 9 Barloa road, Mont Albert.

LOST between Canterbury road and Blackburn station, Lady's Grey Woollen Cardigan. Apply Lowe's Agency, Blackburn, WX1101.

More Uxbridge Dictionary *(From Richard Conn)*

The BBC radio program, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue* has a segment called "The Uxbridge Dictionary" which records new meanings for old words. In February we printed some examples from it; here is a further list for your delectation and edification:

Zulu	A toilet at an animal park
Transvestite	Borrowing an undergarment only to find it doesn't fit
Gear	An alcoholic drink for ventriloquists
Extractor Fan	Ex lover of agricultural equipment
Mambo	Female version of Rambo
Gladiator	An unrepentant cannibal
Palisade	Financial assistance for the upkeep of the Royal Family's home
Windlass	A young lady with flatulence
Placebo	The Marx Brother fired because people only thought he was funny
Mer carp	A very happy fish
Appearing	A circle of peas
Piano	A musical shipping line
Miasma	The reason I carry my inhaler
Extent	Formerly a canvas home
Romantic	An Italian flea
Antidote	An amusing story that ants tell at social gatherings

THREE SCORE YEARS AND ONE: FACTS AND FABLES OF MITCHAM AND DISTRICT Part 2 *(continued from page 4)*

BELOW: Lou Barelli circa 1917.



He may have been right. The woodcutter moved into the new house at the end of spring and that year, by a coincidence probably, there was no fire on Beckett's property. By an even further coincidence there were never any other fires on the property. Still, nothing could be proved one way or the other.

Mitcham could not boast a butcher's shop. Many of the residents relied on salted mutton, and others would buy when the opportunity arose. The Barellis established a butcher shop, and this was a great help to the township as well as local housewives. Perhaps the Barellis bought some of their meat from a wholesale butcher who grazed his herd on the 300 acres constituting much of what is now Heatherdale. This wholesale butcher, with his hundreds of head of cattle, had property on both sides of the railway line, and with ingenuity overcame the

problem of crossing the line.

In 1915 he built a bridge over the railway line at the top end of Purches Street. Once over the line, this becomes Witt street. So, 45 years ago Mitcham could boast an overpass. Admittedly it was made of wood, was only six feet wide, and when it started to fall down the Railways made him remove it. But it was an overpass. To this day the earth approaches can still be seen. The butcher's name was Mr. Purches, and he lived in a house on the corner of Heatherdale road and Whitehorse road close to the old stock route of Heatherdale road.

His many horses were shod at a blacksmith which was at the corner of Rooks Road and Whitehorse Road; a busy man in the days of the horse-drawn vehicles.

Denise Moorhouse, 1961.

DIARY DATES*

Meetings are held at the Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex

Saturday, 8 October
1.00pm General Meeting

Rosalie Whalen – Our Favorite Germans (and how they got here)

Thursday 20 October
2–4pm

Schwerkolt Cottage's Stories & Hidden Treasures

Saturday, 10 December
1.00pm General Meeting
Corranderrk – Dr Gary Presland

2022 WORKING BEES*

Please make a diary note and join us on the day.
Working Bees commence at 9.30am and finish around 12 noon with morning tea.

Saturday 5 November

Please come and help even if you can only offer an hour of your time.

***All dates subject to Covid-safe conditions**

STATISTICS

Photographs catalogued	-	4488
Artefacts catalogued	-	5100
Documents catalogued	-	7883
Museum visitors July–August		561



Facebook Page 'likes' to date

1165

Is this where you live?

Original street names to present day (Part One)

Boundary Road, Vermont South,
renamed Highbury Road.

Delaney's Road, Blackburn Nunawading/ Forest Hill,
renamed Canterbury Road, after Viscount Canterbury.

Central Avenue, Mitcham,
renamed Cochrane Street, after Dr Stanley Cochrane.

Simla Ave, Nunawading,
renamed Ceylon Street.

Colbar St, Nunawading,
(after Colin & Barbara Savage) Renamed Efron St.

Lake Road, Blackburn,
North-south road renamed Forest Road, as it intersected with the east-west Lake Road.

Gardiner Street, Blackburn,
Name changed to Banksia Street in 1956–8.

God Governs', Mitcham,
named by owners, refused by Council, became Good Governs Street.

Vine Street or Poplar Street Blackburn,
Changed by Shire Council to Hartigan St in 1932.

Langford Avenue, Mitcham,
Now Delaware Ave.

Laurel Street or Lilac Street, Blackburn.
Changed by Shire Council to Lawson Street, after Councillor Lawson, in 1932.

McGhees Road, Mitcham/Vermont,
Now Mitcham Road.

Railway Road, Vermont,
Now Morack Road.

Musk Street, Blackburn,
Changed by Shire Council to Myrtle Street in 1932.

Yvonne Fitzmaurice

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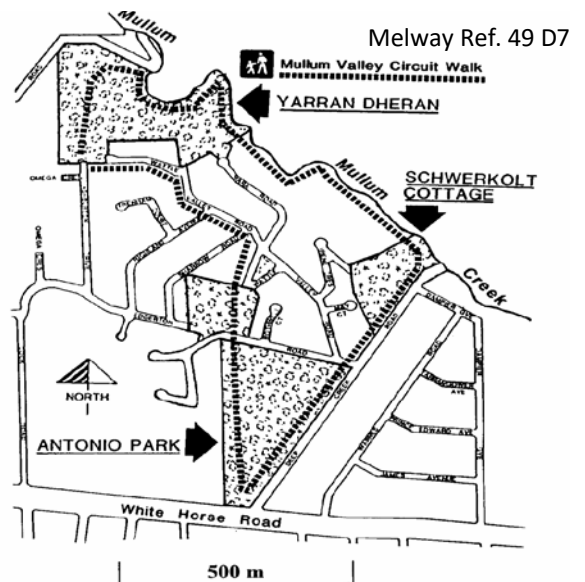
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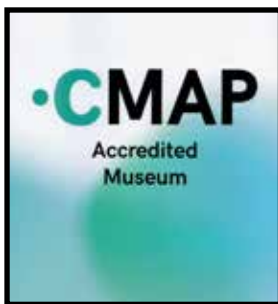
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Copy Deadline for next WHS Newsletter: Wednesday, 9 November 2022



The Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.

Mission Statement & Acknowledgement of Country

"The purpose of the Society is to foster historical interest and knowledge. To collect, document, research, preserve and exhibit items that show how people have lived and worked in the City of Whitehorse area."

"In the spirit of reconciliation, Whitehorse Historical Society Inc. acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners of the land now known as the City of Whitehorse, and pays respect to its elders past, present and emerging."

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Whitehorse Historical Society Local History Collection

Open 10.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. Wednesdays.
Visitors welcome.

Ring 9873 4946 for an appointment at other times.

**Box Hill Cemetery Records &
Nunawading Gazette for 1964-1974**
available on microfiche for research.

**The Whitehorse
Historical Society, Inc.
acknowledges the
support of the
City of Whitehorse.**



THE WHITEHORSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER IS PRINTED THROUGH THE COURTESY OF MICHAEL SUKKAR MP, FEDERAL MEMBER FOR DEAKIN

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