

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc.



Things Past

Newsletter 118

August 2020

PO Box 289 Mt Evelyn Vic 3796

Incorporation Number A0051327F

Dates for Your Diary

Unfortunately, due to the measures being taken to protect everyone at risk from COVID-19, all History Group activities are cancelled until further notice. We have received advice from Consumer Affairs Victoria that the Registrar is currently granting three-month extensions on AGMs and waiving the usual fee. We will seek an extension.

In This Issue...

Major Money and his Gladioli Gardens	1
Congratulations Marion	2
Trail Notes	2
Universal Business Directory 1966 includes Mount Evelyn	2
Vale Reg Falkingham 26.12.1928 - 22.10.2019 (Part 2)	5
Notes on Big Gums Estate 1920s, 1950s-60s	7
Log Cabins and the Tramway	9
Letter from Member Bev Watkins in Maryborough	
<i>Lilydale Express</i> Digitisation	10
Response from Jean Edwards to <i>Things Past</i> no. 117	11
You Know You're Part of History When...	11
Hawaií (cont'd)	12
From Kev's Rain Gauge	12

Major Money and his Gladioli Gardens



*Major Money's house, early 1920s.
Photo Yarra Ranges Regional Museum.*

cont'd p 3

Congratulations Marion!



Congratulations to Marion Stott OAM, on being recognised in the Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours list for service to the community of Mooroolbark.

Marion, who lived in Mt Evelyn in the seventies, is a member of the Mt Evelyn History Group in addition to being President of the Mooroolbark History Group, and a representative to the Yarra Ranges Heritage Network and the Association of Eastern Historical Societies.

In the absence of an RSL in Mooroolbark, Marion organises events around Anzac Day and Remembrance Day in Mooroolbark, and has been active in the redesign of Hookey Park and the creation of the memorial there.

She is a major mover in working to protect the Mooroolbark Railway Station building during the current planned upgrade.

Marion is also a member of the Mooroolbark Umbrella Group (MUG), the Township Group for Mooroolbark, and created 'Celebrate Mooroolbark', the history of the *Celebrate Mooroolbark* festival in Mooroolbark, formerly the *Red Earth Festival*.

While in Mt Evelyn, Marion was very active on the committees and fundraising for the Nursing Mothers Association, Baby Sitting Club, Toy Library and Morrison House and set up the Montessori Play Group which still runs as a commercial pre-school in Mt Evelyn: the *Childrens' House of Early Learning* in Watkins Crescent. Marion went on to found the Village

School in Croydon. Marion is the franchisee for Gymparoo in Mooroolbark, where she creates wonderful themed sessions throughout the year. The photo is taken from Gymparoo publicity.

Many of us have enjoyed Marion's talks to Mt Evelyn History Group on the 'Lone Pine', and a (non-walking) Walking Tour of Mooroolbark! Knox said they had rarely laughed so much as during Marion's talk last year - Marion is a very witty speaker with a dry sense of humour!

And we do not forget her very able support staff, husband Lloyd! Many thanks to you both - you have improved Mt Evelyn, Mooroolbark, the Shire and the Region hugely by your work! Marion and Lloyd have great personal interest in genealogy, and travel extensively to family reunions and events, in particular those connected to the Boer War and Lone Pine.

Congratulations Marion!!! A well deserved award! We wish Marion a speedy recovery from her current poor state of health.

Trail Notes

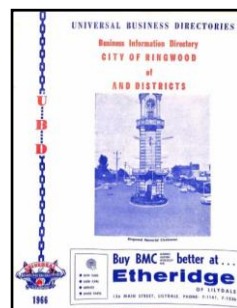
The first stage of the Yarra Valley Loop, along the old Healesville Railway alignment, is now open: Lilydale – Blacks Quarry Siding – Coldstream – Yering.

There is historical signage at the former station sites. The section from Yering to Yarra Glen is expected to be completed by late 2021.

Work is under way on the section of the Warburton-Carrum Trail through the Olinda Creek Wetlands and Lillydale Lake Reserve.

Universal Business Directory 1966 includes Mount Evelyn

Russ Haines, President of Ringwood Historical Society, sent a scan of the 1966 Universal Business Directory (UBD) for the City of Ringwood and Districts to be uploaded to the Association of Eastern Historical Societies Facebook page.



This is a reference for street names, businesses, 1966 map, for Mooroolbark, Warrandyte, Wonga Park, etc. and INCLUDES a small entry on Mt Evelyn.

It can be found there, or on our Facebook page: Mount Evelyn History Group.

Major Money and his Gladioli Gardens

Ruth McLean from Yarra Ranges Regional Museum asked if we had any further information about this photo from their collection. A note with the photo read: 'Major Money died in 1965 aged 90. Major Money Built in 1910. Donated by Mr Money.' The envelope had the address 'No 8 Winsor (sic) Crescent Surrey Hills, opp Surrey Hills Railway Station.' We can now fill in more of the story.

Edward Russell Kyrle Money was born at Westhampnet, Sussex, England on 18 April 1875.¹ He was the son of Lt. Col. Edward James Thrayle D'Oyley de Bourbel Money (1823-1889) and his second wife Georgina Mary Russell (1835-1931). On the 1891 census for England, Edward Money's occupation was listed as 'Cadet HMS Worcester'. He was living at Portsmouth Road, Kingston, Surrey. On the 19 December 1895 he achieved his Certificate of Competency as Second-Mate of a Foreign-Going Ship. By 1 December 1900 he was listed as a Lieutenant in the Royal Indian Marine (R.I.M.)² with a Certificate of Service as Master of a Foreign-Going Ship by the order of the Board of Trade, 7 June 1902. An entry from Masters in the Merchant Service lists Edward Russell Kyrle Money as Lieut. R.I.M., promoted to Commander R.I.M. 18 April 1907.

Sometime before 1910, Edward Money spent time in Western Australia. In the March quarter of 1910 he married Keziah or Kesiah Warren at Wandsworth, London. Edward (then 35) and Keziah (25) sailed for Melbourne on the White Star liner 'Afric' from Liverpool on 7 April 1910. Writing from Melbourne on 18 June 1910, 'E.R.K. Money' began a correspondence with the Imperial Pensions Office in Melbourne. He asked for his service pension of 120:2:0 rupees (£10:18:1) per month, which had been paid to the Western Australian Treasury in Perth, to be transferred to the Tasmanian Treasury, Hobart. His intention was to settle in a remote part of Tasmania. Requested to submit a Life Certificate each month, he responded dryly that his ability to cash a cheque was accepted as sufficient proof of life by the India Office in Whitehall, London.

¹ Some sources give his birth year as 1874, but 1875 would fit his age at death.

² The Royal Indian Marine became the Indian Navy.

Money changed his mind and decided to settle in Victoria; letters later that year requested the pension payments be transferred from Hobart to the Melbourne Treasury. Edward Russell Kyrle Money, 'retired mariner' and his wife were living in Riversdale Road Surrey Hills 1912-13. Early in WWI, 'Lieutenant E. R. K. Money, formerly of the Royal Indian Marine, has been appointed transport-officer in the Commonwealth naval forces at a salary of £450 a year', *The West Australian* reported (28/12/1914). Supplements to the *London Gazette* dated 11/9/ 1915 show Edward Russell Kyrle Money to be a temporary Captain, and the issue dated 9/3/1917 stated 'Temporary Major Edward Russell Kyrle Money, Royal Engineers, awarded the Order of the White Eagle, 5th Class'.³ He retained the rank of Major when he resigned his commission in 1921. He returned to Victoria aboard the 'Mantua' in 1920. It was in the ratings year 1920-1921 that Major E.R.K. Money's name first appeared in the Shire of Lillydale rate books. He held title to just over 20 acres, with house, on McKillop Road, Mt Evelyn. The photo of the house must have been taken not long after that; the date '1910' on the note was incorrect. Helen Darvell nee Koolmees, whose family later bought the adjoining property, confirmed that this was Major Money's house. We presume that the couple on the porch are the Major and his wife Keziah, and that the young man on the bicycle is his nephew, Ernle Kyrle Money. The vine trained around the window-frames may be passionfruit, which was the Major's main crop before he turned to flower farming.

The Major grew gladioli on his land and developed an extensive mail order business in gladioli corms. He was listed in the rate books and directories at various times as a farmer, fruit grower and florist. His 'World Famous Gladioli Gardens' were opened to the public each year, for a silver coin donation in aid of the Lord Mayor's Appeal, the Melbourne Hospital or the Red Cross.

Visitors are made welcome, and are "personally conducted" over the extensive grounds, picturesquely set on the rising of one of the pleasant hills of the Silvan amphitheatre. ... Our party did not meet the proprietor, who was away

³ An honour bestowed by Serbia during World War I.

marketing a load of gladioli at two o'clock this morning. He supplies 300 dozen bunches a week. Mrs Money and her nephew did the honors, and explained that the garden is never watered. Too much moisture is not good for gladioli, but the rich red soil is kept loose between the rows by a 10-tine horse drawn cultivator. There are about eight people employed on the garden, mostly girls, and they are obviously happy in their delightful task of cutting the flowers – an operation requiring skill and precision, it seems, or the bulbs are damaged.

We wandered among the flowers – pure white, sulphur yellow, crimson, almost black again – every color in the spectrum and more besides. We were reverently shown the Prince of India, the most remarkable gladiolus in cultivation on account of its coloring and shading. (Healesville & Yarra Glen Guardian, 7/2/1931)

One of the most interesting portions of the land ... was a one-acre block planted in gladioli and in full bloom. At this time last year the land was uncleared bush, covered with timber and undergrowth. Through last July and August the land was cleared and allowed to lie fallow for a couple of months. The soil is a fine, porous red soil, the land protected from hot north winds by the uncleared timber adjoining. From the time of planting no artificial water has been applied, the plants having to rely only on the rainfall – certainly a fairly generous one in that hilly southern district in Victoria. But the season has been intensely hot at intervals, and the results seen proved again the remarkable suitability of the gladioli to our climate. (The Australasian, 3/2/1934)

The Major's fundraising activities were not confined to his gardens. In the 1920s he led an orchestra, Major Money's Merrymakers, which provided the music for charity balls in Silvan and Mt Evelyn. In 1925 he was elected President of a newly-formed Progress Association in McKillop.

The Major and his nephew Ernle were both listed as fruit farmers in McKillop Road Mt Evelyn in the 1927 Electoral Roll. In the ratings year 1933-1934, in addition to his 20 acres and house, the Major owned an adjoining seven acres in partnership with Ernle. In the following ratings year, Ernle was the sole owner of the seven-acre property.

Sometime in the early war years the Major moved to Victoria Parade, Frankston. He sold his surplus furniture in 1942 and donated some of

his gladioli corms to the Frankston Red Cross Shop in 1944. 'Major K. Money late of Mt Evelyn' was selling bulbs by mail order from Frankston by January 1945. He retained ownership of his 20-acre property in Mt Evelyn until 1949. He then sold it to J.H. Ward, who traded under the 'Major Money' name. Ward later sold to McIlroy.

Ernle served in the R.A.N. from 1942 to 1946. The Koolmees family bought Ernle's property in the 1950s, by which time the Major's house and gardens on the original block were in ruins. Mr Koolmees registered the business name 'Major Money's', with the family's permission. In 1958 another of the Major's nephews, Alonzo Money, was listed in the Sands & McDougall Directory as a resident of Mt Evelyn.

The Major and Keziah lived out the rest of their lives in Frankston. Edward Russell Kyrle Money, Gentleman, died 30 June 1965, aged 90. Keziah Money, Widow, died 1 November 1969, aged 84.

They do not appear to have had any children,

... Yet another noted identity to pass on was Major K. Money, former nurseryman, of Mt. Evelyn, and in recent years a resident of Frankston. Major Money was a familiar figure in Lilydale district for many years, and in his younger days made fame as the grower of top grade gladioli and deffodils at his McKillop Road farm. He disposed of the business a few years back and moved into retirement at Frankston. He enjoyed reasonably good health until a short time back when he was admitted to Royal Melbourne Hospital for an operation, from which he did not recover. Major Money was aged 90.

**Cutting from the
Lilydale Express, 1 July
1965, courtesy
Anthony McAleer.**

though a man claiming to be Major Money's son visited the Koolmees and claimed the farm was his. Both of the nephews married during the war, and both had families. Ernle Kyrle Money died in Brisbane 6 July 1985, aged 87. Alonzo Money and his wife Olive were listed in the Victorian Electoral roll for 1954 at 'Gausworth', East Avenue, Mt Evelyn. His occupation was Printer and hers was Home Duties. Alonzo died 14 March 1986 aged 90. He was then a Pensioner, and his place of residence was still Mt Evelyn. The 'Mr Money' who donated the photo to the Museum was probably Alonzo or his youngest son, Robert Alonzo.

Karen Phillips

Sources

Index of Births Deaths & Marriages; Unassisted Passenger Lists and Wills & Probate Index, PROV;

cont'd p 12

Vale Reg Falkingham (26.12.1928 - 22.10.2019) (Part 2)

Like [his brother] Alby, Reg was a gentle man who earned the respect of others because of his genuine interest in other people's lives. Reg was always shy in a crowd but really loved engaging with people one on one. He maintained a love of music and performance throughout his life. Cecily, Reg and Caroline had annual subscriptions to Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, and looked forward to this time together to enjoy the music.

Caroline recalls, sometimes sitting up in a theatre with Dad, waiting to watch a play or musical and he would talk about the carpentry work he did there as a young man. He loved renovating Her Majesty's Theatre and the Regent Theatre and spying on the performers during the rehearsals. When his youngest granddaughter started school at Luther College, he told her about the building work he had also done there in the early days. He recalled the commanding views across the bush to Wonga Park and beyond. When he visited Carlton breweries with his son-in-law Alex he told of the building work he had done there in the early days. Reg worked in many notable places around Melbourne and in the suburbs.

When Reg's father died, he took on work at a factory to have more regular hours to be able to support his mother. This was when he met Cecily. After marrying her he went back into the building industry, working for a company called Johns and Lyng for many years and working locally on weekends to maintain Whitefriars College and the Monastery in Park Orchards. He was on the tools for most of that time and it took a toll on his body. At Johns and Lyng he was promoted to building supervisor but when a recession hit a short time later he was retrenched. He was in his early fifties with young teenage children and a wife to support. He decided to have a go at self-employment and was surprised to find that he was able to build up a group of clients that provided ongoing verbal referrals to others over a 35-year period. Reg worked for some of the same families for all of these years. After his death, Reg's family found that he had kept a selection of written references provided by former employers and clients. They all referred to his high-quality work, reliability and honesty.

Reg was a kind and caring father and worked very hard to be a great provider. Cecily was able to focus on parenting during the children's primary years and Reg took on the extra weekend work to enable this to happen financially. Dale and Caroline remember helping him on weekends and playing at Whitefriars College when they were young. They probably got under his feet, but he'd get them sweeping and being useful when he could. Caroline recalls the lovely smell of sanded timber, the sound and smell of the electric saw and itchy feeling from playing in the insulation. Once Dale was a teenager, he was engaged to help in the business with the heavier jobs constructing pergolas and decks. He learnt rapidly that a desk job as a draftsman might be easier on the body and better for the pocket.

Reg was dedicated family man and was very busy ferrying both kids to before- and after-school sports training and weekend activities. He watched their sports and juggled the messy timetable of weekend netball and football matches with guiding and scouting activities. He sacrificed his own down time and leisure time, especially during the footy and cricket season and when Caroline joined the Swim Squad at the Olympic Pool, which meant early morning training. Life was very busy. When the time came, he supported their career choices and was encouraging in every way, helping them emotionally, practically and financially throughout.

Reg liked to be useful. He thrived on giving and hated to see people suffer; especially family. He was a protective father and husband and would do anything to relieve suffering or pain.

Reg was a supportive father in law. He cared deeply about helping both couples as their children grew up.

Reg tried to retire at age 65 but continued to do many small and not so small building and carpentry jobs until he was nearly 85 years old. This included renovation and maintenance of homes, schools and medical facilities. At the age of 89 years, he ceased doing maintenance, mowing and handyman work for his good friends Doctor Paul and Dorothy Adrian, finally admitting that he was getting a bit old to do the work.

All of his grandchildren share fond memories of coming together at the family home or in the bush to celebrate events. Camping trips were a

real adventure and swimming in the icy Yarra river at Warburton unforgettable. Reg loved fires and poked and adjusted the timber to get the best coals and watch the flames and sparks.

Reg always had to start his day with *The Age*. Even recently, if it landed on the roof, he'd get up on a ladder to retrieve it, much to the horror of his neighbours. The grandkids all knew their grandpa was a whiz with words, especially Cryptic Crosswords and Target Word puzzles. Caroline's kids were regularly enlisted to give him a hand and loved to help him find the nine-letter word and enough words for him to get 'genius' status.

Reg had a passion for sketching, drawing and painting. He contributed a number of paintings of the early life in Mount Evelyn for the historical society and the *Tracks to Trails* book on Mount Evelyn's history. He had a brilliant memory for detail and was able to capture the characters and landscapes of the early to mid-1900s.

Reg's other passion was cooking. He took this up wholeheartedly in retirement. All of the grandchildren were introduced to cooking from a young age. Reg often baked cakes and other treats and delivered them to local shop owners, neighbours, doctors at his clinic, friends and family, and others who faced hard times.

Reg had extensive arthritis and disc degeneration along with two artificial hips, knees and repaired shoulders. He developed a condition called polymyalgia rheumatica about 10 years ago and was diagnosed 12 months ago with a blood condition in which the bone marrow's blood production almost ceased. This required blood transfusions every six weeks due to anaemia and marked physical weakness. Despite these conditions he led a very physically active life until about two years ago when he started noticing more pain, muscle weakness and fatigue. He was still bush walking and living independently, maintaining his home and sharing a wonderful life with Cecily, his children and grandchildren.

Recently, Reg's quality of strength and stamina diminished and he became frustrated by not

being able to be as active as he would have liked. The doctors encouraged him to continue to walk regularly, which he did most days. Four days before he died, he was walking in Marysville on a short holiday that he took with Cecily.

Sadly, Reg contracted shingles and due to his compromised immunity was unable to recover from the sudden onset of pneumonia and septic shock. He was admitted to Emergency in the wee hours of the 22nd October and moved into ICU where he spent the day valiantly fighting to stay alive; hoping to make it to the next Falkingham Reunion in November 2019. He chatted away throughout the morning between bouts of sleep. The nurses found him charming. The medical team at Knox hospital provided considerable support throughout the day and he rallied well. However, it became apparent in the late afternoon that Reg's system was unable to take over the functions of the life-supporting medication and equipment. He quietly passed away at 8pm on the same day (22nd October 2019).

Since Reg's passing, the reactions and stories shared from people Reg has known have been deeply touching and moving. Everyone had the same sense of profound loss and deep respect for him. He was often referred to as nature's gentleman. The family are comforted to know that Reg touched the hearts of everyone he came in contact with and built beautiful relationships with them over time.

Reg's GP said, 'Reg was such a special man. I am really going to miss him. He was like a young man of 25 or 30 in a 90-year-old's body, his mind was so alert and sharp. He was incredible. He was witty and kind and very intelligent. Reg was a very special gentle man.'

Reg will be remembered as a kind, gentle family man. He was loved by all his family and respected by everyone who came to know him.

Caroline Macdonald



90th Birthday Celebrations

Notes on Big Gums Estate 1920s, 1950s-60s

On Saturday 21 January 1922 *The Argus* advertised holiday blocks on behalf of Chew, 99 Queens Street Melbourne. Big Gums Estate was 27 miles from the city at Mt Evelyn. It was the land between Birmingham Rd and Irvine St, cross cut by Alice, Louisa and Elizabeth Streets. Jim Spiers believed the original owner was a Mr Muller or Miller.

Owners listed for JG Chew's 1921-2 Estate 'Big Gums' Lillydale Shire Rate Books South-West Riding 1921-2, 1924-5

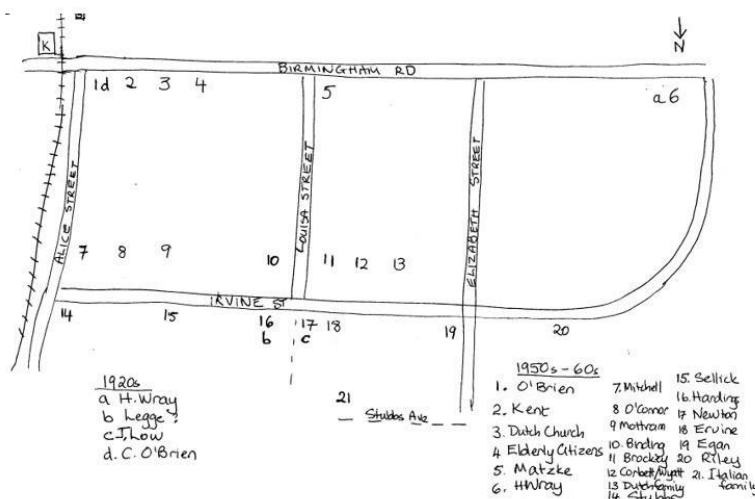
Abramovitch	Lake	Rowen
Duggan	Lockyer	Smart
Elder	Low	Steward
Forrester	McDougall	Stone
Furmedge	Miller	Strickland
Gallagher	Moore	Symonds
Gay	Newton	Toone
Hall	Neyton	Townsend
Harding	O'Brien	White
Hayward	Purser	Whitenbury
Holt	Quealy	Williamson
Hoylong	Rayne	Wingrove
Jacobson	Rennick	Wood
Joynes	Richard	Wridgway
Jollyan	Roberts	White
Knell	Rogers	

JG Chew, Estate Agent is listed as owning Lots 7-10, 27-30, 35-43 and 45-94 of Sect. 30 D.

An interview with Nena O'Brien and my own memories are used to fill out some of the history of this area.

Nephews, Uncles and Aunts

Miss Charlotte O'Brien, a single older woman, ran a sweet shop in Malvern with her two sisters. Thinking that it might be a future asset, Charlotte purchased a holiday block at 37 Birmingham Road at the first land sale, probably in early 1923. Chew,



Sketch Map of Big Gums Estate

the Real Estate agent, was a nephew of Mr Kent, who already lived in Alice Street. His aunt went to the Malvern Congregational Church with Charlotte. Every Sunday, when she attended Church, Charlotte gave 5/- in payment to Kent's aunt for the block. On her first visit to the beautiful block, covered in gums and sarsaparilla (*Hardenbergia violacea*) and home of many kookaburras, she was unsure of her block borders. She and her sisters walked a few metres from the Mt Evelyn Railway Station and set up their picnic afternoon tea between Birmingham Road and Railway (Wray) Crescent, under the Fire Bell.

Charlotte had a dream to build on the block and save money on holidays but, for 20 years, she just travelled to Mt Evelyn for day picnics or to stay at rental cottages nearby. (One of these rental cottages was in Louisa Street and owned by Hughie Wray.) Charlotte once considered selling her block



Train in snow, possibly Alice St or Birmingham Rd area.
Photo courtesy Nena O'Brien.

but when the potential buyer turned out to be a man who wished to open a wine saloon, she took down the 'For Sale' sign, as selling alcohol was strongly against her convictions.

Houses already occupied by permanent residents in the 1920s included possibly the house of Charlie Stubbs on the corner of Alice and Irvine

Streets and Jimmy Low, the Green-grocer, who lived on the corner of Louisa and Irvine Streets in a four bedroomed house surrounded by a verandah that may have been built in the 1880s or 1890s. Hughie Wray lived on the corner of Birmingham Road and Irvine Street.

In 1946 Charlotte's nephew, Bert (Frederick Herbert) O'Brien returned from the war and Charlotte offered him the block of land to build a home, as long as Charlotte and her sisters could continue to visit and stay. In this post war period more housing in this Big Gums Estate became permanent, with many widows taking up the cheap housing option.

Bert was a roof tiler who worked for the company Wonderlux. He built his house at 35 Birmingham Road but the beautiful stone work was done by a man called Maurie Fields from Billy Goat Hill. (Maurie lived next to a quarry and kept goats. He had many children and as the family got larger he added room after room, each one on a different level as the building descended the hill.)



Looking towards Kinglake from 35 Birmingham Rd 1952, with back sheds and the garages of Reid next door (37), and Kent, as well as chimney of Mrs Mitchell's home.

Bert and Nena O'Brien

Around 1951 Bert married Nena Margaret (1916-2001) and they had two children: John and Sue. Unfortunately in 1952 Bert fell off a ladder and injured himself and was unable to continue roofing. He obtained work as a driver for Theo Millard, becoming one of 'Millards' Boys' for many years. Nena lived at 35 Birmingham Rd, Mt Evelyn for 50 years.



Bert and Nena O'Brien with Gladys on a Sunday walk beside railway line, 1952

By the 1950s Big Gums Estate boasted two medical professional quarters. Before Dr Bill Hardy became the first permanent doctor in Mt Evelyn, Lilydale doctors had, in 1954, a couple of days a week at 39 Birmingham Road. Here they hired a back room and people sat (often in the cold) on a stool on the front verandah waiting to be seen. There was also a dentist operating from the house labelled as 'Mrs Brockey' on the corner of Louisa and Irvine Streets, opposite Lows/Newtons.

Electoral roll names (LaTrobe: Croydon) and occupations from 1954 Big Gums Estate and environs*

Birmingham Rd	Birmingham Rd	Irvine St	Irvine St	Alice St
Ethel & Robert Bishop (labourer)	Margaret and Carmel (machinist) Hughes	Elizabeth Banfield 'Glen Pine'	Clara Quick	Freda and William Blunden (carpenter)
Percival Davely (foreman)	Lorna & John Jermyn 'West Hill'	Dorothy & William Brockey (dentist)	Francis Rafferty (driver)	Jeanne Houstoun-Lang
Evelyn and George Dorward (storekeeper)	Helen & James Johnston	Dorothy, Eric and Keith Corbett (RAN)	Mavis (machinist) and Tom Sellick (joiner)	Helen Kelly
Herbert Fielder	Mary Meckeff	Dot and Bill Ervine (mechanic)	Maud & Edwin Silk	Nena & F Herbert O'Brien(tiler)
Eva, Lawrence & Terry Frankland (truckdriver)	Peter O'Connor (driver)	Joan Egan	Henry Smalley (carpenter)	Eileen and Charles Stubbs (butcher)
Sylvia & Marco Ghiradello (store-keeper)	Hilary & Geoffrey Sims (foreman)	Thelma and Frank Fairclough (driller)	Florence & Albert Stroud	John Whitting (carpenter)
Phillipa & Henry Godfrey	Flora & John Smith (teacher)	Beryl (machinist), Elsie & Cyril Gray (plumber)	Francis & Harold Tarbath (clerk)	Louisa St
Eileen Gorham	Eunice (machinist) & Roy Thompson (machinist)	Janet & Robert Lumsden (labourer)		Edith and John Binding (carpenter)
Ron Hester (linesman)	Elsie Watts (process worker)	Margaret (factory) & Ralph Mortimer (storeman)		Patricia and James Harrison (carpenter)
Annie Hind	Lily White	Dorothy & Herbert Osborne (drover)		Jean and Lance Newton (clerk)
Cecilia & Charles Horan (stevedore)	Alice and Hugh Wray	Gertrude, Evean (traveller)& Derek Owen (RAAF)		

*As there are no house numbers given, it is impossible to know which houses in Birmingham Rd and Irvine St were part of the development. Almost all women listed occupation as Home Duties. When this was not the case, a female's occupation is listed.

My 1955-70 memories of residents in the Big Gums Estate environs include Millards worker Tom and Mavis Sellick, 'Mad Tom' and his mother Mrs O'Connor, Charlie Stubbs, Mr Mitchell (a magician), Mr Legge, the Hardings, Stan and Beryl Mottram, Lance and Jean Newton, Bill and Dot Ervine, Mrs Corbett, Mrs Binding, Mrs Brockey, Matzkes, Alan and Joan Egan, Mrs Riley, Hughie and Alice Wray.

Janice Newton

References

- The Argus* 21 Jan 1922, 16.
- Interview with Nena Margaret O'Brien 9 March 1996 by Janice Newton*
- 1954 Electoral Roll La Trobe: Croydon.
- Lilydale Shire Rate Books 1921-2, 1924-5.

Log Cabins and the Tramway

Douglas Knox, our March speaker, gave an interesting talk on two local log cabins and the Cave Hill Tramway. He opened with a brief description of his early life. He started life at the Presbyterian Babies Home and then moved to Kildonan children's services.

Douglas's association with the Mt Evelyn/Lilydale area came about indirectly through a wartime aviation accident. On 25 May 1944, two RAAF Vultee Vengeances crashed in cloud on Mt Disappointment.⁴ The crews were not given updated weather reports that would have warned them of a change of weather. Both crews were killed, including a 19-year-old Pilot Officer named Ralph Erskine.

Ralph's mother, Mrs Erskine, took the loss hard. Her daughter Joan arranged for her to take in a foster child, and Douglas was the chosen one. 'I was picked out of 40-plus kids [to be fostered out], so I landed on my feet.'⁵ Douglas was to be 'a distraction' for Mrs Erskine, a duty he claimed to have discharged successfully. He lived with Mr and Mrs Erskine at Mont Albert for four years, until Joan married and Mr Erskine gave her the Mont Albert home as a wedding present. Mr Erskine bought a house on four and a half acres in David Road. He was a keen gardener and wanted a lot of land for his gardens.

So Douglas moved to 53 David Road Lilydale 'with Uncle Jim and Mum (Mr & Mrs Erskine), where he turned this ramshackle property into a garden of Eden, 49 chickens, up to five goats, three compost pits and lots of vegies' Mr Erskine won prizes for the best vegetables at the Box Hill Agricultural Show.

The house was a small derelict log cabin that had once been the gatehouse to a nudist colony. The original cabin had an entrance, kitchen and bedroom built on. The Erskines added a second bedroom with a wide entrance, and dug under the house for storage. The log cabin had a huge fireplace that Mr Erskine added to, and he sealed between the logs to keep the cabin warm and draught-free. The land appeared to have been a chicken farm, as there were four chook runs on

the property. Mr Erskine repaired one of these, about the centre of the first row, which became Douglas' bedroom. The second row was organised so that Mrs Erskine could run 49 chickens – in those days if you had 50 chickens you had to join the Victorian Egg Board. The land was infested with blackberries, which Mr Erskine cleared to create the garden. The original stone front fence is still there.

The nudist colony had ceased to operate long before Douglas and the Erskines moved up there. The main building was a larger cabin that stood further back from the road. A Mrs Edmunds, who lived in the larger cabin, kept English Setter dogs on the property and ran the Lilydale Kennels. After Mrs Edmunds left (or died?), a Mrs Murphy took over the property. She invited Douglas in to look at the impressive house. There was a verandah along the front, a garage on the level of the driveway and steps up to the door. Douglas remembered a huge stone fireplace on the wall away from the entrance, and two lofts (mezzanine floors). The bathroom had a pink sunken bath, and a skylight casting an eerie green colour over the room.



Douglas showed us two paintings of the large log cabin from different directions, artist and date unknown. This cabin burnt down about 1960. The smaller one that the Erskines bought was demolished 1988-1989.

From the verandah you could see a wooden bridge over a tributary of Olinda Creek which ran through the property. The creek fed a lake or swimming pool, formed by a stone embankment, and once used by the nudists. This creek is now known to Melbourne Water and Google Maps as the Fuller Road Drain (it is channelled in its lower

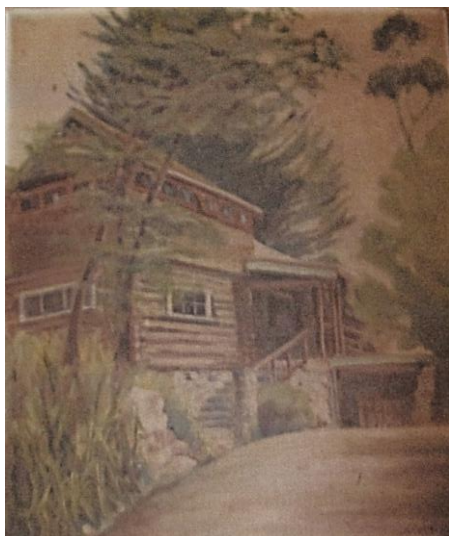
⁴ Peter Dunn, 'Australia at War',

<https://www.ozatwar.com/crashvic.htm> and Les Lewis

<https://www.ozatwar.com/vic19.htm>

⁵ Douglas Knox's speech notes.

section).⁶ Ralph Alger called it 'D Creek' in his article 'Reminiscences of the Cave Hill Tramway'.



Ralph Alger and Douglas' father Alan Knox were friends. Alan worked for Ralph on occasion, and they were both members of the Walking Club of Victoria. Ralph asked Douglas to show him what he knew of the area. Both were sure there had been a branch of the tramway in the David Road area but differed on the route. Douglas thought it would have gone via a cutting that ran up the length of the creek gully. Ralph Alger reconstructed the route as crossing the gully above the log cabin and continuing close to what became the Fuller Road alignment, till it reached a place where several gullies converged on 'D Creek'.⁷

It was noted that there is now a 'W Class' Melbourne tram at the Mt Evelyn Garden Centre on York Road, only a few metres from where the main branch of the Cave Hill Tramway used to pass. We hear it is intended as a small café.

Karen Phillips

Lilydale Express Digitisation

Despite Covid-19 and all the obstacles, the National Library has now digitised the *Lilydale Express* to 1920. This means all the pages can be searched of the newspaper dating from the first issue in 1886 through to 1920. The latest tranche of digitisation of the *Express* was funded by the Public Record Office.

Sue Thompson

⁶ This is the creek that rises on the Beryl Phillips Nature Reserve on Stubbs Avenue, Mt Evelyn.

⁷ Ralph Alger, 'Reminiscences of the Cave Hill Tramway', *Light Railways* No.111, January 1991.

Letter from Member Bev Watkins in Maryborough

Dear Paula & Tim & History Group Members,
Many thanks for forwarding the History Magazine recently. I find these very interesting, the latest one of course with an update of the Church in Watkins Crescent. Allan's family had a very long association right to the final days of the church.⁸ All ancient history now of course.

Lorraine [Fairweather] had rung me to tell me of Gladys [Falkingham]'s passing. A dear lady in every sense.

I don't hear much news of the old town except for when Lorraine and I phone each other. ...

I've been having a quiet time along with many others but no very bad times for us oldies really. I feel sorry for all those out of work.

I don't think we have had any recent contacts or cases – one very early from a returning traveller who is OK now.

I miss my social activities of course but they will come back in due course I suppose. The country will take a long time to recover. It's a part of history that we would rather not have experienced.

Janine has been coming over every seven or eight days to do my grocery shopping - no mean feat as it's a 140 km round trip, of course all my friends and "reles" here are old too. It's a very quiet town here for sure.

My granddaughter Kate (Janine's daughter) has joined the Army. Is currently stationed in Liverpool. She is training as an engineer (Sapper) seems to be meeting every challenge well. Those girls were well trained by their father in all sorts of farm work from a very young age.

Doug and family are in very close "lock down" in Surrey. UK not the best place to be. They are working from home, very small house too.

... every best wish to all the History Group members.

Every good wish for your health and safety,

Regards
Bev Watkins

⁸ Allan Watkins, Bev's husband.

Response from Jean Edwards to *Things Past* No. 117

Hi Paula, Karen and Alison,

Paula, I might have guessed that you would know Shirley [Carn]. Luckily I saw the death notice that Helen Kennedy put in the Saturday Age, but I would like to read other notices if you can copy them. I suppose there will be no memorial celebration at present, but if there is something in the future I would really like to know about it.

...

We are so lucky to have phones and computers... Just imagine how isolated early settlers must have felt!

...

I first recall going to Mooroolbark by (steam) train, probably the end of the 1940s or early 1950s for our Sunday School picnics. We had a steam train from Surrey Hills and the teachers provided sticky fruit buns for us to eat on the way.

The picnic was on a farming property.

In 1967 I walked into the staff room of the (then) Mooroolbark Tech School and drew breath!!! This was the very place where our Sunday School picnic races had taken place.

Jean Edwards

You Know You're Part of History When ... Sunday School Picnics and School Picnics were a Highlight of the Year.

Jean Edwards' letter about coming to Mooroolbark for her Sunday School Picnics started me thinking about that phenomenon. Do they still happen?

The Yarra Glen Presbyterian Church Sunday School went to Fernshaw just out of Healesville for their picnics in the 1950s. We went by car, because my father owned a garage and we had a car, but I think others went in a bus. It was a

novelty to have so many people who knew each other sharing a large meal on central tables.

Everywhere you looked there were kids you knew from Yarra Glen but in strange surroundings.

Once there I have fond memories of very weak orange cordial (a treat because generally we had lemon because everyone had lemon trees and we made our own cordial) and 'peanut scrambles', where peanuts in shells were thrown out and you tried to collect as many of these exotic treats as you could. And of course we ate them. A no-no these days with peanut allergies and the risk of breathing the bullet shaped nuts into your lungs!

From memory I tasted potato chips (crisps) for the first time there at Fernshaw. By the time they were shared around you had one, or maybe two if you were lucky!

We had races and we collected acorns and leaves from the exotic trees planted there. I also went to Badger's Creek Weir many times with my family, and might be confusing the two, as I have strong memories of walking to the weir, the tree ferns and the boulders in the creek, but one year we were amazed by a huge goanna coming out of the bush and walking out in the open for several minutes before returning to the bush. I think it was Fernshaw. I have a memory of a baby dragon that made me wonder for years whether dragons were living somewhere in the bush at Healesville.

Yarra Glen Primary School was unusual in not taking a Show Day holiday, and instead the whole school went by bus and private car to the annual Beach Picnic at Mordialloc Beach at another time. There were signs in the shops that the shops and businesses would close so parents could go too. Again an amazing treat for kids who knew the country and horses and the bush, but for whom the beach was a novelty. My family caravanned interstate or to Ballarat each year, and we toured Victoria every second weekend because our family owned the garage in partnership with the Smiths and we took every second weekend off from the business. My brother and I had lots of experiences of new and different places, but going as a group was a different and exciting experience. After a while the businesses didn't want to close, and the Beach Picnic ceased.

Paula Herlihy

Major Money

from p 4

Service files, National Archives; digitised newspapers on Trove; family trees on Family Search; Sands & McDougall Directories; *London Gazette* and supplements; Shire of Lillydale Rate Books; Janice Newton 2018, *Flower Farming in Mt Evelyn & District*; Mr Koolmees, interviewed by Jill Koolmees; information from Helen Darvell and Sue Barnett. Special thanks to Pam Norman, Mornington Family History Society. See also *Things Past* #53.

Hawai'i

(continuing Paula and Tim's 2019 trip)

Creation and Destruction

I had heard that some islands are sinking into the sea, and others are still being created, but had not appreciated the mechanism behind this – I assumed incorrectly that it was random. There is

a 'hot spot' to the earth's molten core, from which lava is released, and eventually an island forms. This much is pretty obvious. However since the earth's crust is not fixed, the plate covering the hot spot moves, at differing rates at different times, and when the plate hovers for a time at one spot, an island in a chain is formed, in this case with the older island at the north eastern end (Kaua'i) and the newest island (Hawai'i) at the other. A future island (Lō'ihi) in the Hawai'ian chain is currently forming south west of Hawai'i.

When we cruised the islands we could see how weathered the older islands are, and at various Museums we saw displays showing how the islands are sinking beneath the waves. Aerial photographs over time show a steady picture of diminishing land and more water. The land weathers quickly with the high rainfall and warm temperatures.

From Kev's Rain Gauge				
Rainfall (in mm) for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, and Melbourne for the last three months.				
	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	YTD
Mt Evelyn	110.6	74.3	67.1	698.6
McKillop	115.4	94.4	76.9	751.4
Melbourne	66.6	27.6	30	525

McKillop readings courtesy Jean Edwards
Melbourne figures from Bureau of Meteorology: <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/>
Kevin Phillips

Contact Us

President: Paula Herlihy, telephone 9736 2935, pherlihy3@gmail.com

Editor: Paula Herlihy, pherlihy3@gmail.com

Memberships: Tim Herlihy, therlihyau@gmail.com

Newsletter distribution: Kevin Phillips, kev.phillips@bigpond.com

Newsletter layout: Alison Martin

General enquiries: mtevelynhistorygroup@gmail.com

Postal address: Mount Evelyn History Group Inc., PO Box 289, Mt Evelyn, VIC 3796, Australia.

Website: www.mt-evelyn.net/historygroup

Archived newsletters: <http://www.mt-evelyn.net/thingspast>

Mt Evelyn History Tools Blogsite: <http://mtevelynhistorytools.blogspot.com.au/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MtEvelynHistoryGroup2016/>

Opinions expressed in *Things Past* are those of the writers, not necessarily those of Mount Evelyn History Group.