

2026 Heritage Family Day

IT was that time again – our annual Heritage Family Day – September 13 this year. With fabulous weather, our best-ever attendance of around 1500 people joined us. A fantastic day was had by all and we thank the community groups and volunteers for their contributions to this highly successful event.



PICTURES
(clockwise from top): Animals of Oz; Lacemakers; Futura Kelpies Working Dogs; Giant Bubbles; Woodturners.



**NEXT
MEETING:**

Saturday, 3 October 1pm
General Meeting
Margaret Picken: History of a Property Illustrator



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Members,

Thank you to all who contributed to our highly successful Heritage Family Day, with special thanks to our Co-ordinators Kathy Innes and Harley Hall. We were also very lucky to have excellent weather and the atmosphere can be summed up in one word “happy”.

The Federation Time Capsule date for reburial has been decided. It will take place on Friday 2 October at the Federation Rotunda at 9am until 9.30. You are all welcome to attend.

Hope to see you at our next meeting.

Vicki Jones-Evans



**Blackburn Library:
Celebrating 60 Years
The Stories That Made Us**

Help us build a Memory Wall with your stories and photos – from the 1970s to today. Visit throughout November to explore the display and celebrate with us on Saturday 21 November the anniversary of our opening.

Share your memories in branch or scan the QR code.



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AUGUST MEETING REPORT

COVID:

How We Lived Through It



AGMs are often seen as the end of one year and the beginning of a new one for a community group. This year, we were taken further back in time to the early 2020s, by Giselda. We were reminded, anecdotally, of the dark days of Covid-19 and the depths of 'lockdown' for community groups. No more meeting on a weekly basis, no more cheerful banter round the morning tea and lunch table; this was now serious and our group contact was now limited to email and Zoom. We were all affected.

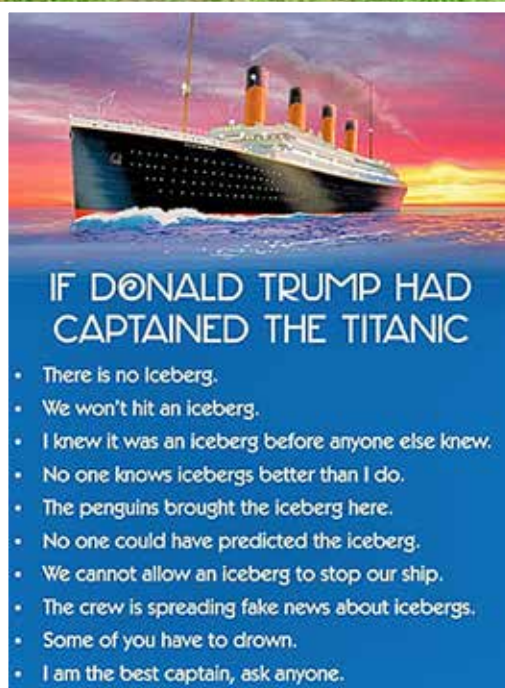
Now, we have somewhat forgotten or moved on, at least hoping to forget! Giselda took us back – via visiting exchanged email snippets – with good humour and quite a bit of work. We were reminded of the frustrations of limited time outside, limited interaction with others, distancing when we shopped, glass screens everywhere, QR codes, essential items left at the front door, of what seemed like a suspension of life as we knew it or would ever see it again.

Cleverly, groups like ours made the most of the situation. We 'spoke' each week of what had been happening for each of us in our isolation. It was fun to look back on the many ways we managed.

Giselda found some funny cartoons and comments to remind us of a time we would probably all rather forget, but it was very interesting, in retrospect, to be reminded. Thank you, Giselda, for a great little recent history trip. Hopefully we can all give Covid-19 its proper place – in our distant history!

Margaret Graham

Day 7 of the quarantine
My wife took up gardening but won't
tell what she's going to plant



FROM THE COLLECTION . . .



ABOVE: Surgical syringes. *Engraving with etching by T. Jefferys*; **BELOW:** Alexander Wood by Barraud & Jerrard, Photographers, 1873.



ONE of our articles this issue is about the history of local hospitals. In the spirit of this subject, our "From the Collection" is, appropriately, a glass syringe with needles & "suggestions" (instructions!) in cardboard box, dated June 1947. It is a 5cc. B.D. Yale, hypodermic syringe, No 5Y, graduated 1/5 cc "Resistance glass", made by Becton, Dickinson & Co., Rutherford N.J.

But how did we get to the syringe as a medical instrument?

Early syringes

Early syringes didn't have needles. The plunger was pulled back to suction fluid from the body, or pushed out to apply medicine or ointment. One of the first medical uses was the removal of cataracts from the eye through suction.

Early needles took the form of hollow reeds, glass tubes and goose quills.

Who invented modern syringes?

Scottish doctor Alexander Wood is credited with inventing the modern hypodermic syringe in 1853. His goal was to treat pain in one area of the body. He attached a hollow needle, an earlier invention by Irish doctor Francis Rynd, to a plunger.

Wood's first patient was a woman experiencing neuralgia, which causes intense pain after nerve damage. He used the hypodermic syringe to inject the powerful pain relief medicine Morphine, a mixture of sherry and morphine, to the site of her pain.

French orthopaedic surgeon, Charles Gabriel Pravaz, invented a syringe around the same time. Despite inventing them in the same year, Wood is credited with the invention of the syringe.

(Continued on page 9)

(Camberwell, Surrey Hills and Box Hill News.)

From THE REPORTER.

CIRCULATING IN BOX HILL, SURREY HILLS, CANTERBURY, BALWYN, CAMBERWELL, DONCASTER, BURWOOD, BLACKBURN, MITCHAM AND RINGWOOD

VOL. XIII NO. 12

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1901

ONE PENNY.

Permanent Memorial.

The lamentable lack of public interest in the local movement for the erection of a permanent memorial in honor of those who went to the wars from the Nunawading shire was again illustrated by the sparse attendance at the meeting at the shire hall, Box Hill, on Friday evening. Cr Hunter, president of the shire, presided. The hon. sec., Cr Bishop, reported that up to date about £40 had been promised. A design for a fountain to cost about £60 was approved of, but the feeling was against proceeding with the proposed memorial until the amount required was actually in hand. It was decided to invite further subscriptions, and to hold a concert in Box Hill on an early date, Crs Garrett and Cox and Messrs Foster and Richardson being appointed as a concert committee. The meeting then adjourned for a fortnight.

—:O:—

Concert at Box Hill.

The 31st anniversary of the Box Hill tent of the I.O.R. was celebrated by the holding of a high-class concert in the Federal hall, Box Hill, on Thursday evening, Sept. 26. The hall had been most artistically decorated for the occasion with flowers and foliage, and looked exceedingly well. The entertainment was certainly one of the best ever held in Box Hill. The committee are to be heartily congratulated upon the excellent programme submitted, the various numbers being highly appreciated by the large audience, nearly every performer being encored. The charming singing of Miss Florrie Angrove, Mr Jno. Goldsmith, and the quartette party evoked much admiration. Miss Townsend and Miss Woodhead won golden opinions as recit-

ers; Miss Sergeant's selections on the violin were of a high standard of excellence, while Miss Plaisted as accompanist rendered valuable and effective service. Mr Frank H. Swan's feats of legerdemain proved highly diverting, while as the funny man of the show, Mr W. H. Bunn took not only one humble piece of baked dough with currants, but hypothecated the whole tart-shop. The audience greatly regretted the non-appearance through illness of Miss Fanny Lyndhurst, the deservedly-popular contralto cantatrice. Bro. Wm. Wilson, P.D.C.R., who most ably performed the duties of chairman, took advantage of the occasion to bring before the audience in a few well-chosen words the prominent features of the I.O.R., and the many advantages to be derived from membership thereof. The programme submitted was as follows; Overture, Miss Plaisted; song, "The brave sentinel," Mr Jno. Goldsmith; recitation, Miss Townsend; song, "The dream of home," Miss Florrie Angrove; quartette, "Comrades' song of hope," quartette party; violin solo, Miss Sergeant; recitation, "Mother and the kids," Mr W. H. Bunn; chairman's address, Bro. W. Wilson; ten minutes with Mr Frank H. Swan; part songs, "Maiden, listen" and "The three chafers," quartette party; recitation, Miss Townsend; song, "Good-bye," Miss Florrie Angrove; recitation, "The boat race," Miss Woodhead; song, "The Garonne," Mr Jno. Goldsmith; recitation, "The Frenchman's dilemma," Mr W. H. Bunn.

—:O:—

ADVERTISE in "The Reporter," which circulates in Balwyn, Bayswater, Box Hill, Blackburn, Burwood, Camberwell, Canterbury, Doncaster, Fern Tree Gully, Forest Hill, Mitcham, Ringwood, Surrey Hills, Tunstall. &c.

Surrey Hills Branch, A.N.A.

There was a good attendance at the Surrey Hills branch of the A.N.A. on Wednesday evening, President Hodges presiding. Messrs J. H. Kellow, J. W. P. Oates and A. King were nominated for membership. After branch business had been dealt with, a very lively and interesting debate took place on the question "Is it advisable to have a standing army in the Commonwealth." Mr W. Foster opened in the affirmative, and Mr W. A. Jones in the negative. Others who contributed materially to the debate were: Messrs Parkinson, Reaburn, Brooks, Scott, Sneddon, and the president. Undoubtedly the debate was the warmest experienced by the branch for some time, and the hope was expressed that the branch would tackle other live subjects at no distant date. At next meeting, on Wednesday, 16th inst, a lecture will be delivered by Dr Gandevia.



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LOCAL DEPOT—

STATION STREET,
BOX HILL

Edith Coleman Part 4: The family connections

Gladys Coleman: Writer, Illustrator, Painter, Frustrated Botanist

IN 1923, Gladys was a botany student at Melbourne University. In 1924 she commenced her writing career, contributing articles for the local *Leader* newspaper in a semi-regular column: 'Sketches from the Bush'. In 1925 she married fellow-student of Botany and Geology, Donald Thomson. While Donald commenced work as a journalist at the *Herald*, Gladys continued her studies. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Botany, but also took geology, parasitology and bacteriology.

Moving to Sydney in 1927, Donald commenced studying Anthropology, while Gladys supported them, writing a regular nature column for the *Sydney Mail* entitled: 'Little Glimpses of Wildlife'. This amounted to one six hundred-word article every week for seven years until 1934.

In April 1928 Gladys was awarded a research grant of £50 for botanical work by Melbourne University. Meanwhile, Donald had been awarded a £600 grant by the Australian National Research Council for Anthropological and Geological work on the Cape York Peninsula. This was the start of Donald's illustrious anthropological career, his first trip to Lockhart occurring in 1928. On his next trip in 1929, Gladys accompanied him.

Gladys at Cape York circa 1932.



Gladys left a lasting impression on the people she met for being unlike other white women: wearing shorts like her husband, dancing 'naked breast' with the women in traditional dances and for being 'kind'. Her ability to form relationships with the women has left a valuable legacy in the Donald Thomson collection at Museum Victoria, of women's ceremonial body ornament, something Donald could not have achieved himself.

After a brief stint at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute in Melbourne, the couple returned north in 1932-1933. Gladys described this journey in a letter to her mother: '...walked 120 miles in six days through the ranges in most desolate country...walking from early morning until dark to get horses...had seen animals and birds new to even them...' Edith noted: 'I am proud of her part in it all, but shall be glad to have her home...'

Donald had a conflict with the Australian Research Council which led to him returning his grant money; the couple having to rely for income on their journalism and publications. The latter were enhanced by Donald's photographs and Gladys' illustrations. Gladys received credit for her contribution to this work and Donald always acknowledged her invaluable assistance in preparing botanical specimens for which she had the talent and skill. Her fine botanical illustrations appeared in Ewart's *Flora of Victoria* and her colour-tinted photographs of Orchids, Common Heath, Fungi, Wattle and Grevilleas form part of the Donald Thomson collection of Museum Victoria.

In 1934, the family doubled in size when Gladys gave birth to twin boys, John and Peter, at Epworth Hospital. The *Herald*, reporting on the birth, commented that while Mrs Thomson had previously accompanied her husband on his expeditions 'among the wild tribes of the North', [she] 'will not go on this occasion'!

In 1938 the family took a trip together to England; but by 1942, the marriage was in trouble, the couple separated – the misery compounded by protracted and hostile court cases. Donald's notoriety and reputation ensured heightened public interest, and his entrenched university position and circle of academic friends ensured Gladys could not return to her own research. The divorce was finalised in 1954, by which time Gladys had become reclusive, returning to live with her father at 'Walsham' in Blackburn. She later moved to Blairgowrie to be near her sister Dorothy, and after her death was buried at Sorrento with her mother and sister.

Sources:

The Australasian Saturday 13 April 1918

Clode, Danielle *The Wasp and the Orchid: the Remarkable Life of Australian Naturalist Edith Coleman*, Sydney, Picador Pan MacMillan, 2018.

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Hospital Care for Early Nunawading Settlers



NP2461 'Warrender' Mitcham Private Hospital, corner McDowall and Harrison Streets, Mitcham, since demolished.

IN the new colony, later named Victoria, everything was centred within the city of Melbourne and the hospitals were no exception. Records tell us that in 1838 the first hospital opened in Victoria was in William Street and was restricted to convicts and new immigrants.

The first public hospital, The (Royal) Melbourne, opened in temporary premises in 1842 and transferred to a new building in Lonsdale Street in 1848. Its primary function was to cater for those who were too poor to pay for their care at home.

In 1856 the "Lying-in Hospital", later The Royal Women's Hospital, provided public maternity facilities as well as wards for treating "female diseases".

The Children's Hospital in Pelham Street, Carlton, was founded in 1870 and was mainly supported by voluntary contributions. It claimed to be, and may have been, "The Premier Children's Hospital and leading Paediatric Institution in the Commonwealth".

There were a number of dubious small hospitals run by untrained nurses, and it wasn't until some years later these establishments were discontinued by an Act of Parliament.

Although in the 1899 the Melbourne Directory did not list any private or public hospitals in the Nunawading area, the Sands & McDougall directories for 1933 to 1942 list a private hospital at 26 McDowall Street, Mitcham.

Before the government-run hospital in Box Hill was officially opened in 1956, the local communities were served by small hospitals, some run in conjunction with a doctor's practice and others recognised as Bush Hospitals. They served the community for simple needs, but anything of a severe nature had to be transported to the city hospitals either privately or by ambulance. It wasn't until after WW1 that Mitcham had a separate viable hospital open to the public.

Following his discharge from war service in 1919, a Dr Cochrane, with the aid of his wife, started his medical practice in a shop on the south side of Whitehorse Road. After becoming established, he built a new house and surgery (called 'Warrender' – his middle name), on the corner of Harrison Street and Mitcham Road. Shortly afterwards he opened a small hospital at 26 McDowall Street. This new hospital had previously been the home of Dr F J Drake, who had specialised in tuberculosis care at a sanatorium where White Friars College now stands.

Amongst the WHS files are papers relating to the possibility of turning this hospital into a Bush Nursing Hospital. Dr Cochrane and the other local GPs, (probably, Dr Langley of Ringwood, Dr Craig of Box Hill, Dr Forsyth of Surrey Hills, Dr Lempriere of Terra Road, Vermont, and Dr Liebert of Mitcham) were in favour.

As a result, in April 1933 a Provisional Committee was formed by 'certain residents', at 24 Station Street, (the home of Norman Armstrong), in an endeavour to establish a Bush Nursing Hospital in Mitcham.

Before calling a public meeting, the convenors were 'desirous of ascertaining the approximate number of subscribers likely to be obtained', and with that in view, they submitted the following brief outline of the scheme:-

In the first instance it is necessary to obtain sufficient subscribers at an annual subscription not exceeding 30/- to enable a nurses' salary (about £175 per annum) to be paid. The greater the number of subscribers, the lower the amount of the subscription. The remainder of the income is obtained from fees received.

Each subscribing member is entitled to hospital service at half the usual fees payable at a private hospital. These are usually fixed at Members: General cases, £2 to £2/10/- per week; midwifery cases, £5 for the period of ten days to two weeks. These fees include a member's wife and family up to 18 years of age. Members' unmarried children over 18 years of age can obtain the same benefits on payment of 5/- per annum. Non members: General cases £5 per week; midwifery cases ten days or two weeks £5/5/- per week.

It will be seen that the fees payable as a member are really less than those ordinarily charged by an Intermediate Hospital, and have the following additional advantages:-

- 1. Money will be spent in the district.*
- 2. Ambulance expenses will be avoided.*
- 3. Visiting of patients will be more convenient and less expensive.*

The hospital would be entirely controlled by a Committee of Citizens appointed by the subscribers, and all profits would go to the Hospital Funds and not to any individual, thus in time enabling a reduction to be made in the amount of the subscription, or as may otherwise be decided.

(Continued on page 8)

Hospital Care for Early Nunawading Settlers

(Continued from page 7)

Patients select their own doctor and make their own arrangements with him.

The open letter continued:- The scheme has full support of Dr Cochrane (who is the proprietor of the existing hospital in Mitcham) and of the other medical practitioners in the district.

As previously stated, it is proposed to call a public meeting at a later date, when more detailed information will be given by a representative of the Bush Nursing Association, but in order to give the convenors some indication of the number of persons likely to be interested, we would much appreciate a reply from you on the appended form.

At the bottom of the page was a space requesting interested subscribers to add their name in support of the hospital.

This letter had sufficient support for a public meeting to be held on the evening of 18 May 1933 in the Mitcham Memorial Hall to discuss the proposed Bush Nursing Hospital. The meeting was addressed by Sir James Barrett, KBE, CB, CMG, MD, who was the Hon. Secretary of the Victorian Bush Nursing Association. It was successful and the decision was taken to proceed with the project.

The constitution of the Bush Nursing Association precluded it from giving any financial support to a hospital in a suburban area; however, the Association would give all possible assistance and guidance, including the selection of a suitable Sister, while using lines similar to the Bush Nursing Hospital. The subscription fees varied from 5/- to £1/10/-, depending upon the individuals' circumstances, while the scale of fees and benefits remained the same as predicted.

The following was stressed by the Committee:

- The Hospital will be entirely controlled by a Committee to be appointed by the subscribers. The present committee is only a provisional one.
- All profits to go to the hospital funds, and not to any individual.
- The larger number of subscribers, the lower will be the fee and subscription.
- Patients select their own doctor and make their own arrangements with him.
- The service of the hospital will be in accordance with that usually given by private hospitals.
- This will be the only private hospital in Mitcham, and the proposal has the support of the medical practitioners of the district.
- Subscription to the hospital amounts to approximately ONE PENNY PER DAY.'

The members of the new Provisional Committee were, N Armstrong; C Stacey and M J Hoath, all of whom were on the original committee. They were joined by Mrs L Brockell; Dr S Cochrane, Mitcham GP; H Fenton; orchardist A Leber; and G M McKinley. At this meeting a short homily was given about public hospitals that 'are really for those unfortunately destitute, and that admission to them was recently made more difficult.'

There remains some doubt whether Dr Cochrane's hospital in Mc Dowall Street ever became a Bush Nursing Hospital, because the directories of the day did not list any in Mitcham; instead, no 26 McDowall Street was placed under the heading of "Private Hospitals'.

By 1949 no hospital of any description was listed. Therefore, it can be safely assumed that Dr Cochrane's hospital had ceased to function sometime during the late 1940s, probably when the new doctors, Threlkeld and Twiddy, took over the practice in 1946, after they had returned from war service.

The demand for a hospital again arose, and in 1963 the Mitcham Private Hospital was opened. By 1977 it was a fully accredited 99 bed hospital, and in 1991 an intensive care unit was added. Two years later, in 1993, the hospital celebrated its 30th anniversary and by that date it had cared for over 5,000 residents.

Since then the acute medical care of Nunawading residents has been vastly improved with another two important establishments opening in recent years.

Bellbird Hospital at Blackburn South opened in 1970 in a wooden house on the corner of Blackburn and Canterbury Roads. Now known as Blackburn Public Surgical Centre, it is a 53-bed medical and surgical facility providing general surgery and gynaecological services.

The Peter James Centre, in Burwood East, opened in 1985 with over one hundred beds. It provides a wide range of services for people in need.



Mitcham Private Hospital

A. Y. Fitzmaurice

From the Collection

(Continued from page 4)

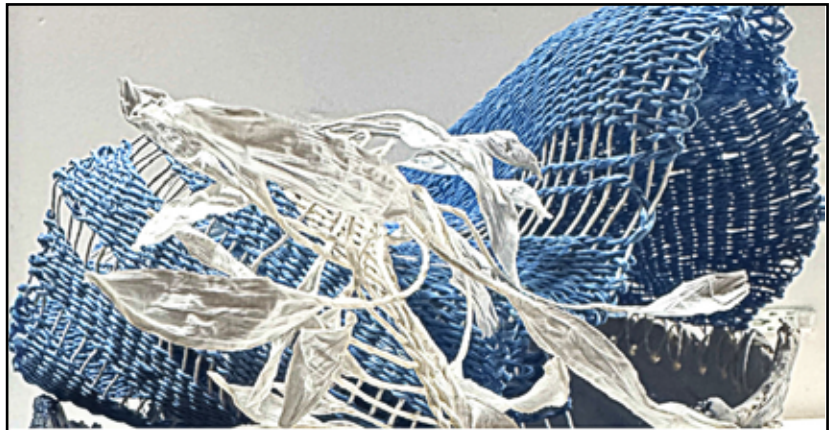
Pravaz used silver, as opposed to glass, to make his syringe. The contents were not visible and it was difficult to control the amount of medicine given to a patient. Pravaz's plunger mechanism was also different. It used a screw, rather than pushing down a plunger. This enabled the injection of small, measured amounts into an area, without creating a cut in the skin.

The glass sides of Wood's syringe made it easy to see the dosage, and the plunger allowed more control.

Adding measurements to the side of syringes gave more control over dosage. Before this, medicine doses were often measured roughly and too much or too little given to a patient. The design of syringes hasn't changed since.

Syringe material

Depending on their use, syringes are made of different types of material. Historically, syringes were made of metal and glass. This meant they were easy to clean and reuse. Before an understanding of antiseptics this was a recipe to spread disease. After discovering the importance of sterilisation, needles and syringes were sterilised between uses. Today most syringes are plastic with stainless steel needles and are single use. This ensures they are sterile for each use and won't spread disease.



RANDOM WEAVE

Basketmakers of Victoria
celebrate 40 years

15 September - 24 October

Artist members of Basketmakers of Victoria have created vibrant works that explore the astounding creative possibilities of basketry and fibre arts.

Exhibition Opening:

Saturday 19 September, 1pm – 3pm

Drop-in Basketry Demonstrations:

Saturday 3 October, 1pm – 3pm

Saturday 17 October, 1pm – 3pm

RSVP your attendance at the Exhibition Opening

artgallery@whitehorse.vic.gov.au

Whitehorse Art Gallery

Box Hill Town Hall, 1022 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill

artgallery@whitehorse.vic.gov.au

9262 6250



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2026 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 September

Saturday 7 November

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

STATISTICS

Photographs catalogued	-	4606
Artefacts catalogued	-	6977
Documents catalogued	-	8628
Museum visitors July–August	-	521

DIARY DATES

Meetings are held at the Schwerholt Cottage and
Museum Complex.

Saturday, 3 October 1pm

General Meeting

*Margaret Picken: History of a Property
Illustrator*

WHS Committee Contacts

President

Vicki Jones-Evans
0404 612 216

Vice-President

Peter McPhee

Secretary

Kathy Innes

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Eddie Tan

Local History Room (03) 9873 4946

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

Newsletter Team

Chris Gray
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WHS website

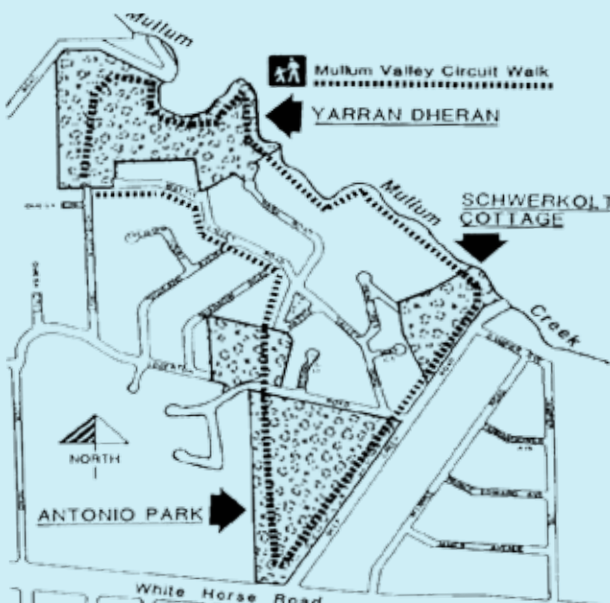
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The Whitehorse Historical Society Inc. Mission Statement & Acknowledgement of Country

"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.



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Deep Creek Road, Mitcham, VIC 3132
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