



# NEWSLETTER

Series 33 No. 1

January–February 2025

ABN 44 352 041 634 Inc. AO 012235J

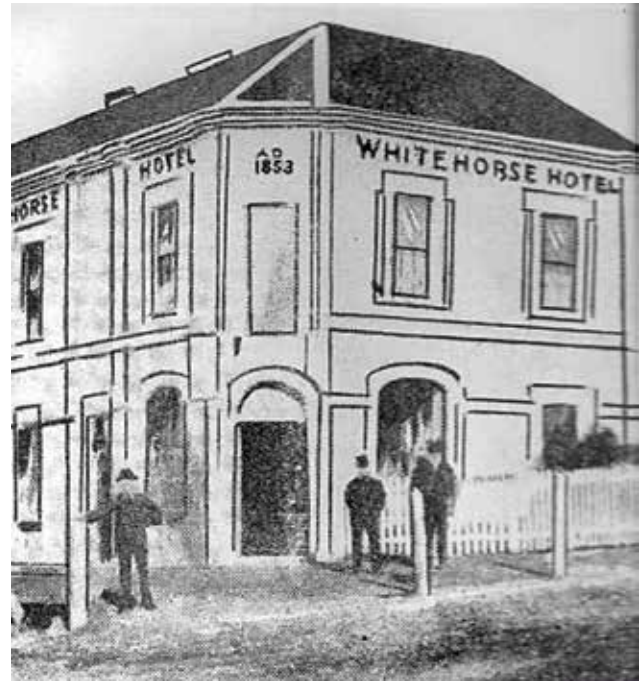
*1965–2025 Sixty years of local history*

## Box Hill's White Horse

ON 1 August 1933 in faraway Muswellbrook, NSW, the *Muswellbrook Chronicle* reported that when the White Horse Hotel was built, “a wooden facsimile of a white steed was placed on top of the main entrance. The old building is being demolished, but the owner of the premises has presented the effigy to the Box Hill Municipal Council.”

In 1852 Patrick Trainer built a coaching inn, the first change for Cobb & Co. Coaches, on the south east corner of Whitehorse and Elgar Roads in Box Hill. Burnt down and rebuilt, it endured until its demolition in 1933. The landmark carved white horse above its doorway was eventually moved to Box Hill Town Hall in 1986 when a replica of the statue was placed on the median strip in Whitehorse Road. The original horse (25cm by 20cm) is kept in the Box Hill Town Hall.

*Continued on page 6*



(ABOVE): The White Horse Hotel, pictured circa 1855;  
(BELOW) The hotel after demolition in 1933.

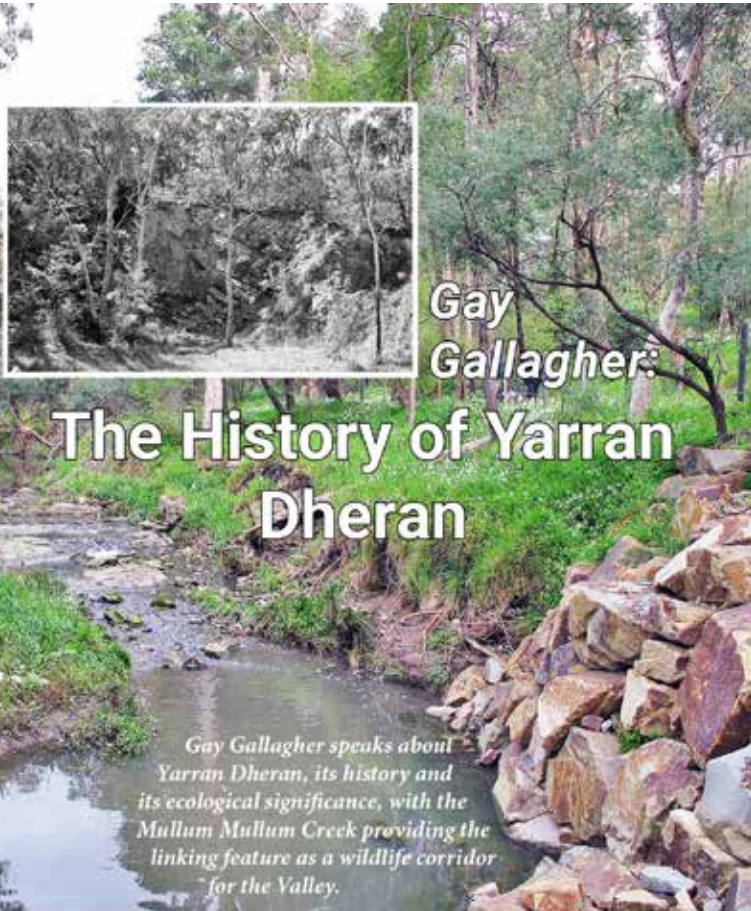


**NEXT  
MEETING:**

**Saturday, 1 February 2025 1.00pm General Meeting**  
*Gay Gallagher: The History of Yarran Dheran*



# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



**ALL WELCOME**

**General Meeting 1pm Saturday, 1 February 2025**  
**The Local History Room**  
**Schwerkolt Cottage & Museum Complex**  
**Deep Creek Road, Mitcham**



*Dear Members,*

**H**APPY New Year to you all!  
The big news this year is that our Society will be 60 years old. The official anniversary is 22 November and the Committee is planning the celebration for the 6 December meeting with a lunch and a speaker. More details to come during the year.

Another big event this year will be the wedding dress display at the Box Hill Artspace. Opening on 13 September and going to 25 October, "Finding the one: Wedding dresses from Whitehorse" will feature twelve wedding dresses from our Collection. More details to come during the year.

A little closer is our annual Planning Day on Monday 17 February in the Local History Room from 9.30am. All members are welcome to attend. Please let Kathy know if you would like to attend for catering purposes.

The Council is organising a "Schwerkolt mixed farm revival" event on Sunday 4 May. We will advise more information in the next newsletter.

At our meeting on 5 April, we will have a women's perspective for ANZAC Day and Glenys Williamson of the Returned & Servicewomen's RSL Sub-branch will be our speaker on "Service Women and then..."

But our first event of the year will be our 1 February meeting when Gay Gallagher of the Yarran Dheran Advisory Committee will speak on the history of Yarran Dheran.

*Vicki Jones-Evans*

---

## CONTENTS

President's Report	2	Box Hill's White Horse (Cont from p1)	6
December Meeting Report		From the Collection	7
Heathmont, Mitcham, Ringwood	3	Whitehorse luminaries: The Fighting Farrier	7
From <i>The Reporter</i> , 1923	4	Some History of the District	8
	5	Diary Dates	9
		Woodsy	9

---

# DECEMBER MEETING REPORT



## Plants and places

OUR December meeting speaker treated his audience to some early Christmas fun with his lovely talk on 18 Plants of our Suburbs and Hills. I thought we were in for a botanical talk about flora and fauna; we were, however, in for special treat. Gerry gave us lots more to think about.

He showed us how useful the names of plants were in the naming of municipalities in our area, and reminded us just how many such names using this protocol there are – Heathmont, Boronia, Box Hill, Briar Hill, etc.

Gerry reminded us that we name and identify all sorts of things within our localities. Some of these names are physically identifying – Deep Creek, Quarry Road, Hillcrest Reserve. Some are obscure and some even refer to First Nations origins (though these are usually mispronounced!).

He shared a remarkable amount of research into the names of our surrounds: little snippets, stories and facts that explain so much of how we got to where we are today.

I was especially interested in the ‘beautifying’ of the names of localities once they were more established and settled, and the selling of land, rather than just settling, became the norm. ‘Montrose’ sounded much better than the original ‘Double Pitts’ and doubtless looked much better on the publicity posters!

Thank you, Gerry, for a beautifully researched and presented talk about our past and present. I think you could present a great trivia quiz with just this topic. As a child, I spent many holidays and weekends at Rosebud, without ever knowing the story of how the town got its name – from an 1855 shipwreck in Port Phillip Bay. I always thought we were just talking about flowers! A shipwreck story would have been much more exciting to us kids!

*Margaret Graham*



# Heathmont, Mitcham, Ringwood



I am a member of the Heathmont History Group and a resident of Mitcham. When preparing to be the guest speaker at the Whitehorse Historical Society 2023 AGM in Mitcham, I considered the similarities and differences between the past and present of Heathmont and Mitcham, and indeed as a member of the Ringwood & District Historical Society, I soon included Ringwood.

Broadly, the similarities of their stories are quite obvious: First Nations people, especially along the waterways, then European woodcutters followed by a rural community of orchardists, poultry and flower

farmers, the importance of the coming of the railway and cars, the few shops developing into shopping centres, and as Melbourne spread, rural becoming suburban with all the associated services, roads, sports, churches, schools, parks, nature reserves and homes.

But what of the differences? What does Mitcham have that Heathmont does not have? (I see is the cryptic answer!). My answer includes two railway stations, Asian supermarkets, Coles, car factories, gyms, an MP's office, Maroondah Highway, multi-storey apartments, an hotel, a private hospital, a reservoir, a Roman Catholic church and school, and Schwerkolt Cottage. Of course there are many others in fine detail, and I may be missing some important ones. Also of course, the historian's role is to identify causes, results and significances as well as merely list details. For example, the absence of a Roman Catholic church anywhere along the 26km of Canterbury Road deserves analysis.

In turn, what does Heathmont have, that Mitcham lacks? In numbers, not much. But there is a main road bridge (though dangerous), and the road is a designated route for trucks to and from Eastlink. Also, there is an indoor sports centre (The Nets at H.E.Parker), ten Nature Reserves, excellent 360 degree views from the Mont, and a compact and diverse group of cafes and restaurants; hEATHmont! As well as all these and also encompassing them, Heathmont is still celebrated as a village in a way now unavailable to Mitcham. Today, the village nature and feel are underplayed and are under threat, but this community spirit is still valued by many locals.

What about Ringwood? Perhaps a reader will compile a list. Eastland, lake, Car City, law courts, clock tower, athletics track, pool . . .

Enjoy! Readers in 2073 will.

*Gerry Robinson 2023*



**PICTURES: (Top) Heathmont Village; (Middle) Mitcham Station in 2018; (Bottom) Ringwood Memorial Clock Tower opening ceremony (1967).**

# From THE REPORTER

ISSUED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE "HAWTHORN AND CAMBERWELL CITIZEN"  
THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SHIRES OF NUNAWADING, DONCASTER, AND CIRCULATING IN THE CITIES OF CAMBERWELL, HAWTHORN & K.E.W. SHIRES OF NUNAWADING, DONCASTER, FERN TREE GULLY, LILLYDALE AND ADJOINING MUNICIPALITIES.

VOL. XXXIV NO. 19

Registered at the General Post Office, Melbourne,  
for Transmission by Post as a Newspaper.

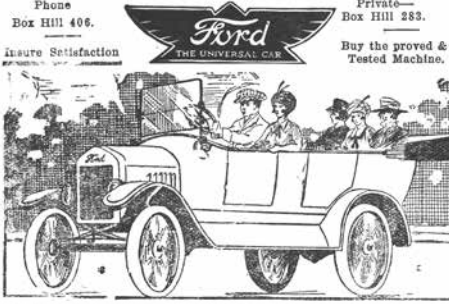
FRIDAY, MAY 11, 1923

PRICE: TWOPENCE

Phone  
Box Hill 406.

Private—  
Box Hill 283.

Buy the proved &  
Tested Machine.



INSURE SATISFACTION  
THE UNIVERSAL CAR

MOTOR &  
GENERAL  
ENGINEER.

## O. H. SMITH

MAIN ROAD,  
DONCASTER.

AUTHORISED DEALERS BY TARRANTS, MELBOURNE.

The New Model FORD CAR, with all the Latest Improvements,  
DE LUXE TOURER, £275. TRUCK CHASSIS, £165. FORD-  
SON TRACTOR, £225.

LARGE STOCK OF DUPLICATES ALWAYS ON HAND.

FORD Service and Repairs of Every Description Guaranteed.

### Shire Overseer Appointed.

The Nunawading Council on Tuesday evening dealt finally with applications for the new position of overseer of works recently determined upon. The salary fixed for this office is £300 per annum, with £52 a year as cycle allowance. There were nearly 60 applicants for the position, and the number was reduced to three. Two of these appeared before the Council on Tuesday evening, prior to the appointment being made, in committee. After consideration, the Council decided in favor of Mr. W. Bruce Hedley, from Griffiths, N.S.W., who will take up the work shortly. It is understood that he has had a lot of experience, and is well qualified for the position.

### The Public Warned.

It has come to the knowledge of the Camberwell branch of the R.S.S.I.L.A. that a man is going round the district, and is supposed to be collecting for a soldier's widow. The branch wish to warn the public that as far as they are concerned no authority has been given to any man to receive contributions for the purpose indicated.

### Outer Sewerage Extension.

At a meeting of the Nunawading Council on Tuesday evening, details were furnished of a conference recently held at Mordialloc with regard to the extension of the sewerage system to the outer suburban districts. Cr. Blood represented Nunawading. A number of important resolutions were passed. Among other things, it was decided that it was imperative in the interests of the health of the residents, the sewerage of all closely settled areas contiguous to Melbourne should be proceeded with as early as possible. This determination is of particular interest to centres like Box Hill, which have been looking forward to an improved sanitary service for a long time. In connection with the conference decisions, representations are to be made to the authorities, and Crs. Ellingworth and Roughton were appointed to represent Nunawading Shire.

### A Licensing Prosecution.

At the Camberwell Police Court on Friday last Thos. C. Hawkins, a former licensee of the Palace Hotel, Burke road, Upper Hawthorn, was charged by Licensing Inspector P. Thomson, with not having the lodgers' book written up on 12th March last. Constable W. R. Spottiswood, of Fitzroy, said that he visited the hotel on 12th March, and found that no entries had been made in the lodgers' book after 7th March. The defendant admitted that the book had not been written up, and explained that the neglect had been due to the illness of his wife. Mr. Smith, P.M., imposed a fine of £2.

### GAS BATH-HEATERS

ENSURE the comfort of a Hot Bath at any time—without trouble or delay



### Empire Day Celebration.

Arrangements are being made for the appropriate celebration of Empire Day this month. At a meeting of the Nunawading Council on Tuesday evening a letter was read from the Education Department on the subject, and it was suggested that the citizens give their assistance in having suitable programmes carried out. The Council agreed to co-operate as desired, the representatives of the ridings being appointed to act in conjunction with the various school committees.

### Railway Disabilities.

As the result of the meeting held recently, the Commissioner of Railways has agreed to receive a deputation of residents of Blackburn, Tunstall, and Mitcham, at the railway offices, Spencer street, on Wednesday next, May 16, at 3 p.m., for the purpose of discussing the disabilities of the new time-table on the Box Hill—Ringwood line. All residents interested in the matter are invited to attend, and it is expected that there will be a large assemblage, so that the requirements of the district may be strengthened to the fullest extent.

# Box Hill's White Horse *Continued from page 1*

*The Argus*, 15 July 1933, ran an article: *White Horse Inn; Famous old hotel to be demolished.*

The White Horse Inn, on the north-east corner of Elgar road and White horse road, just before entering the town of Box Hill, is about to be demolished. The inn is a familiar sight to motorists, with its effigy of a white horse standing boldly over the porch. It lies nine miles from the city and in the old coaching days it was the first change for the stage horses on the run to Lilydale. The original hotel was a two-storey brick building of 18 rooms with stabling accommodation for 30 horses. There was no stone handy to the site and the bricks cost Patrick Trainor, the builder and first licensee £11 a thousand. Today bricks could probably be delivered on the spot for less than a third of that price. In addition to its importance as a changing place for the mail coach team, the White Horse was a popular place of call for visitors from Melbourne at the weekends. On the opposite side of the main road may still be seen the remains of the old hitching rail to which hacks and harness horses were made fast while their owners relaxed in the long, cool barroom. In those days there was no statutory radius of 20 miles within the meaning of the Licensing Act.

The coming of the railway in 1882 was the death knell for the White Horse Hotel. The coming of the train to Box Hill also resulted

in those artists later denoted as Heidelberg School of Artists relocating to Heidelberg. Their quiet weekends were no more, with inquisitive day-trippers encroaching on their peace.

On Friday, December 1, 1882, the first passenger train steamed into Box Hill. The train consisted of one coach divided into three and a half compartments—first non-smoking and first smoking, second non-smoking and second smoking. The half compartment was the second smoking; the guard being installed behind a partition in the other half. On the previous day, November 30, the coaches had run for the last time on the Lilydale route. The advent of the train to Box Hill was celebrated on the day following the opening of the line by a land sale, for which a special train was engaged.

The old White Horse Inn stood on a block of land 60 acres in area. On this estate was the Box Hill racecourse. The judge's box, set picturesquely in a small clearing, stood where the electric trains now thunder, less than 200 yards from the Box Hill platform. The last race on this course was run on Easter Saturday, 1883, and for the second time a special train was run. It was on the Box Hill racecourse that Bob Ramage, the rider of Carbine in his victorious Melbourne Cup in 1890, rode his

first winner as a fully-fledged jockey.

The last licensee of the hotel was Miss Amelia Holmquist who surrendered the licence after the Nunawading local option poll in 1920 when the district went "dry" on January 1, 1921. Miss Holmquist held the licence for five months only.

Following a fire in 1898, it was rebuilt as a single-storey structure. Although its business had declined since the coming of the railway, the White Horse Hotel was widely known as one of the most popular road houses in the country near the city. Railway lines had encroached on a few of the stage coach runs, but the horse was still unchallenged on the roads. The steady subdivision of surrounding estates, with a corresponding increase in the population of the district, helped to re-establish the fortunes of the hotel, but gradually, as the horse gave way to the motor-car, custom diminished little by little and the former coach days became a shadow of the past.

White Horse road was named after the hotel, and this arterial route will probably be the only remaining reminder of the original building. When, within the next few weeks, the inn is demolished, and the familiar white horse disappears, six suburban dwellings will occupy the area.

The White Horse Inn, pictured shortly before its demolition in 1933.

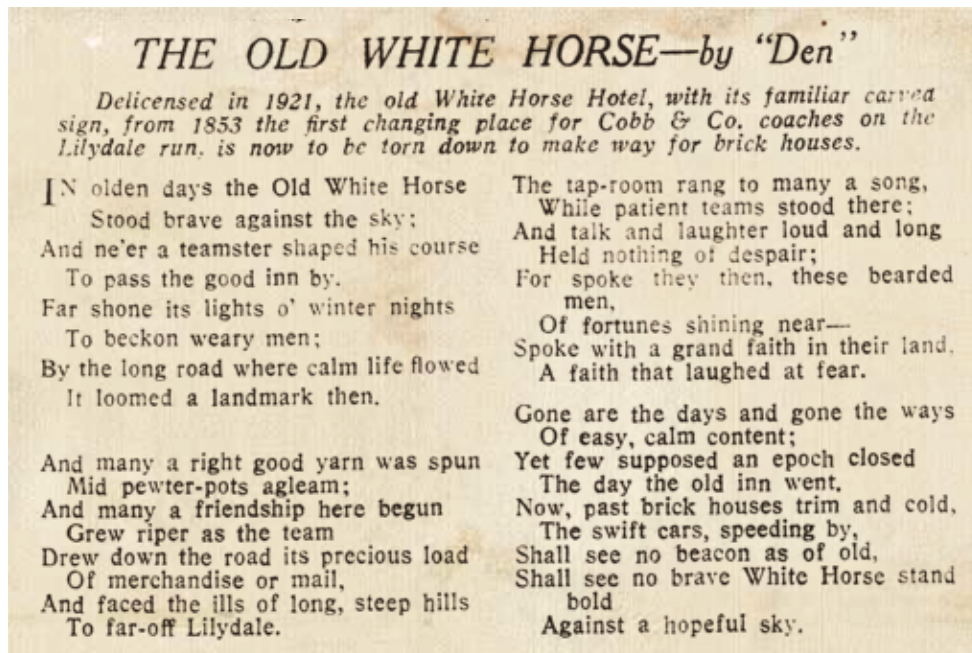


FROM THE COLLECTION . . . .

ND2299

## White Horse Hotel, poem by 'Den'

THE White Horse Hotel was immortalised in verse by C. J. Dennis – his poem was printed in *The Herald* in July 1933, Dennis using the pseudonym “Den”.



## Julian Holland the 'Fighting Farrier'

### WHITEHORSE LUMINARIES #1

JULIAN Holland was born 13 October 1972 in Bendigo. Later making his home in Blackburn North and training in Blackburn, Julian earned the nickname 'Fighting Farrier' during his career as a professional boxer. He debuted on 22 September 1995 and boxed his last professional bout at Festival Hall, Melbourne on 29 November 2002, against Zulfikar Ali.

With his professional weight varying from sixty-five kilograms (welterweight) to seventy kilograms (light middleweight), he won numerous titles and championships. These included: the Queensland State Welterweight title, the Oceanic Boxing Association welterweight title, the Australian welterweight title, the Pan-pacific middleweight title, the World Boxing Organisation Asia-Pacific welterweight title and the Commonwealth light middleweight title.

Giselda Bannister



# SOME HISTORY OF THE DISTRICT

Newsletter May 1969, from local residents.



ON the site of the present reserve at the intersection of Canterbury and Blackburn Roads, blocks of land were surveyed and sold many years ago. When orchardists wanted a through road from Burwood Road to Blackburn, a change was made. Baker's Road, now Blackburn Road, already went from Canterbury Road to Hawthorn Road – where the road curves. About 1937, two orchardists each gave enough land between them for this road to be continued as far as Burwood Road. At the same time, the creek was diverted into the present reserve and a new section of Blackburn Road was constructed – this is the section immediately north of Canterbury Road. The Council had to buy the existing blocks of land to accomplish these changes. That is why we now have that open space where the City Council and the Blackburn Tree Preservation Society have planted Australian native trees and shrubs.

When major works constructing this section of the road (and Canterbury Road after its widening) were carried out in the late 1960s, the workmen were astonished and dismayed to find a layer of soft oozy mud several feet down. This was the original site of the creek, diverted many years previously. Much extra filling was necessary before the job could be completed.

A small quarry between Canterbury Road and the Lake, now private property, was worked to obtain metal for making Canterbury Road.

Blackburn South Primary School was held first in a hall owned by the Salvation Army in Middleborough Road, but this was burnt down about 1924. The present school site in Canterbury Road had already been purchased. The first building was a weatherboard one of two rooms, moved there from Deepdene School. A new brick school was erected for Deepdene. This original two-roomed building still forms part of the Blackburn South School.

On the west side of Blackburn Road, Blackburn, almost opposite Central Road, is a block of four shops. At one time on this site there was a small general store. Later, a newsagency was added, plus refreshment rooms known as 'The Fernery'. Next door a small hall could be hired for social events. Later, this hall was moved to Lake Road to become the first Scout Hall.



**PICTURES: (Top) Blackburn Triangle replanting after Canterbury Rd widening (circa 1965); (Middle) Blackburn South Primary School circa 1970; (Bottom) The west side of Blackburn Road, almost opposite Central Road circa 1976.**



## 2025 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 1 March**  
**Saturday 3 May**  
**Saturday 19 July**  
**Saturday 6 September**  
**Saturday 1 November**

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

## STATISTICS

Photographs catalogued	-	4574
Artefacts catalogued	-	5593
Documents catalogued	-	8488
Museum visitors Nov–Dec 2024	-	318

## DIARY DATES

Meetings are held at the Schwerkolt Cottage and  
Museum Complex

**Saturday, 1 February 2025**  
**1.00pm General Meeting**

*Gay Gallagher:*  
*The History of Yarran Dheran*

**Saturday, 5 April**  
**1.00pm General Meeting**

*Glenys Williamson:*  
*Service Women and then . . .*

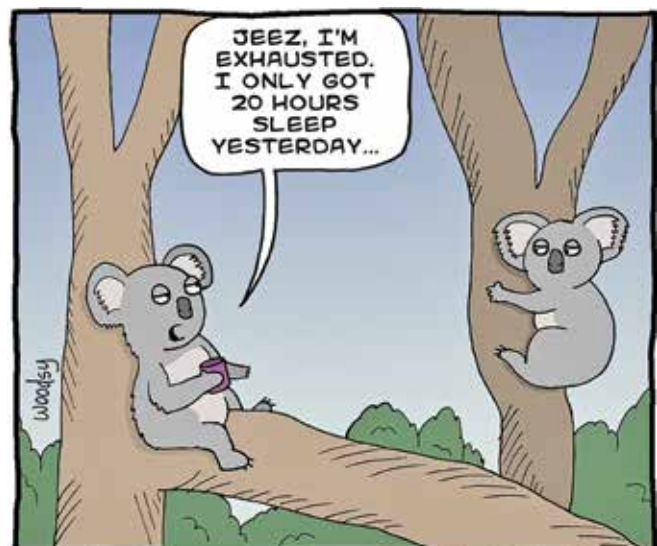
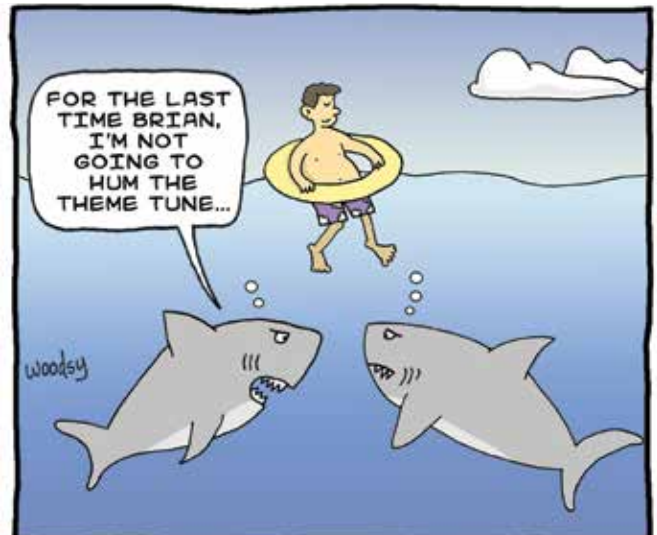
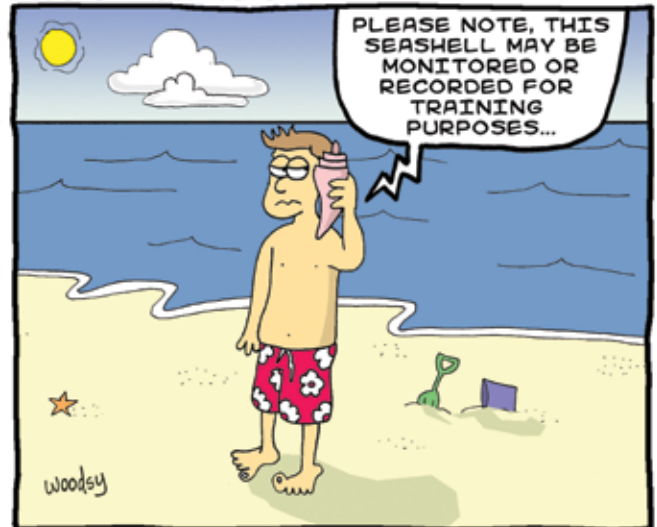
**Saturday, 7 June**  
**1.00pm General Meeting**

*Gregory Hill:*  
*Nunawading's Earliest Potteries & Porcelain*  
*Works*

**Saturday, 16 August**  
**1.00pm Annual General Meeting**

*Anne Payne:*  
*History of Blackburn Lake Sanctuary*

## woodsy insert brain here



**Do you enjoy your membership of WHS?**  
**We encourage you to think about recommending membership to your friends.**  
<https://whitehorsehistory.org.au/membership/>

## WHS Committee Contacts

### President

Vicki Jones-Evans  
0404 612 216

### Vice-President

Peter McPhee

### Secretary

Kathy Innes

### Treasurer

Eddie Tan

Local History Room (03) 9873 4946

Rear Museum Building  
Schwerkolt Complex  
2 – 10 Deep Creek Road, Mitcham

### Newsletter Team

Chris Gray  
Wendy Standfield

### WHS website

whitehorsehistory.org.au  
facebook.com/whitehorsehistory

### Email

whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com

### Postal Address

PO Box 2092  
Rangeview 3132



**Copy Deadline for next WHS Newsletter: Wednesday, 5 March 2025**



## 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."*



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

### REMEMBER

**Whitehorse Historical Society**

**Local History Collection**

Open 10am to 3pm Wednesdays.

Visitors welcome.

Ring 9873 4946 for an appointment at other times.



**WHITEHORSE  
CITY COUNCIL**



*Printing provided by* **MICHAEL SUKKAR MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR DEAKIN**

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

Deep Creek Road, Mitcham, VIC 3132

If undeliverable, please return to PO Box 2092 Rangeview 3132

**AFFIX  
STAMP  
HERE**