



Newsletter 10, October 2008

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc.

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Dates for your diary

Art show by Lia Williams and Christine Cafarella-Pearce, Darren Honey Centre, Uniting Church, Maroondah Highway, Healesville. **Friday 31st Oct - Mon 3rd Nov.** Lia is a History Group member.

Our **November meeting** will be on **Tuesday 25th November, 7.30 pm** at Morrison House. This will be our final meeting for 2008. Rather than a Christmas break-up, we plan to hold a special event early next year. Details to follow.

Scarecrow Scout About

What a great day! It all came together on Saturday 25th October: perfect weather, excellent organisation, some inspired scarecrows and lots of fun all round. Paula's photos of the event are scattered through this issue.



History Group scarecrows 'Evelyn' and 'Dave'



Ian and Mary running the stall

We set up shop in our favourite spot under the Community Link verandah. Our display on 'Mt Evelyn's Farming Heritage' included photos never previously shown of Major Money's Gladioli Farm, provided by Helen Darvell, and of Monomeath Gardens, courtesy Anne Francis. Congratulations to Paula on another successful display.

Thanks to everyone who helped on the stall. We raised just under \$200.

Booklets

Janice's booklet *Flower farming in Mt Evelyn and district* is now available (\$4) and is selling

well. We have current and back issues of the *Yarra Valley Historical* newspaper for \$2 each. There has been an expression of interest in compiling a history of the St John Ambulance as a companion to the CFA history.

Mt Evelyn Primary School will celebrate its centenary in 2010. Principal Phil Comport is interested in updating the school history. Whether this would be better done by a sub-committee from the school, or by History Group members, is yet to be decided. The existing history book covers the school's first 75 years (1910-1985).



Our 'Farming Heritage' display attracts attention

Birmingham Primary talk

Paula will be speaking to 80 Second Graders from Birmingham Primary School this Wednesday 29th October. She plans to follow her previous successful format of telling them about the Zig Zag, the Flying Fox, 'using the cypress tree to date the railway station photos' and handing out tickets to the platform.

Things that go bump in the night – 1

Enough ghost stories have cropped up around Mt Evelyn to be worth documenting. Please tell us about any you hear of.

More about the 'nudist camp ghost' from our enquirer (referring to the camp in the David Road area): 'I have had contact with Craig, who I have been trying to help with his mysterious "visitor"... His property backs onto the property of the gatehouse and he has the original gates from the gatehouse ... He has uncovered what appear to have been tennis courts and wonders if these could be from a nudist colony. His gentleman visitor has made his presence felt to Craig's 3-year-old daughter. Craig thinks he is looking for something and cannot find it.'

Beryl Phillips sensed that her property in The Crescent had a restless spirit that contributed to her health problems (though she didn't use the words 'ghost' or 'haunted'). Beryl thought the atmosphere might have been caused by some Aboriginal presence, perhaps someone who had not received proper burial rites. She had a didgeridoo player perform a cleansing ceremony.

Needs to try harder

We received an email from somebody claiming to have found the entrance to the WWII tunnels under Mt Evelyn Reserve and asking if there was a reward. Paula pointed out the dangers of an open tunnel and recommended that our correspondent inform the Army and/or the Police.

Instant back-peddle! He hadn't found the opening, had only been told where it was, had no plans to do anything about it, wasn't claiming the credit. Paula's Army contact agreed with her that the whole thing sounded sus. No action warranted. Message filed. Giggling all round.

Interest in the tunnels may have revived following an article in the RACV *Royal Auto* of October 2008, 'The Hole Truth'. Mark Rawson, who was digging at the Reserve a few years back, is interviewed and Mt Evelyn is mentioned. There's a great picture of Mark digging at Northcote.

The fact that researchers have pinpointed Mt Evelyn Reserve, coinciding with stories already circulating locally, may add some support to the theory. The History Group is keeping an open mind. We'd all be thrilled to bits if the tunnels were found but we've yet to see any hard evidence.

Various bods claim to know the location of the tunnel entrance but aren't telling. We wish they'd come up with something better than kiddy email pranks.

Think up a hoax with some legs to it, fellas! Where's Ern Malley when you need him?



A spectral Ned Kelly with some companions



An attractive pair of scarecrows made from natural materials: paperbark, twigs and grasses