

Things Past

Newsletter 44

October 2011

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

PO Box 101 Mt Evelyn VIC 3796

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Dates for your diary

'The Mitchells in Mt Evelyn', our display in the Mt Evelyn Exhibition Space during October.

'Face to Face' exhibition launch, Yarra Ranges Regional Museum, 2-4pm Saturday 15 October.

History Group stall, Mt Evelyn Street Party, Saturday 22 October.

History Walk, Lillydale Lake Reserve, Saturday 19 November. Brief meeting to follow.

Launch of *Aborigines of the Yarra Valley and Northern Dandenongs*, Saturday 3 December, 2pm Mt Evelyn Station House.

Wilam naling presentation

Paula (with grandson Graham), Karen and Kevin attended the *wilam naling* grants presentation at the Public Records Office (PROV) on 21 September. Our grant was for publication of *Aborigines of the Yarra Valley and Northern Dandenongs*.

PROV Director Justine Heazelwood acknowledged the traditional owners and the elders present. She thanked Aboriginal Affairs for funding the grants, which were last awarded in 2007.

Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Kitty Coombes gave a warm Welcome to Country. The Wurundjeri

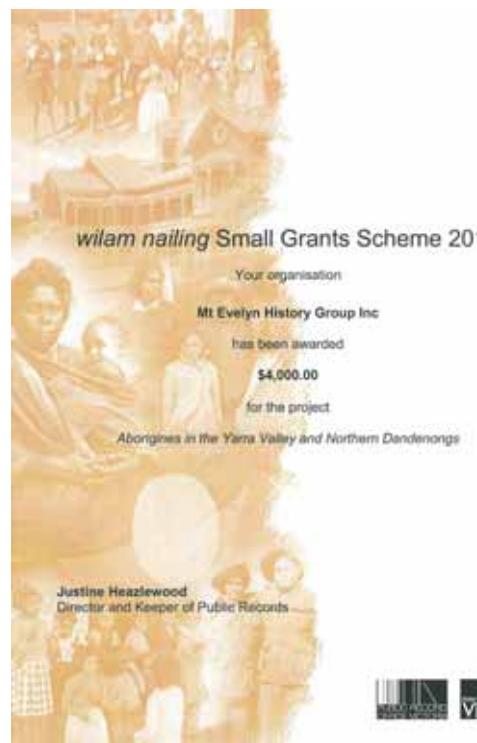


Aboriginal Affairs Director Ian Hamm presents the *wilam naling* grant to Paula and grandson Graham. PROV Director Justine Heazelwood applauds. Photo courtesy PROV. Below left, our certificate.

belong to one of the five language groups that make up the Kulin nation. Aunty Kitty explained her background as one of fifteen children of an Irish father and a Wurundjeri mother from Coranderrk. In the 1930s, an inter-racial marriage was an act of bravery. Her parents are her heroes. Aunty Kitty has read the manuscript of our book and made many valuable suggestions.

Elder Jim Berg, who served on the selection committee, praised the high standard of the applications. He spoke of the importance of mutual respect between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians in redressing the injustices of the past and moving forward.

Ian Hamm, Executive Director of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, said that while his department provided millions of dollars to fund regional development, local projects like those recognised by the *wilam naling* grants often



'Life in Melbourne' - 1854

Continuing our extract from the *West Briton and Cornwall Advertiser*, 21 April 1854.

The conversation at the dinner table, and in the various rooms of the hotels, reminds me much of America, as nothing is discussed that has not some relation or other to making money, and if you substitute the word 'pounds' for 'dollars,' you might imagine yourself in a public room in New Orleans during the very busiest time of cotton speculations.

On dit, that more gold is being found than ever, and, if I might judge from what I have seen of the conduct of divers diggers I have seen about the streets, they must have been singularly successful lately. These gentlemen patronize the most expensive articles that they can find, and the way I saw a digger's 'lady' dressed up yesterday would (as far as richness of material and gold chains) cast into the darkest shade the most expensively got up belle at Almack's or the Champs Elysées.

This morning I saw several fellows with beards of huge length, and moustache and whiskers to match, dressed in corduroy 'smalls,' huge boots, and a sort of blue blouse, with a belt round it, standing at the door of a public house tossing nuggets in their hands, some of which must have weighed several pounds, just as carelessly as you see boys in England tossing stones and catching them on their way to school. I spoke to one or two of them, and they were as civil as possible, said they were better off than they were in England, which I believed myself, and also said, which I did not believe, that they intended 'some day' to put money in a savings'-bank.

There are, however, many of the diggers who save their gold, but this other especial party will not leave their 'noblers' (which is Australian for brandy and water) till their pockets are at a low ebb, and they have only enough to carry them back to Ballarat or Mount Alexander. However, if people did not drink, what would become of the publicans?

Which is a serious consideration, as here, and at Adelaide, every other house is devoted to the retailing of spirituous liquors, which are drunk, as are also the customers generally, on the premises.

Storage is excessively high; 2s. 6d. per week per ton is the general rate, and the same sum as entrance money. Land is worth in the main

street £100 a-foot frontage, and is bought at that price and turned to account, as stores and small shops, &c. One small place you really could not swing a cat in, about eight feet square, is paying a rent of £10 a-week, and the occupant told me that he was quite satisfied, so I presume he 'realized,' as the Yankees say.

The shop was dedicated to the divinity who presides over tobacco – not bad tobacco, such as you see labouring men in England smoke, but the genuine article, lit (?) cakes from old 'Virginny,' looking as strong and black as a copious infusion of molasses could make it, and which, in order to be fashionable, ought to be smoked out of a very short clay pipe, the shorter and blacker the better. **To be concluded**

Wilam naling presentation, from p.1

gave him the most pleasure. They are the projects that make a personal difference to individuals and communities.

Wurega Aboriginal Corporation's project, 'Our Elders speak of country', will preserve the oral histories of Wotjobaluk Elders, who have connections to the Wimmera/ Mallee region of Victoria. This project will pass on creation stories and knowledge of cultural connections to the flora and fauna of the Wimmera. Groups from Nillumbik and Lake Tyers and women's groups were also represented.

Wilam naling is a Boonwurrung/ Woiwurrung phrase meaning 'knowing who you are'.

Karen Phillips

On house names

In response to the query 'House Names and Rate Books' – my Wallis grandparents' home at 6 Bradman Avenue, Mt Evelyn, was named 'WALBAR' (Wallis/Barr, both their surnames). They built that house about 60 years ago. My grandfather left the house a short time after my grandmother passed away, thus ending our association with Mt Evelyn. We always knew it as No. 6 and it was so when my grandmother died in 1969. I don't know when it changed to No. 7.

From Maree Hahn

New web address

Thanks to our webmaster, Joy Carrick, for setting up a new, simpler website address for us: www.mt-evelyn.net/historygroup The old address will still work: <http://mt-evelyn.net/Community-Groups/Mt-Evelyn-History-Group.aspx>

Young footballer invents new kick to counter muddy conditions

In 1949 15-year-old Jim Johnson and his older brother Charlie joined Mt Evelyn Football Club, Second XVIII. Mt Evelyn Football Ground's surface was then uneven and often very muddy. Studying the *Sporting Globe Football Book* (1948), Jim Johnson adapted Jack Dyer's 'crazy' Drop-Punt ... 'the silliest looking kick in football history' (p.49) into an effective Drop-Punt (field pass) and later invented a Stab Punt (pass), both kicks being suitable to Mt Evelyn's mud. These kicks were able to be kicked at full pace with accuracy; they are in constant use today in Australian Rules football.

Playing just three games, Jim won the 1949 Second-Best-and-Fairest trophy (The T.O. Millard Trophy). Theo Millard (Jim's uncle) was Mt Evelyn's major employer at Millards' Timber and Trading.

Jim, 157.5cm and weighing 51kg, was promoted to the first XVIII, winning the umpire's vote for best player on three occasions; joined Ringwood Football Club as First Rover for the First XVIII in 1950; and in 1960 played in a Premiership team for Croydon. 'Johnson was outstanding in the mud with clever turning and accurate disposal.'

The Ringwood Mail, August 1951.

Journalists had trouble finding the correct name for Johnson's Stab Punt.

'Johnson sent his delightful little drop punt pass direct to Manfield'.

Frank Casey, *The Post*, September 8, 1960.



Jim Johnson (right) with brother Charlie at Yarra Glen oval, 7 May 1949.

'Johnson should write a book on stab kicking – he has found the lost art'.

Davey Crocket, *The Ringwood Mail*, September 8, 1960. **From Helen Johnson**

Jim Johnson's story appears in the 'Face to Face' exhibition at the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum. Jim also donated the concert program signed by Melba, part of our display 'The Mitchells in Mt Evelyn' at the Exhibition Space.

Vale

September 2011 saw the loss of three community members known to many of us.

Liam James Paterson, eldest child of History Group members Peter Paterson and Gwenda Donaldson, died on 13 September, aged 27. Liam leaves a huge hole in the lives of his family and friends, on the one hand because his medical condition (epidermolysis bullosa) meant it took his carers four to six hours each morning to prepare him for the day, and on the other because his intelligence, wit and cheekiness made him such a charismatic personality. At his funeral service, his sister Charlotte said it had been like living with a celebrity or rock star. About 400 people gathered to farewell Liam and celebrate his remarkable life.

Doreen Humphrey, who with her husband Jim has headed the volunteer arm of St John Ambulance from headquarters in Mt Evelyn, died on 25 September. Doreen supported many people through her work with St John Ambulance and was a strong support to her husband Jim in his involvement with Neighbourhood Watch, the Mt Evelyn Township Improvement Committee (METIC) and the town's Street Party organisation.

Pamela, Lady Vestey, granddaughter of Helen Porter Mitchell (Dame Nellie Melba), died on 2 September, ten days before her 93rd birthday. Lady Vestey was patron and supporter of the Lilydale & District Historical Society (L&DHS) and their museum, the Museum of Lilydale (now the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum). She held Open Days at her home, Coombe Cottage, as fundraisers for the L&DHS and joined in working bee activities such as cataloguing museum items. Many people connected with historical societies have met her over the years.

Paula Herlihy

Veterans Virtual Museum

This website contains a number of new resources: <http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/veterans/veterans-heritage>

Victorian War Heritage Inventory Developed in partnership with Heritage Victoria, the Victorian War Heritage Inventory is a searchable online database containing information and images of places relating to Victoria's war history, including war memorials, avenues of honour, places of commemoration and former defence sites. Users can search for places according to keyword, postcode, region, type of heritage or conflict commemorated.

War-related heritage in Victoria This report gives an overview of the extent and nature of war-related heritage in Victoria, such as memorials, commemorative buildings, honour rolls and memorabilia. The report explores the preservation of moveable heritage through case studies of collections in RSLs, local historical societies and community museums.

World War I unit histories In partnership with the State Library of Victoria, the Veterans Unit has digitised many of Victoria's World War I unit (battalion) histories. A number of these books were originally published in the 1920s and are now rare. This online library can be read from any computer with web access.

'In our words' digital stories The Virtual Museum also hosts the 'In our words' digital stories, recorded with Victorian veterans over the past two years. They include personal accounts of war and repatriation by World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War veterans, which make compelling viewing. This project is still underway in partnership with the Shrine

of Remembrance and the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI).

Marina Larsson, Senior Policy Officer, Veterans Heritage, Department of Planning and Community Development

Congratulations, Kevin ('Rama')

Kevin Phillips received the Silver Arrowhead award for excellent service to Scouting at a ceremony at Gilwell Park, Gembrook, on 18 September.

Kevin has served 1st Mt Evelyn Scouts since 1993, first as a committee member and then as Group President. He went into uniform as Group Leader (under the Scouting name 'Rama') for 3 years before settling into his niche as Assistant Cub Leader of Attunga pack. He ran a Cub pack at Mt Evelyn Primary School from 2000 to 2001.



Kevin with his award.

Kevin and his two fellow Attunga leaders boast a combined life experience of over 180 years.

From Kev's rain gauge

Rainfall for September 2011 for Mt Evelyn, Melbourne and Melbourne average:

Mt Evelyn	Melb	Melb Av
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106.5mm	73.6mm	58.0mm
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McKillop Sept rainfall: 138.5mm. Year to date 1015.5mm. Highest for Sept and YTD since 1996 (from Jean Edwards). **Kevin Phillips**

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



It just keeps rollin' along ... This beautifully restored steam roller was spotted in Hereford Road on 15 September on its way to the Healesville Railway Heritage Festival. Photo Kevin Phillips.