



Things Past

Newsletter 116

February 2020

PO Box 289 Mt Evelyn Vic 3796

Incorporation Number A0051327F

Dates for Your Diary

General Business Meeting, Monday 17 February, 7:30 – 9:30 pm at Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn.

Working Bee, Friday 21 February, 10 am – 12 pm at Hardy House.

Meeting, Saturday 21 March, 1:30 – 3:30pm at Hardy House. Douglas Knox will speak on the Cave Hill Tramway and log cabins. Douglas provided information for the late Ralph Alger for his article on the tramway.

Meetings are 3rd Mondays of even months, 7:30 pm at Hardy House for General Business Meetings, and 3rd Saturdays at 1:30 pm on odd months (except January) for speaker/activity. Dates are subject to speaker availability and other factors.

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Glass Photo-back Ashtray Souvenirs of Mount Evelyn



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Glass Photo-back Ashtray Souvenirs of Mount Evelyn

Glenn O'Brien contacted us at the start of 2020 to offer us a souvenir ashtray of Mount Evelyn. He had come across us online.

The ashtray measures 73 mm x 73 mm x 16 mm. Glenn believes it was never used, and that it belonged to his grandfather, surnamed Roe. He found the ashtray at the bottom of his Mum's china cabinet when he was clearing her belongings, and it is in very good condition.



Glenn's ashtray features a Rose Postcard photograph of the Mount Evelyn Railway Station taken when John Alexander Paterson was Station Master. At that time J.A. Paterson won several awards in the

non-piped water section of the railway gardens competitions.

This photograph was confused with one of two earlier Rose Postcard images at the time it was reproduced to advertise the opening of the Mt Evelyn library in 1986, and was incorrectly dated 1920. We know the approximate date of this photograph, because we have had a first-hand account of the day it was taken from Rod Paterson, the son of J.A. Paterson, who was Station Master from 1/1/1942 to 12/5/1955.

The photograph shows three men on the platform, from left to right the Porter, the photographer, and a friend of the latter. The photographer and his friend had crossed the railway lines and set up the camera for a time release shot. On their return to the platform to be in the shot, the friend had tripped and hurt his leg. He was captured for all time holding up his leg to show the damage! The background shows part of the award-winning station garden.

Many thanks, Glenn, for your donation to the Mount Evelyn History Group. If anyone knows of the Roe family, or how Glenn's grandfather came to have a souvenir of Mount Evelyn, we would love to know!

In 2007 I purchased a 'Vintage Olinda Creek Glass Photo Back Ashtray' from Shanina Conway through the OZtion website for \$10.60 (made up

of \$6 for the ashtray and \$4.60 postage). It likewise featured a Rose Postcard photograph, the one of two boys on the Olinda Creek, which is widely known from its inclusion in the fan fold collection, last reproduced in the 1960s.

Paula Herlihy

Night Moves

John Keane has rediscovered a letter he wrote to the *Herald Sun* on 2 October 2008 in relation to enemy flights over Melbourne during WWII (*Things Past* #114).

In addition to the Japanese pilot who waved to children in the bayside suburbs in 1942, there were reports of a night-time flight.

John wrote that the latter was not an enemy plane but an American transport plane.

'We're not sure where it was coming from or going to, but it flew into restricted air space and wouldn't respond to radio calls, so they fired off a few shots just to wake them up.'

From John Keane

Working Bee

Thanks Ian James, Alison Martin, Robyn Taylor, Tim Herlihy and Paula Herlihy who were able to make it to the working bee on Friday 17th January from 10am - 12 noon. Special thanks to Robyn who took away notes to type up for the 'Where Is It?' book. A lot was achieved in organising our files, and the intrepid members met afterwards for a pleasant lunch at Passchendaele's Cafe.

Thanks also to the members who apologised due to prior commitments, in particular to Mary Golds, who asked if Paula could arrange another day that fits her activities. Mary and Paula have decided on Friday 21 February 10am – 12noon, and it is booked in with the RSL.

If others can make it we would love to see you there. If you are able, please join us at Passchendaele's for lunch afterwards. Otherwise we will catch up at our first meeting for the year, Monday 17th February at 7:30pm at Hardy House.

Reg Falkingham 26.12.1928 - 22.10.2019: Mt Evelyn's Historical Memory Artist

Reg and his family were long term Mt Evelyn identities. Great-grandfather Falkingham built the railway from Dandenong to Leongatha (1890-1891) but the Kooweerup swamp 'broke his spirit' and he had a breakdown and died penniless. Each of his sons, Charlie, Tom and Harry, were 'used to high living' but, having moved around the country with their father, were used to the bush. They bought blocks of land in Mt Evelyn for about £5.

Grandfather Falkingham was believed to have arrived in Mt Evelyn about 1902, after the railway was opened. He built his first bark humpy near the present Falkingham Road.

Reg's parents arrived in Mt Evelyn in 1918 and built a small weekend building on the same property. His mother liked Mt Evelyn so much she decided to stay and they moved into the bark hut while grandfather took over the weekender.

Reg's father had begun his working life as a carpenter, working at Port Melbourne on boats to be redeployed for troop use during the First World War. Following the war he obtained work on the Silvan Dam, then the construction and widening of the Mt Evelyn aqueduct. Dad Falkingham also helped weekenders build their shacks and cottages close to the railway station, some of which survived at least through to the 1990s.

During the 1930s Depression there was an influx of permanent residents, as people were able to buy land very cheaply at £1.2.10 a quarter acre block. (Some moved full time to their holiday shacks.) Those out of work could also access, every Friday, a 'sustenance' food parcel, in nearby Lilydale. Newcomers were attracted by the access to land to grow fruit and vegetables, some casual work fruit picking and bush on which to hunt rabbits.

Grandfather Falkingham grew food on about 3 acres. The family was reliant on rainwater in

tanks and would carry water from the Olinda Creek in buckets. Sometimes they carried the laundry there as well.

As Reg's parents' family grew larger, home grown vegetables, fish from the creek, and rabbits caught by ferreting became vital. They added extra rooms to the bark hut, cut wood for heating and cooking, and built a can toilet some distance from the house. After bushfires went through the area, Dad Falkingham would retrieve pieces of iron roofing from burnt out huts to reinforce his bark roof. The rooms were lined with hessian sacking and painted with Calcine, a clay paint. The floors were earthen or gravel, retrieved from roadside cuttings. (Dad Falkingham actually worked on the straightening of the Zig Zag, Birmingham Road, using a horse and cart.)

There were many snakes in the vicinity. When the snakes got behind the bark slabs Dad Falkingham used to shoot them and when the boys went ferreting they would come across one or two dozen of them! Happily no-one in the family was ever bitten.

Beds in the extended 'Bark Rest' were originally made from saplings and straw, and children would sleep two to three a bed. The bark hut was given its name Bark Rest when Dad Falkingham built a seat half way up the hill from the creek, so visitors could have a rest. He also oversaw the cleaning out of the swimming hole in the creek below their old home.

To avert a major bushfire, Grandfather Falkingham used to set fire to the whole gully every three years. When the mounted policeman from Lilydale (Eldridge, then Edwards) visited to warn him about the proximity of the bushfire, he had to pretend he was frightened of the blaze caused by people unknown. When the area became dotted with more houses this preventative burning had to cease.

The Falkingham family was musical and artistic. Dad Falkingham started the Mt Evelyn Brass Band before the Second World War and built the Band Hall. Reg and his brothers and sisters played



Reg Falkingham

cont'd p 8

You Know You're Part of History If ... You've Ever Used These House-hold Utensils

The photographed items belonged to the late Eleanor Phillips, Kevin's mother ('Vale' in *Things Past* #114).

The kerosene lamps possibly date from the 1920s. The yellow lamp is a duplex (two wicks). Kevin remembers it still in use in the 1950s. Electricity had not been connected when his parents moved into their house in Ringwood, and was unreliable for years afterwards.



Kerosene lamps. The glass may not be original.

The flat iron, weight, and cobbler's last have been re-purposed as door stops. Flat irons had no internal heating. They were heated by standing them on a hot surface, usually a stove top.



Hurricane lamp, cobbler's last, weight, flat iron.

Most of the lettering has worn off the weight, which is for about 5 kilos. The only figure on it that can still be read is a 4. It's hard to know what it would have been in Imperial weights.

Eleanor's father made the wooden ironing board. The bellows are home-made too, but we don't know who made and repaired them, or how old they are.



Hand-made wooden ironing board, spindle, darning mushroom, bellows.



Close-up of bellows, showing repairs.

The book press was used most recently to press flowers (it seems a little excessive for that purpose).



Book press.

Sometime in the 1970s, Eleanor visited a museum in Portland that had a collection of antique household objects. Expounding on their use and purpose for her daughter's benefit, she suddenly noticed one of the curators following them round with a pen and notepad, writing down everything she said.

Even then, Eleanor was obviously part of history.

K & K Phillips

In Name and Nature: Bonnie Neilson

Bonnie (Leah Laura) Neilson (nee Knowles) was born in Prahran 1922, the year her parents Richard (Dick) Knowles and Ruby came to *The Outlook* at Mt Evelyn for a holiday and decided to remain there. Her father, Dick, was English born but he had jumped ship from the Merchant Navy in Geelong prior to World War One. Here he met and married a local girl but tragically she and their first baby died during the birth. Some time afterwards Dick married Ruby Riky, and moved to Melbourne where their first child, Alf, was born in 1918.

Dick had difficulty making a living out of bricklaying in Mt Evelyn so he and Ruby took an overdraft with the bank and set about developing *The Outlook*, an old lean-to structure with hessian and peeling wall-paper walls, into basic accommodation for holiday makers. He bought a tram and built nine or ten small 8 by 10 foot cabins.

Growing up at The Outlook guesthouse

The Outlook ultimately catered for thirty or forty guests, mostly families or women and children during school holidays but during the construction period of the Silvan Dam in particular, it also catered for full time working tenants. The modest fee for a holiday at *The Outlook* was about 30 shillings a week full board and less for children. When *The Outlook* was booked out, the family sometimes forfeited their own rooms and slept on the floor in a nearby house they could rent temporarily.

Life at *The Outlook* was interesting but hard work. Guests enjoyed porridge put on early in the morning by Dick Knowles as well as a cooked English breakfast, a cold lunch, then an evening meal cooked by Ruby and helpers. Ruby bought a half sheep from the Croydon market and large bags of potatoes and onions from the greengrocer for the guests but the family sometimes ate only bread and dripping themselves. The Knowles grew many of their own vegetables and kept up to 8 cows, which were hand milked and provided wonderful clotted cream for the guests. The cakes that were made by Mrs Knowles in very large baking dishes dominate in the memories of those who saw and

tasted them: vanilla slices, walnut and orange cakes, tarts and scones. Her home remedies were less popular. Kerosene was used for everything ranging from rubbing a sore ankle to taking a teaspoon for diphtheria.

Guests enjoyed bush walks down to the Recreation Reserve and beyond, and Bonnie with her older brother Alf too came to know and love the wonderful variety of orchids growing in the area. (There were frogmouths, greenhorns, beetle and sun orchids.) The children also enjoyed yabbing in the dam near the station, though Bonnie was pushed in the dam by Albert, the son of Mr Strickland, the grocer. (Albert later became a Minister in the Anglican Church.)

In the evenings during cooler periods there was a large open fire in the lounge where guests gathered to play Euchre, 500 or Cribbage. On occasions Dick Knowles would take up a stance with his back to the fire and they knew he would begin a recitation. This would be followed by singing around the piano; before the war, sad country songs like, '*There's a bridle hanging on the wall*' (by Carson J Robinson, concerning a man and his deceased pony), and during WW II, songs like '*Wish me luck as you wave me goodbye.*'

During the Depression Bonnie and her older brother Alf helped out by shelling peas, peeling potatoes, and killing and plucking chickens. Alf met the train and carried the suitcases belonging to guests. Work on the Silvan Dam, completed in 1932, also brought interesting permanent residents to *The Outlook*. Migrants from Sweden, Norway and Albania stayed with them and a man from Albania gave Bonnie a necklace from his homeland.

Girl Guides

Bonnie with her friends Peggy and Jean Low were some of the first Mt Evelyn Girl Guides. Former nurse and first aid officer for the Fire Brigade, Adelaide Falkingham began a guide group in 1934. The uniform Bonnie remembers as being rather ugly and the hats resembled army hats. Regular meetings were rather low key and held at the Mechanics Hall. They would sometimes take a walk around the local area, but did enjoy craft activities in Adelaide's lovely log cabin home. A highlight was a jamboree they attended in Frankston.

Schooling

Bonnie began school at Mt Evelyn Primary at the age of three, possibly as her mother did not have the time to mind her. Bonnie continued through the school to eighth grade (the Merit Certificate) graduating as dux of the school. She began to attend Zercho's Business College but before she could complete the course, tragedy struck the family when her young brother Gordon died at the age of four, following a brain haemorrhage. Bonnie was called home to help run the boarding house as her parents were so shattered by the death they could not manage by themselves.

At 15 Bonnie now began a life of almost unremitting work. She worked cooking, cleaning, scrubbing the verandah, waiting tables and even emptying chamber pots from 7am until 8pm, seven days a week. She was pleased to have one day off a year to go to Melbourne.

Bonnie's parents welcomed another girl to their fold, Joyce, whom they treated as a daughter. There was a riding school at the Recreation Reserve and Bonnie must have learned to ride as she was very amused when her friend Joyce attempted to ride, clinging to the horse's neck in fear.

The meeting of the husbands

One Christmas Day two young college educated men came to *The Outlook* for the midday Christmas dinner. Joyce was immediately attracted to the 'dark one' and managed to insert a sixpence into his piece of pudding. The young men charmed them at the meal and later when the girls walked to the main street they found them sitting outside Haughton's shop. While they stood next to them there, some young local men called out from their car asking the girls if they were going to the dance at the Do Drop In that evening. Uncharacteristically bold for that era, one of the girls turned to their new acquaintances on the bench and said, 'Would you like to come to the dance tonight?' Bonnie and Joyce, did not return home. They stayed with the boys, attended the dance and arrived home very late at about 1 am. They were met outside *The Outlook* in the street by an unamused, possibly furious Mrs Knowles, long plaited hair disarranged, an overcoat possibly over night clothes. Joyce who shared a room with Mrs Knowles, spent the rest of the night lying rigid,

sensing the disapproving atmosphere in the room.

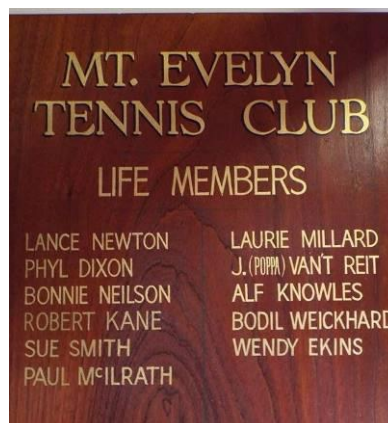
It took some time, but Joyce married the 'dark one' and Bonnie married his friend, Harry Neilson, in 1944. Harry and Bonnie lived at *The Outlook* and ran it with brother Alf as their family grew with the birth of John, Helen and Ricky. When Ricky was only ten months old (in 1949-50) Harry took a job at McEwans and Bonnie went on to have two more children, Jill and Gaye, at their new home in Glenview Rd, Mt Evelyn.

The Tennis Club

Tennis became central to the Knowles family as it grew larger with the next generation. In 1922 the Shire of Lillydale gave money towards a Mt Evelyn public tennis court.

Dick and Ruby Knowles took out a subscription on behalf of their guests but their children, Alf, Bonnie and younger sister Ruby developed a

passion for tennis and with their partners and children (Alf, but not Nancie, and children Rob, Colin, Joan and Donald Knowles; Harry and Bonnie and children John, Helen, Ricky, Jill and



Gaye Neilson; and Laurie and Ruby Millard and children Jan and Faye Millard) they formed a solid nucleus for the club for at least three decades. Bonnie was an excellent player who managed to send off her five children in whites every Saturday as well as playing and winning many premierships and trophies.

The Presbyterian Church

Church was very significant to Bonnie's life from an early age. The Methodist Church on Silvan Monbulk Road was originally called the Union Church. Horrie Alexander went around the town in a jinker picking up children so they could all attend Sunday School. Bonnie loved church so much that after her father was involved in the construction of the Mt Evelyn Presbyterian Church, she chose to belong to it, as it was of a similar denomination and closer to their home.

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Timeline of Mooroolbark Railway Station, Part 1 (1880-1920)

- 1880** Construction of the line from Hawthorn to Lilydale.
- 1881** Thursday 2nd June at the residence of Mr T. Turner, **largest meeting ever held in the District re a Station.**
15th Sept. Deputation re Brushy Creek Station 20 miles 10.03 chains from CBD. Amount £79,865.10.0.
- 1882** **Friday 1st December OPENING Camberwell to Lilydale, huge celebrations held at Lilydale.**
Gatehouse, staff porter paid 6s. 6d. a day.
- 1883** Deputation request to provide more accommodation at Brushy Creek siding for Passengers and Goods.
- 1884** 'Octopus Act' by Minister of Railways, Thomas Bent, authorised the creation of 59 new lines throughout Vic. [Sir Thomas Bent, 22nd Premier of Vic, 1904 - 1909. Mayor of Brighton 9 times, Bentleigh named in his honour.]
1st August 1884, Warrandyte Station renamed Croydon.
- 1885** Deputation again requesting the promised Station at Brushy Creek.
- 1886** Definite information re providing a shelter shed and siding platform, plans drawn up by Chief Architect, George W. Simms, soon to go to tender. First need to improve road access to proposed Station.
Land donated by Lithgow & Blair, from Griffin's Corner, adding Manchester Road northwards to become 'Five Ways'.
£ 80 donated for Mr A. Geisler to clear & build road.
- 1887** Mr George Clewett is making rapid progress in building the platform and Station proper for £343.12s. One patent Earth Closet, £ 4.15 s.
Mr Jas. Mc Ilarth contracted to supply the metal.
Request from Mr. E. A. Atkyns for the Station to be named 'Mooroolbark' after the Parish, in lieu of 'Brushy Creek'.

Monday 10th October 1887 OPENING of Mooroolbark Station.



Two Views of the Historic Section of Mooroolbark Railway Station in 2012.

- 1888** Three trains run daily.
- 1889** Slowing of the Victorian housing boom.
- 1890** Depression: soon renders many railway lines unviable.
- 1892** Tender to remove the Gatehouse.
- 1894** ‘Dastardly Outrage – Railway Bridge Tampered With’. Timber struts sawn mostly through.
- 1895** Woman-in-Charge Station. Caretaker – Gate Keeper 4s. 6d. a day.
- 1896** Gates removed.
- 1909** Crossing with gates at Manchester Road.
- 1913** 1st STORE, north-west on Manchester Rd, facing Station House.
Carron Vale Estate, £10 Deposit & 10 Year Terms.
- 1915** Postal service housed in the Store.
- 1918** Arnwood Estate, 103 acres divided into 33 Grand Blocks.
- 1920** Edna Walling purchases three acres of ‘Arnwood’ from James Hewish, where she built her first home ‘Sonning’. Walling bought the north west corner, Cardigan & Pembroke, piece by piece, building and selling, creating ‘Bickleigh Vale Village’.
Walling plants oaks about town and different avenues along north side of the Railway.
Farewell to Mr & Mrs Fahey and family at Sherlocks’ house. Mrs Fahey was the Caretaker in charge of the Station for three years, ably assisted by two of her daughters.
Repairer – Mr W. Cummings.
Saturday 11th December, Mooroolbark Township Estate opposite the Station, 12 shop sites on Taylor Road, [now Brice Avenue] 92 garden sites. £5 per lot deposit, 20s. per lot monthly.

Marion Stott - Mooroolbark History Group

Reg Falkingham

from p 3

musical instruments and took part in plays, performing acts in family and community concerts. Reg was taught commercial art by the daughter of the Outhwaite family who lived at Pine Brae, Johns Crescent, Mt Evelyn.

Reg’s talent at art and enthusiasm for the history of Mt Evelyn was to benefit our preparation of the *Track to Trails* history book and other publications. He had a wonderful visual memory of streetscapes, and the names of all the shops in the little town during the 1940s, as well as of the landscape and vegetation around the Mt Evelyn channel.

Sources: Interview with Geoff (Bob) Falkingham by J. Newton, December 1993.

Janice Newton

The Field Naturalists in Evelyn

Janice Newton found the following local reference in the *Victorian Naturalist*.

‘Excursion to Evelyn Monday 5 June (King’s Birthday). The party of 40 was led by Mr. C. Oke as C. Barrett was ill. The party walked along the now disused water race towards Wandin as far as the cascades on the Olinda Creek, returning to the station by the Wandin Road. Though there is a wealth of shrubbery etc along the creek, flowers (excepting the native heath) were scarce. A number of insects, spiders etc were also collected. Some of the party continued their walk to Lilydale.’

Vol. 39, no. 3, 6 July 1922, no. 463, p. 1 [p. 25].
Click [here](#) to view the original publication.

From Janice Newton

Hawaii Part 1. The Big Island: Volcanoes, Science and Food.

As part of our holiday in 2019 we spent three weeks in the Hawai'ian islands. We spent a week on the island of Hawai'i and a week on the island of Oahu. Sandwiched between those weeks (forgive the pun – these used to be called the Sandwich Islands) we spent a week on a cruise ship travelling at night and spending the days at different islands.

On Hawai'i and Oahu we used Shaka guides, the same sort of GPS driven guides as the Gypsy Guides we had used in Canada, and we really recommend them if you are self-driving. It is like being guided by a Local, and being treated to music, stories, history and attractions.

The island of Hawai'i (called the 'Big Island' to distinguish it from the State of Hawai'i) was our main destination, because this island contains the active volcanoes and the Keck telescope, both destinations we had wanted to visit for some time. We visited the *'Imiloa Astronomy Center* several times, which has direct links to researchers using the many telescopes on the summit of Mauna Kea, one of the two major volcanic peaks on Hawai'i. There we attended a session in the planetarium where researchers show direct feeds from the telescope and comment in real time via a different feed. There is also a Visitor Centre halfway up Mauna Kea, but we chose to hire a four wheel drive Jeep Cherokee Sport and self-drive to the peak.



The University studies indigenous fruits, and serves indigenous cuisine in its restaurant at the Astronomy Center, and decorates the tables with exquisite orchids grown at the University. We ate there regularly.

We also ate the traditional Hawaiian 'plate' in the oldest restaurant in Hawai'i, attached to the Hotel Manago in Captain Cook, where we spent several days. The Manago began life as a Japanese plantation worker's shack, offering a

bed and food to travellers, and grew into the rambling and fascinating place we stayed at. There is a lot of good Japanese food in Hawai'i because many Japanese were imported to work on the plantations. 'Plates' take many forms, being protein, often fish, raw (poke) or cooked, and different vegetable dishes, including seaweed. In their simplest, take away forms, they are in one container or on one plate. My favourite is marinated raw fish with a seaweed salad and potato/taro salad.



Here we are at breakfast: pawpaw, ham steak, eggs. The Manago offers one dish at any meal for a fixed price, but you can vary the components!

Mauna Kea is 4,207 m above sea level, with thirteen telescopes on the summit. We were warned repeatedly about the risks of altitude sickness, and we needed to stop to allow our bodies to adjust as we drove up. Even so it was cold and we were light headed as we parked at one of the telescopes at the W. M. Keck Observatory, expecting to be asked to leave. To the contrary there was a small foyer with a display explaining the work at the telescope, and a door leading to a glassed enclosure through which we could see the telescope working. It was an exhilarating experience.

Though we saw nothing that day, and were unaware that action was being taken by local people to protect Mauna Kea from more construction, we heard on the radio in following days that the road was sometimes blocked by protestors. The arguments will be familiar to us here since they echo the arguments calling for

Uluru to be closed to sightseers. Mauna Kea is 'the home of Na Akua (divine deities) and Na'Aumakua (divine ancestors) as well as the meeting place of Papa (Earth Mother) and Wakea (Sky Father) who are progenitors of the Hawaiian people'.



The W. M. Keck Observatory on Mauna Kea

The arguments are also economic and patriotic. The Hawai'ian government was overthrown by European and American plantation owners in 1893, which still rankles with Hawai'ian people, although they voted to become a state of the USA in 1959. The summit of Mauna Kea is leased by the University of Hawai'i from the state of Hawai'i, and sublet to observatories for \$1 per year. The facilities which lease the land pay the expenses of constructing and maintaining their telescopes. The observatories sell viewing time for prices like \$1 per second or \$30,000 per night. They also pass a percentage of viewing time to the University of Hawai'i Institute for Astronomy (UHIFA), making it one of the 'most prominent astronomy programs in the world'. UHIFA's focus on astronomy 'at the expense of ... the cultural and religious importance of such sites', is now under attack.

The other volcanic peak on the Big Island, Mauna Loa, is active, but unlike our concept of a volcano with a central vent at the summit, it is a cone with holes in the sides from which lava creeps in different amounts at different times. It is this volcano which still provides the island's fresh lava and the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park is the island's biggest tourist attraction. We visited but

that day was a day with no 'red' lava. Signs are posted so visitors know what to expect.

The Hawai'ian people live with volcanoes, lava, tsunamis and the sea as part of their daily life. A large amount of the Big Island is covered with black, treeless lava, and even we began to distinguish older flows from younger flows, and identify the pioneering plants. People understand that residential areas might be covered with the slow moving lava, and they pack up and retreat when the lava comes. People are at ease switching from scientific language to mythological language where the volcanoes are addressed by name, and attributed human motives like love and jealousy.

Tsunamis are also a part of Hawai'ian life. After horrible losses of life due to forgetfulness of the signs of tsunamis, these are now taught in all the Museums, and waterside areas are

signposted. Since 1948 a warning system has been in effect in Hawaii. Another site we visited was a park where a primary school had once stood, commemorating the Laupahoehoe Tsunami, which killed 159 people on the Big Island. On 1 April 1946, the sea withdrew and the children ran out to pick up the beautiful shells, including a 16 year old boy, Herbert Nishimoto. When he saw the first wave, he realised what was happening, and turned to run. The waves caught him and he was washed out to sea. When things calmed, he swam around and collected timber and rope and made a raft. He found a jar of cooking grease, and covered his body with it, and ate an apple he found floating in the sea. He picked up two other boys, but they were too weak to paddle, and could only drift. They survived on the raft for 27 hours, until they were seen from the shore and rescued. The school was destroyed, and the other children and teachers were killed. There is a poignant memorial to a later tsunami in Hilo, incorporating a large clock which survived the tsunami of 1946 but stopped when a second tsunami struck in the sixties.

Paula Herlihy

<https://sites.coloradocollege.edu/indigenoustraditions/sacred-lands/sacred-lands-mauna-kea/>

Travelling Post Offices (TPO) – Australian Night/Mail Trains

From 1865, some special trains carried mail from capital cities (and a few other centres) to the outskirts of their states at night. They were staffed by Post Office employees, who sorted the mail as the train ran through the night, and franked the stamps with 'T.P.O.' postmarks.

The train from the central point out was known as a 'down' train, and bags of mail were dropped at stations along the way. Upon reaching the end of their run, the staff slept, and then during the next evening for the 'up' train, they sorted, franked and bagged mail and again dropped it as they travelled.

Stamp collectors collect the postmarks. Train buffs relish the details of the trains. On at least one line (Sydney to Moree), the down train commenced its run with a large engine, exchanged that for a smaller engine when wood, water or coal was consumed, and then changed again to an even smaller engine for the last part of the run on very flat land.

Paula recently enjoyed a brief talk by a past Narrabri NSW Post Master, Alan Clark, at the Burwood Missions Stamp Club. Alan is a stamp collector, and has a collection of the Australian 'Cinderella' stamps put out by Prince Leonard of the Principality of Hutt River - Hutt River Province.*

In Victoria night mail trains ran from 1865 to 1932. The last Australian mail train ran in 1985.

Henry Lawson wrote a beautiful poem about one such train, and set to the music of Ade Monsborough, it is a lovely song to sing. You can read the poem online by clicking [here](#).

*Cinderella stamps are often defined in philatelic circles as 'looks like a stamp, feels like a stamp, smells like a stamp, ...' but is not a stamp. Neither the Principality of Hutt River nor the Hutt River Province is recognised by the Australian government, and its 'stamps' are merely printed paper.

Paula Herlihy

Bonnie Neilson

from p 3

This church was founded in 1933 with substantial financial and practical help from builder Mr Pitt, Mrs Pitt and Mr Begby. The Neilson children attended Sunday school, enjoying Sunday School, anniversaries and picnics as their mother had, and daughters Helen Luke and Jill Orr continue to attend this church.

In later life when both Alf and Bonnie were left without their partners and experienced the sadness of the premature death of their younger sister Ruby, the brother and sister saw each other regularly until Alf's death. They travelled together on PROBUS excursions and kept in close contact with each other's extended families.



Roger Boness, Bonnie Neilson and Alf Knowles

Bonnie continues to live independently in her unit in Mooroolbark. I am gratified by having experienced just how bonny Bonnie Neilson has been: a good, kind, hardworking, compassionate and loving person and very much a part of the story of Mt Evelyn.

Sources: Interviews by Janice Newton with Bonnie Neilson 23 July 1993, Alf Knowles 6 July 1993, Joy (Joyce) Tregonning 19 February 1994. Interview by Joan Knowles and David Collett with Ern Walker 23 August 1994.

Mary Howden, *Alf Knowles talks about his life in Mt Evelyn*, 2002.

O Platt, A Keogh and P Dunn, *The History of Guiding in Mt Evelyn* Mt Evelyn History Series 5, 1997.

J Newton, *The Mt Evelyn Tennis Club: A Social History*, Mt Evelyn History Series 13, 2000.

J Newton, K Phillips, P Herlihy, *Tracks to Trails*, 1997.

Janice Newton

Vale: John Francis Waghorn 1936 – 2019

John Waghorn worked for the Post Master General (PMG) for nearly forty years, and was an avid amateur historian of all things related to postal history. He was the go-to person for information about Post Offices in Victoria, and most of the early dates and names of people in *Tracks to Trails: a history of Mt Evelyn* about the two post offices used here, were cheerfully supplied by John. John told me that the postal records had just been dumped unsorted on the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) and he and others volunteered every Tuesday to sort the records.

Because of John's interest and generous nature, we easily learnt that the *Mount Evelyn Post Office* was established in 1904 as *Valinda*, changed to *Evelyn* in 1908, and became *Mount Evelyn* in 1913. *McKillop Post Office* was opened in 1916,

and was often referred to as *Valinda Hills* in early correspondence. It closed around 1990. The Mt Evelyn Railway Station opened in 1901 as *Olinda Vale*, the probable source of the contraction *Valinda*.

I met John personally when researching *Tracks to Trails*, and later when I attended a Whittlesea Historical Society AGM, due to me contacting Whittlesea concerning family connections in the area. By this time (around 2009), John's eyesight was failing, but he was pleased to remember Mt Evelyn. John was for many years both treasurer and vice-president of Whittlesea Historical Society, and was presented with an Award of Merit from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV) in 2000. Thank you, John, for your contribution to Mt Evelyn's history.

Paula Herlihy

From Kev's Rain Gauge

Rainfall (in mm) for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, and Melbourne for the last three months.

	Nov-19	Dec-19	2019 Totals	Jan-20
Mt Evelyn	119.7	24.1	798.8	104.2
McKillop	125.8	17	907.4	102.7
Melbourne	54.4	6.2	374.4	115.2

McKillop readings courtesy Jean Edwards

Melbourne figures from Bureau of Meteorology: <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/>

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