



NEWSLETTER

Series 31 No. 5

September–October 2023

ABN 44 352 041 634 Inc. AO 012235J

Heritage Family Day through the lens



**NEXT
MEETING:**

Saturday, 7 October 1.00pm General Meeting
Brian Millane – A History of Mitcham Post Office



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Members,

WITH the help of many members we had a very successful Heritage Family Day. Although the weather could have been nicer, it was at least rain free and not cold. Special thanks are due to Kathy and Harley for their planning and hard work as well as Judy and her family in the kitchen and all our helpers on the day. We are very grateful for the Community groups that attend and support the day: Forest Hill Rotary, Whitehorse Rotaract, Blackburn Lions, Woodturners, Blacksmith, Spinners and Weavers, Lacemakers, Chinese Brush Painting, Square Dancers, Lapidary Club and the Box Hill Community Arts Centre. Our paid entertainers Brumbies Bush Band, the animal farm, bubbles entertainer, magician and children's storyteller were all very popular. The coffee cart, Vivere, was appreciated by us and the visitors.

We have been shortlisted to the final four in the Volunteer-run Project of the Year category of the Victorian Museums and Galleries Awards for our Visitor Centre Panels "From Then until Now, Exploring the Stories from the Whitehorse Area". The winner will be announced at the Awards Night on Tuesday 10 October.

We have loaned two items from our Collection for display in the entrance foyer of Maroondah Council Realm ArtSpace in Eastland Shopping Centre. It is for a theatre production with video presentations called *The Hidden Orchard*, about the orcharding history in Maroondah. Sharyn Mullens who is producing *The Hidden Orchard* is the granddaughter of Roy Mullens, whose orchard was in East Burwood. It is his apron that will be on display along with a fruit pickers' bag from the Morrison Bros. Orchard, which was in Doncaster. Performances, which run from Friday October 13, are available for booking on Trybooking.

From the 27 September to the 31 October we will have a display in the Nunawading Library. We will have four cases featuring toys from our Collection.

We have our new Post Office Box (2092) at Rangeview postal agency. And of course at our October meeting you will be able to hear the family history of the Mitcham post office (which is empty and has a For Lease sign on it) by Society member Brian Millane.

Vicki Jones-Evans



Mitcham Post Office, displaying its "For Lease" sign.

CONTENTS

President's Report	2
August Meeting Report	3
From the Collection: What is this Pt 2	4
From <i>The Reporter</i> , 1902	5

Page 2

The Denise Moorhouse articles Part 6	6
The Morning & Evening Angels	7
Drake Real Estate Addenda	8
Is This Where You Live?	9
Diary Dates	9

Whitehorse Historical Society Newsletter

AUGUST MEETING REPORT



THIS meeting's speaker was Gerry Robinson, who gave a fascinating – and well-received – talk about the history of Heathmont. He covered many aspects: geological, climactic, biological, geographical and human.

“On a south–north perspective there are the hills of Heathmont, the more level areas of Ringwood, then the hills of North Ringwood and Loughnans. West to east is the Mitcham ridge then down to Heatherdale and up to the Wicklow Ridge – and the ‘mont’,” said Gerry. “This geology is fundamental to an understanding of Heathmont’s history, for it affects all else – climate, biology and geography”.

He went on to describe how the prevailing climate dictated what would become the economic backbone of the area, supporting the orchards that proliferated in the late 19th and early 20th century. It also had great meaning for the indigenous First Peoples, who successfully interacted with the native flora and fauna. This is the human history of Heathmont, (“Indeed,” says Gerry, “in a literal – and fairly pointless — sense, there was no “Heathmont” until humans christened it so in 1923!”).

So Heathmont, and its 100-year anniversary, began then. Eventually the orchards were replaced by Heathmont the suburb, which Gerry suggests be defined in three “sections”: Community 1940s–1960s, Comfortable 1960s –1990s, and Challenging in recent years from 1990.

In the first two decades of the young suburb, shops, churches, schools, families, doctors, roads and houses were established. By the 1960s, now established, Heathmont was settling into its place as a middle class suburb.

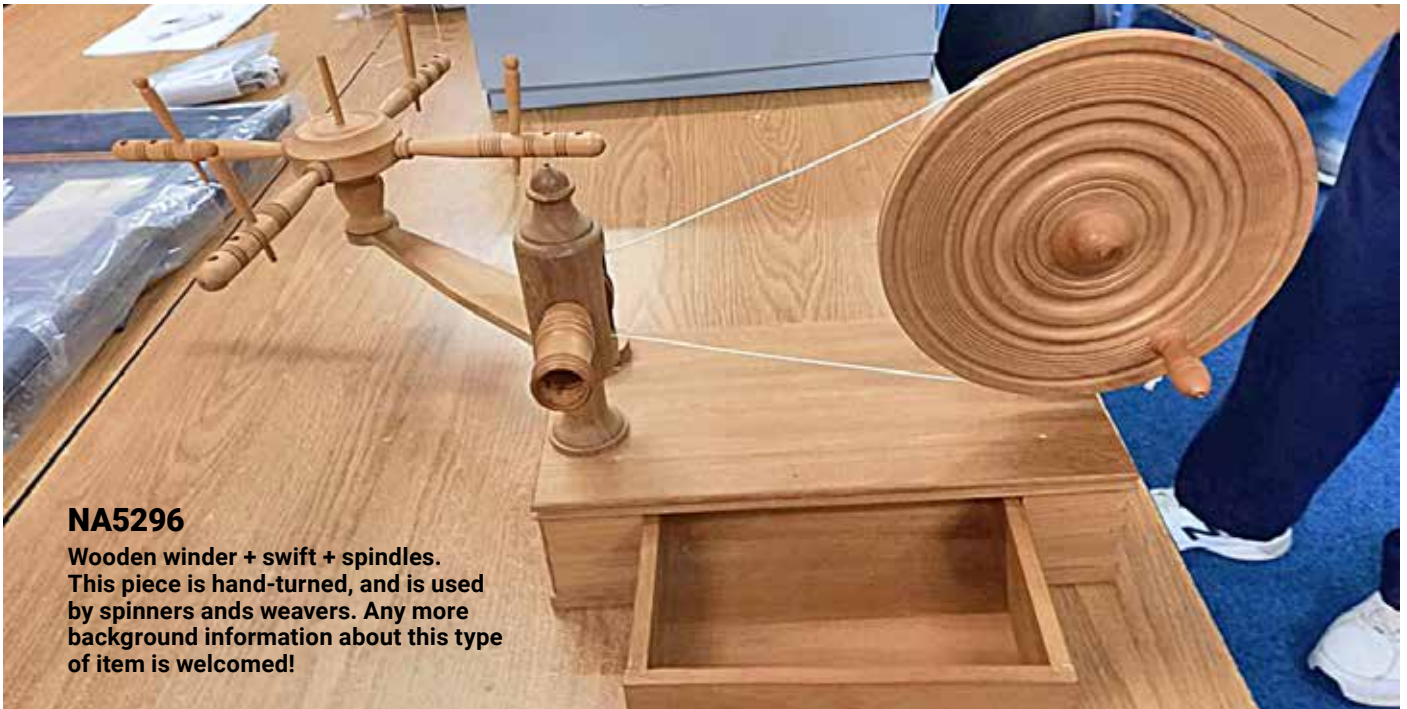
The last 30 years he defined as “Challenging”, as the gradual closure of services and evolution of society and technology meant that Heathmont underwent a transformation, reflecting these changes. “On a community level,” he said, “an increasing number of residents do not know their neighbours, and with online shopping and the remote opening the garages of units and town houses, do not even see their neighbours!”. Herein, he proposed, was the “Challenge”.

Gerry finished by looking at Heathmont’s possible future. “It is hard to be positive – but perhaps harder to be negative!” he said. “Perhaps the movement to retain the station’s village green, the greater awareness of our many Reserves, and the Heathmont Hundred celebrations will be forces which encourage Community to prosper and prevail”.



PICTURES: (from top) Heathmont Village c1970; Heathmont Village now; An appreciative audience held captive by Gerry's address.

What is this? (Number 2)



NA5296

Wooden winder + swift + spindles.
This piece is hand-turned, and is used by spinners and weavers. Any more background information about this type of item is welcomed!

FOR some time the package had sat on top of the filing cabinet in the Local History Room. One of those “must get round to it” bundles that present either a challenge, a choice or a conundrum to cataloguers.

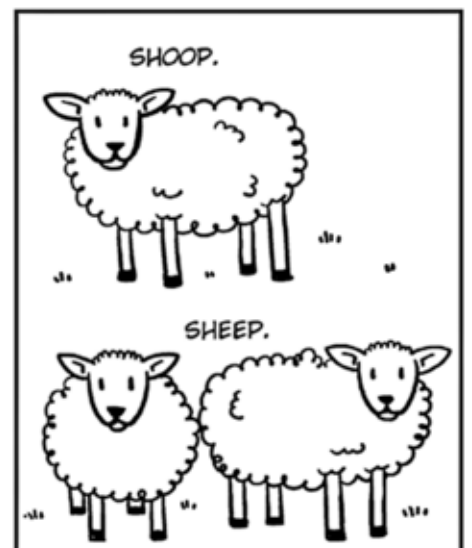
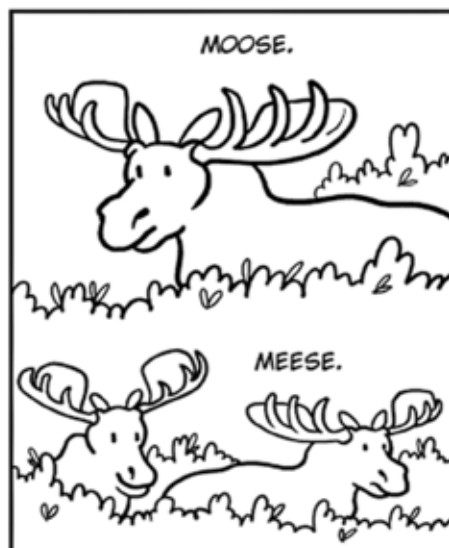
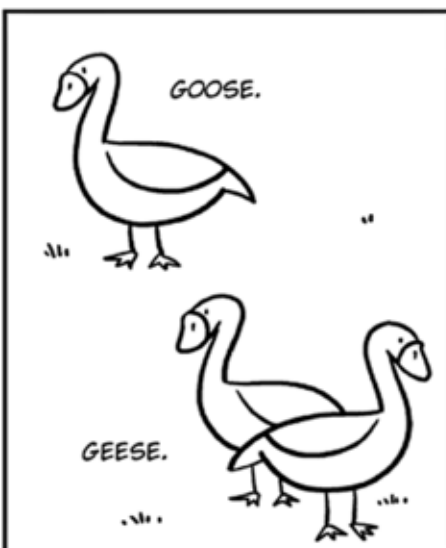
Off the high shelf, unwrapped and down on the table, I was given the job of describing what it was, cataloguing it, then giving it the opportunity to be taken into our collection as the deserving object it was.

Wooden, handsomely made, finely finished from a beautiful timber and obviously a functional object with lots of components – if you knew how it went together.

For me, this is where the fun begins. While I know a little bit about spinning and weaving, my knowledge is minimal. We consulted the internet and a group of our Wednesday Working Group volunteers gathered around attempting to piece it together and see if we could get it to work – all seven mysterious components!

Did we get it right? Can you see how it works? We have identified the two major components as a Yarn Winder and Swift, possibly of Amish design. We welcome any further information and identification to incorporate into our cataloguing of the object/s.

A Cataloguer



FROM THE REPORTER.

CIRCULATING IN BOX HILL, SURREY HILLS, CANTERBURY, BALWYN, CAMBERWELL, DONCASTER, BURWOOD, BLACKBURN, MITCHAM AND RINGWOOD
FERN TREE GULLY, BAYSWATER, CROYDON, MOOROOLBARK, VERMONT, EMERALD, SCORESBY, SASSAFRAS, TALLY HO, BLACK FLAT, &c.

VOL. XIV. NO 9

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1 1902

ONE PENNY.

The Victorian general election, which eventuates to-day, is really the first skirmish in what will be a long and probably bitter fight. To those who can read between the lines, and who can gauge the value of the names behind the movement, the Irvine "reform" platform is merely one step in a clearly-defined, well-arranged conspiracy to bear down wages, to undo existing labor legislation, and to solidify the position of the utterly nefarious house of landlords. Backed by the hard, unscrupulous lying of the Melbourne—and most of the country—press, and by the more insidious methods of suppress, the Victorian Tory party has already got rid of the hated factories act, that is, if the electors allow themselves to be dragged into it, in a fair way to get a reduced parliament with abnormal country representation, in which the unprogressive squatter will run the show. Public service reduction is one detail, the further cutting down of the starved education system (on which Robert Reid had already begun to try his hand) is another. And to carry out this programme the electors have been shamelessly bamboozled. Premier Irvine promises a resuscitated factories act, constitutional reform and a double dissolution with a parliament elected on the new basis, all inside twelve months. So a semi-sober individual promises to eat his hat, or a small boy bets a thousand pounds. Irvine is really a marionette in the hands of those behind the Kyabram ghost. This much for the honesty of Irvine's intentions re the factories act; Cameron, Shiels and the unspeakable Bent have sat as a committee to choose the government candidate in each electorate, and they have invariably chosen the nominee of the citizens' reform league—and the nominee of the citizens' reform league, in practically every instance, was, till just now, a savage opponent of the factories act and to every kind of progressive legislation. Nearly a hundred sudden and temporary converts are to follow Irvine in his campaign, Irvine himself being the suddenest and most temporary convert of the crowd, and Bent hardly pretended to be even that. And, on the other side, Peacock, who ought to be leading the liberal party, has apparently lost his head, and is laughing incoherently in odd corners of the state; and the labor party is the only real force left to oppose Kyabram and Co. The one thing that any good Victorian can do now is to avoid the "Age" candidate, and the "Argus" candidate, and the Irvine candidate as much as possible; to vote the labor ticket where there is one; to vote the Peacock ticket where there is one, and where there is no direct labor candidate to do whatever he can to unite the scattered forces of democracy; and to swear off the Kyabram conspiracy and all its works.—"Bulletin."

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1902 OCTOBER 1902						
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SHIRE OF NUNAWADING.

NOTICE is hereby given that the Council of the Shire of Nunawading, in pursuance of the powers conferred by the Local Government Acts 1890 and 1891, did, at a meeting held on Monday, the 15th September, 1902, whereof special notice had been given, make a Special Order, making and levying a SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT RATE on the rateable Properties comprised in the schemes adopted of the apportionment of the estimated cost of construction o

1. Stanhope street, Mont Albert
2. Salisbury street, Mont Albert
3. Churchill street, Mont Albert, from Hamilton street to a point in a line with the eastern boundary of allotment No 36 on the plan of subdivision of Phoenix Park estate
4. Louise Avenue, Mont Albert
5. Pembroke street, Surrey Hills
6. Broughton road, Surrey Hills, from Canterbury road to the southern side of Edyvean street
7. Edyvean street, Surrey Hills
8. Drewett street, Surrey Hills, from the southern side of Edyvean street to the northern side of Erasmus street
9. Erasmus street, Surrey Hills from Drewett street to Pembroke street.
10. Ellingworth Parade Box Hill.
11. Nelson street Box Hill, from White Horse road to Albert road.
12. Wellington road Box Hill.
13. Albert road Box Hill, from Elgar road to Nelson road.
14. Thames street Box Hill from Watts street to Station street.

Such rate to be levied rateably on such properties in proportion to the amount of the estimated cost apportioned to them in such schemes, and to be payable by half yearly moieties on the 1st day of January and the 1st day of July in each year, commencing on the first day of January 1903 and continuing until all the purposes for which the said rate are applicable shall have been discharged.

And it is further notified that at a meeting to be held at the Shire Hall, Box Hill, on MONDAY, the 27th day of October, 1902, at 7 o'clock p.m., the Council will confirm the resolution making the said Special Order.

A copy of the said resolution is deposited at the Shire Hall, Box Hill, and is open for inspection during business hours.

JOHN R. KEFFORD,
Shire Secretary.

Recent Patents.

Messrs Hedges and Co., patent and trade mark agents, Equitable building, Collins street, Melbourne, have supplied us with the following list of patent applications which have been filed recently in Victoria by various agents:—

A spring bolt and indicator for doors—H. Ward, "Baroona," Camberwell road, Camberwell.

A shield for the soles of boots and shoes.—William Walkerden, Hickford street, Brunswick.

Improvements in fire escapes—W. H. Keon, 37 Cargill street, Dunedin, New Zealand.

An improved marine screw propeller—E. Conroy, Ballina, on the Richmond river, New South Wales.

A baby's cot for attachment to sides of bedsteads—J. S. Buckler, 21 St. James street, Essendon.

A toy goal-kicker for playing table football—J. Gillett, Grand View Terrace, Moonee Ponds, and G. Coghill, 80 Swanston street, Melbourne.

W. CLARINGBOLD,

(Late of Williamstown),

Pastrycook & Confectioner,

Having opened a Pastrycook's Shop in STATION STREET, BOX HILL, Nearly opposite E., S. and A. Bank) Begs to solicit the patronage of the Residents of Box Hill and surrounding districts.

Catering for Balls, Parties and Picnics. A Speciality

Hot Pies, Tea and Coffee Always Ready.

A trial respectfully solicited.

DONCASTER & BOX HILL SHOW.

COTTAGE GARDEN COMPETITION.

Prizes of £2 2/ and £1 1/ are offered by the Doncaster and Box Hill Show Committee for Best-kept Cottage Garden of not more than 1 acre in extent, and situated within the Shires of Doncaster or Nunawading, or within two and a half miles of the Box Hill railway station. Open to amateurs only, no professional assistance allowed. Entry fee 2/6. Entries close OCTOBER 7, 1902. For further particulars apply to the hon. sec. E. F. G. HODGES, "Reporter" office, Box Hill.

Bushell's 1/3 Tea

THREE SCORE YEARS AND TWO

(The Denise Moorhouse articles)

FACTS AND FABLES OF MITCHAM AND DISTRICT

THE LOCAL ADVERTISER, WEDNESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 1962

Harry Alderton and the Tesselated Tiles



SIXTY-TWO years of service with the one firm . . . One hundred working hours in a week . . . 15/- per week . . . romance . . . marriage . . . no time for sport or recreation.

These are some of the main factors in this week's story of "Three Score Years and Two."

The Australian Tesselated Tile Company was founded in 1886, and made agricultural pipes, paving tiles and drain pipes. During its life it has turned to many alternatives, from classical glazed urns to roofing tiles and bricks, but the cycle seems to be complete, and the company is now back to pipes and tiles as the major products.

In 1900 a Mr Harry Alderton joined the company as a labourer in the clay pits. Part of the agreement to take him on was his being able to supply his own shovel.

From this very minor position and a wage of 15/- a week he worked his way with skill and energy to a unique position in any organisation. When Mr Walker died (the owner and intelligence of the works), his will stipulated that Mr Alderton was to be retained for life. Under no circumstances was he to be "laid off".

Skill, energy and enthusiasm was necessary to achieve the importance of Harry Alderton. Enthusiasm was required to supervise the 100-hour shifts. For 100 hours he would watch the fires, to ensure that the fires were kept at the correct temperatures. During these hours he would not leave the works, and he would not sleep. Skill, to brick the kilns after the tiles had been stacked high in the chimneys and guarantee a maintained temperature. Energy, to shovel the coal for hours on end into one fire after another.

Mr Walker, owner, decided to build a house: not just any old house, but a house with special features. The most special of all to be the keystone arch over the vestibule to his home. This was to be made of 28 blocks approximately two foot by six inches by one foot in size. The

blocks were to have a tessellated tile unglazed finish. To obtain this finish and the exact shade of colour stipulated, Harry worked four days and nights without sleep. Each block weighed 250 pounds.

This house, in Meerut street, Mitcham, is now owned by the present Mayor of Nunawading City, Cr D. Barelli. Tiled open court and glaze tiled portico are other features serving as a reminder of past days.

In 1900 over 100 employees hurried into the yards as the steam whistle blew at 7:30. There was a 45 minute break for lunch, and then at 5pm they streamed home. Work went on each day, Saturday and Sunday included. Wages were low, 15/- a week; but then agricultural pipes cost only 2 pence each.

PICTURES:

NP1530 Presentation of a silver medal by Mr. Don Walker to Mr. Harry Alderton for 50 years service to Australian Tesselated Tile Company. Mrs Alderton is also in the picture; NP3325 E.E. Walker's grandchildren in front of his house at 8 Meerut Street Mitcham in 1923.



Clay was dug from the plant's own pits (approximately 18 acres are still available) and, after shaping, was fired in one of the 21 kilns.

Once the pipes or roofing tiles were put into the kilns the opening was bricked up, and in the outer chimney up to nine fires were stoked and kept burning for the length of times and at exact temperatures necessary for the individual contents of any one kiln. Pipes needed a lower temperature than, say, salt glazed terracotta. Some fires were kept at the correct temperatures for seven days. The fires were then blocked and left slowly to cool. Oil burners now take the place of coal. Bricks were 2 pounds 10 shillings a thousand, and, considering the wages paid today, the increase in today's price is not out of proportion at all and can be considered most fair.

The company used its own clay for all work except the "biscuit" tile (highly glazed wall tiles). The clay for these came from England.

Today, trucks are used to transport the finished article, but in earlier years train vans pulled into the yards carrying the tons of coal used in the furnaces, and being back-loaded with hundreds of pipes.

It is to be lamented that the company's venture into the classical urns and bird baths was not successful, because the dark grey, well glazed urns of approximately four feet in height are unusual and highly attractive. There are a few to be found in the district, and contrast sharply with the precast concrete garden tubs we see today. Mrs. Edgar Walker (wife of one of the original Mr Walker's sons) has one of these urns and a bird bath in the garden of her home in Meerut street.

The company employed many women in the 1900s and there, as head sorter, the chief character of the story met his wife. Mrs Alderton sorted the tessellated tiles and in return received 16/- a week – a highly paid position.

When Mr Alderton was asked whether he belonged to the cricket or tennis club he answered "No".

The next question was "Well, what did you do in your leisure hours?"

His wife answered, "He had no leisure hours; his entire life was spent at the works".

Even today Mr Alderton can be found at the works from four o'clock on any afternoon. He feels that if he is never to be put off he must do something in return.

The tile works are a very real part of Mitcham's past and present, and so, too, is Harry Alderton.

The Morning and Evening Angels



TWO of the most outstanding tiles in our collection from the Tessellated Tiles, are 'Morning Angel' and 'Evening Angel' which were designed by Emma Scott, mother of Chrissy Otterbach, long-time member of our society. Emma was born in 1875, and attended school at Vermont and the Catholic School in Mitcham, which was then a private school. Her father, Thomas Scott, believed that girls should be taught social graces, so Emma was taught music and painting. She studied painting at the National Gallery School with Wilson Ellingsworth and eventually worked in the studio of Walker's Pottery (Australia Tessellated Tiles). Most of us would have seen some of the more practical tiles she designed at Flinders Street Station – (*This Way* – etc).

Often there is an associated interesting story – Emma Scott was married on 3 September, 1911 to George Frederick Otterbach, a merchant seaman from Stuttgart, who was unhappy with the militarism of the Kaiser's Germany, and jumped ship in Melbourne in 1909. He went to Doncaster, where there was an established German settlement, and worked in the orchards before later working at the Tile Works at Mitcham and the Brickworks at Camberwell. He died of tuberculosis in 1918 leaving Emma to care for their daughter, Chrissy. Emma worked mainly as a domestic to support her family, but she was a skilled artistic worker.

Thomas Scott, Emma's father, was in the British Merchant Navy and served on the China run, later settling and marrying in South Africa. After the death of his wife, he came to Australia, first to Queensland and later to Melbourne.

In the 1860s he married Emma Weston, who arrived in Australia on the ship *Charlotte Gladstone* and who had worked as a kitchen maid in the Disraeli household.

Thomas opened a tinsmith and galvanising shop in Swanston Street (near the city baths). His daughter, Emma, was born there in 1875. In the 1880s they moved to Mitcham and lived in a bark hut in Queen Street. Thomas opened a business in Victoria (Rooks) Road, (opposite the site of what would later be the Migrant Hostel), manufacturing every description of light forged work, such as grid irons and meat stands. Eventually, he owned a large holding of land stretching from the Tessellated Tile land to Carween Avenue along Rooks Road.

(edited) Barbara Gardiner
October 1996



Errors Of Omission: Drake's Real Estate Office



IT has been brought to my attention that there were errors of omission in the article in the last newsletter concerning the history of Drake's Real Estate Agency. This has been, and is, a cause of concern both to people connected with the entities and persons mentioned and to myself, as the author. It is always a nagging worry that one has overlooked, been unaware of, or misinterpreted information. So for the record:-

- Frank Fisher's business commenced on his return from WW1 – probably in 1923. Armstrongs bought the business in the 1970s.
- The Blackburn office of Armstrong & Hoath and later Drake & Co., was at 15 Blackburn Road, Blackburn. It later moved to 71 Blackburn Road.
- Norman Armstrong was initially joined by his son, Douglas, who left soon after to enter the army. His younger son, Raleigh, joined the business after his return from active duty in WW2.
- Ian Armstrong joined the business full time in 1968.
- In the 1950s the Mitcham office moved from 24 Station Street (on the corner of Colombo Street) to 534 Whitehorse Road (ex-Tinker's Shoe store). In the 1960s the office shifted to larger premises at 483 Whitehorse Road (originally a Butcher's shop, extended to become a furniture shop – Copolovs).
- Ian Armstrong sold the Drake & Co. business in 2001 to Philip Webb, subsequently sold on to Barry Plant in 2022, and currently still trading under that name at 483 Whitehorse Road.

Even within these comments there are kernels of information for which WHS has no information. Can I please make a plea that anyone who has information not mentioned in any future article brings it the attention of WHS. That is sometimes the only avenue we have for finding and preserving knowledge pertaining to the history of Whitehorse and its peoples.

Giselda Bannister

Drake & Co.

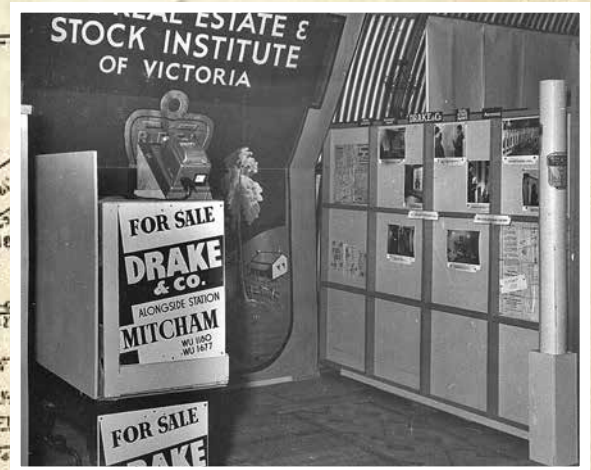
NP3430/3432

In 1914, Frederick C Drake opened Mitcham's first estate agency in a red brick office building on the corner of Station Street and Colombo Street, Mitcham. In 1926 Norman Armstrong took over the business but retained the original name. In the early 2000s the agency was sold to Philip Webb Real Estate and the Drake & Co name ceased to exist.

Our collection includes images of the office, both external and internal (two of which are shown here).



REAL ESTATE &
OF VICTORIA
Whitehorse Road, Mitcham



DIARY DATES

Meetings are held at the Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex

Saturday, 7 October
1.00pm General Meeting

*Brian Millane –
A History of Mitcham Post Office*

Saturday, 2 December

1.00pm General Meeting
Lorraine Smith - Journey of a Lost Manuscript.

2023 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 4 November

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

STATISTICS

Photographs catalogued	-	4532
Artefacts catalogued	-	5306
Documents catalogued	-	7989
Museum visitors July–August 2023		477



Is this where you live?

HUSBAND ROAD, FOREST HILL

... is situated south of Canterbury Road and runs between Springvale Road and Stevens Road. The road is named after Charles Edward Husband, whose home in c1911 was 'Waroonga Park', Springvale Road, Tunstall [now Nunwading]. The site of this road is situated on boundaries of two sections of land that were originally owned by E Edwards and W J Course.

Charles was born in 1863, and was baptized 1864 at All Parishes Church of England, Kingston, Jamaica, the son of Thomas Crosgill Husband [1831–1879] and Charlianne Husband, née Reid. He married Mary Finlay Chalmers Main in 1890. They were the parents of at least two sons and three daughters.

The *Blackburn & Mitcham Reporter* of Friday 7 June 1935 contained an article reporting his remembrances of his first arrival in Forest Hill:

ONE OF THE EARLY SETTLERS

Recently, Mr. C. E. Husband celebrated the event of his first settling in Forest Hill, in May, 1894. In recounting some of his experiences since then, Mr. Husband had lively recollections of Springvale Road as it used to be, metalled only in patches, and with quagmires at intervals. One of those was directly opposite his gate, and it was into this hole that the late Councillor Morton, of the then Nunawading Council, was precipitated while on a tour of inspection. Briefly stated, the result of that experience was that the road was metalled soon afterwards. Humorously, Mr. Husband includes among later developments, electric light, electric trains, high railway fares, and high rates. In the past two or three years, as he rather poetically puts it, "A few of the valiant pioneers have dropped anchor in the harbour of rest," and he concludes his reminiscences by trying to imagine what changes another forty-one years will bring to the district.

Husband died on 10 February 1939, in Richmond, at the age of 76.

Yvonne Fitzmaurice & Chris Gray

NP1293 Charles Edward Husband

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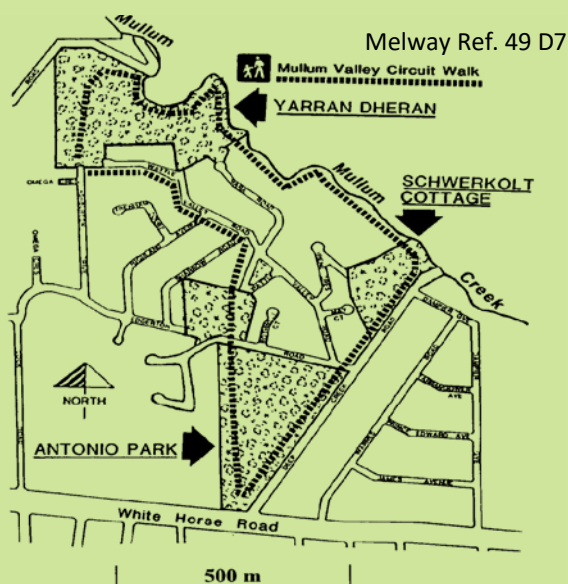
whitehorsehistory.org.au
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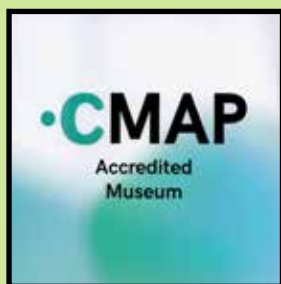
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Copy Deadline for next WHS Newsletter: Wednesday, 8 November 2023



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."

"Whitehorse Historical Society acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. Wurundjeri connection to this land dates back more than 40,000 years, and evidence of this connection still exists today."



REMEMBER

Whitehorse Historical Society

Local History Collection

Open 10am to 3pm 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 Whitehorse City Council.



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

Sender: Whitehorse Historical Society Inc. & Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex

Deep Creek Road, Mitcham, VIC 3132

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AFFIX
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