

# Things Past

Newsletter 89

July 2015

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

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## Dates for your diary

Working bee (sorting the archives) Saturday 18 July, 1.30pm at Hardy House.

Unveiling of plaques to commemorate the Avenue of Honour (joint project of History Group with Mt Evelyn RSL), Sunday 26 July, 2pm at the RSL Memorial Garden.

History Group AGM and general meeting, Monday 17 August, 7.30pm Hardy House.

## Do you recognise this young man?

Cr Gwen Hardy and Dr Bill Hardy were supporters of the Lilydale Athenaeum and both served on its Board for many years. They lent items of their own furniture (including the purple sofa from their front room) for theatrical performances. When Dr Bill first joined the Committee of Management in August 1977, he and Gwen presented this framed print to the Athenaeum.

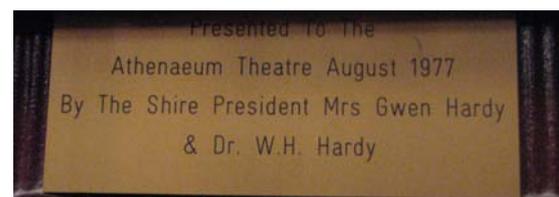
Artist, sitter and date are all unknown (these details may be obscured by the frame but nobody is likely to take the frame off just to satisfy our curiosity). The subject is a young

man in early 19<sup>th</sup> century costume. His outfit is in the style made fashionable by the dandy Beau Brummell (1778-1840) in the Regency period, as shown in this modern statue: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beau\\_Brummell#/media/File:Beau\\_Brummell\\_Statue\\_Jermyn\\_Street.JPG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beau_Brummell#/media/File:Beau_Brummell_Statue_Jermyn_Street.JPG)

Could this be Brummell himself at a young age? Unfortunately each of his portraits makes him look like a different person and all of them ignore his broken nose. It's hard to know what the Beau really looked like: <https://janeaustensworld.wordpress.com/2010/06/16/beau-brummells-broken-nose/>

The portrait now hangs in the right-hand passage between the Athenaeum foyer and the theatre. The portrait of the Queen that hangs above the entrance in the foyer also has a connection to the Hardys. While Gwen was Shire President she arranged for the Queen's picture, no longer needed at the Shire Offices, to be transferred to the Athenaeum. The portrait of the young man seems to have been a personal gift from Gwen and Bill but their children have no recollection of it.

Can anyone identify the mystery man?



Left, the unidentified portrait. Above, the plaque recording its presentation by the Hardys. Photos Kevin Phillips.

## Dates for the WWII Army camp

At last we have dates relating to the World War II military camp at the Mt Evelyn Recreation Reserve. The following newspaper extract reports the Army requisitioning the camp in June 1942.

*Lillydale Shire Council*

### **ARMY TAKES MT. EVELYN RESERVE.**

*Australian Military Forces, advising that the Mt. Evelyn recreation reserve had been taken over at a rental of £25 a year. -In reply to Cr. Jeeves, the secretary stated that no indication was given whether the caretaker's house had to be vacated, and the present tenant would remain there if it were not required for military purposes. An assurance was given that the ground and appointments would be left in as good condition as at present when vacated by the forces.*

*Healesville & Yarra Glen Guardian 27/6/1942.*

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/60677455>

The Army vacated the camp in September 1942.

*Lillydale Shire Council Meeting*  
**CAMP BREAKS UP.**

*The military camp at Mt. Evelyn, which gave this popular tourist resort quite a boost during the winter, has been closed. Townspeople had become so accustomed to the rattle of Bren gun carriers and camouflaged motor trucks speeding about at all hours that the prevailing quietness since the evacuation in the past few days has lost much of its appeal.*

*In many respects the trainees will be missed, both at Mt. Evelyn and Lilydale, as their cheery company provided much of the entertainment and pleasure – and no little solace to the organizers – besides giving a fillip to the depleted ranks of the youth of the district.*

*Official notice of the relinquishing of the recreation reserve was given by the army authorities at the council meeting, along with the assurance that the appointments and surroundings would be left in the same good condition as when the inclosure [sic] was taken over.*

*Healesville & Yarra Glen Guardian 26/9/1942*

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/60677754>

The camp was evidently an Australian Army facility. There is no mention of American soldiers but some locals clearly remembered Americans training there. The military camp was in operation for only three months (see



**Above, 'Brother Bill' Nichols, who established the Holiday House at the Recreation Camp in 1940. Truth, Sydney, 13/6/1943.**

*Things Past 66* – Glenn Golds' photos showed the Recreation Camp apparently deserted, and the Reserve open to the public, about 1943).

'Brother Bill' (the Reverend Reginald Nichols from St Mark's Church Fitzroy) established the camp as a holiday home where disadvantaged children could experience the bush. The camp opened officially on 5 December 1940.

*Holiday House is situated in a beautiful glen on the bank of the Olinda Creek near the recreation reserve, and consists of a two-storey building of timber and fibro-cement, roofed with tinted cordovax tiles. The dining room and kitchen, detached from the main structure, are surrounded by lawns. A large concrete swimming pool has also been constructed, and is served by flowing water from the creek. The buildings are equipped with an up-to-date sewerage system. A caretaker's cottage in keeping with the rest of the buildings, and tennis courts, are in course of construction. Holiday House has accommodation for 90 guests, and cost £2200, of which £1400 has been paid off. ...*

*Cr. Mitchell congratulated Brother Bill on his work, and on the speed with which he went to*

**Continued p.6**

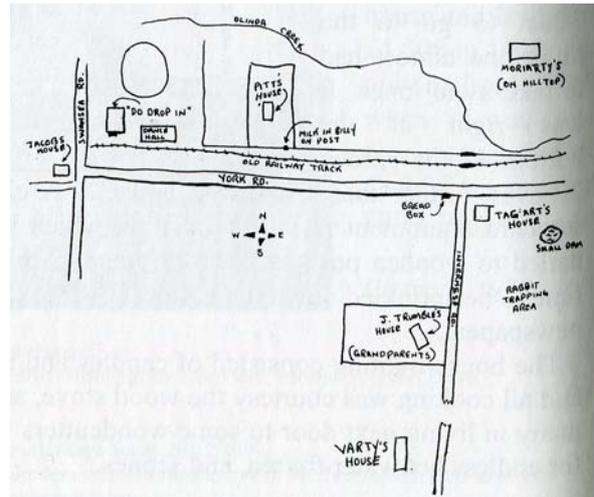
## The Tegarts of Mt Evelyn and Montrose

Last month we mentioned the family of John William Tegart, who was leasing Valinda Park at the time the Happy Hermits camped there. We now have information from another descendant showing that the Tegarts and related families had a long history on the borders of Mt Evelyn and Montrose.

The first record of the Tegart family in the Shire of Lillydale came when Charles Edward Tegart (brother of John William) enlisted for the Boer War on 11 February 1902. He gave his occupation as Fruitgrower. Both his own address and the contact address for his mother, Mrs Mary Ann Tegart, were 'Montrose PO, [via] Croydon'.

The family history has it that Charles returned to South Africa in 1903, married there in 1904 and lived there till his death in 1918. The Rate Books however show a Charles Tegart, Gardener, leasing a house and 11 acres on Mt Dandenong in the ratings years 1904-5 and 1905-6. If it was the same Charles, the dates don't quite fit the narrative.

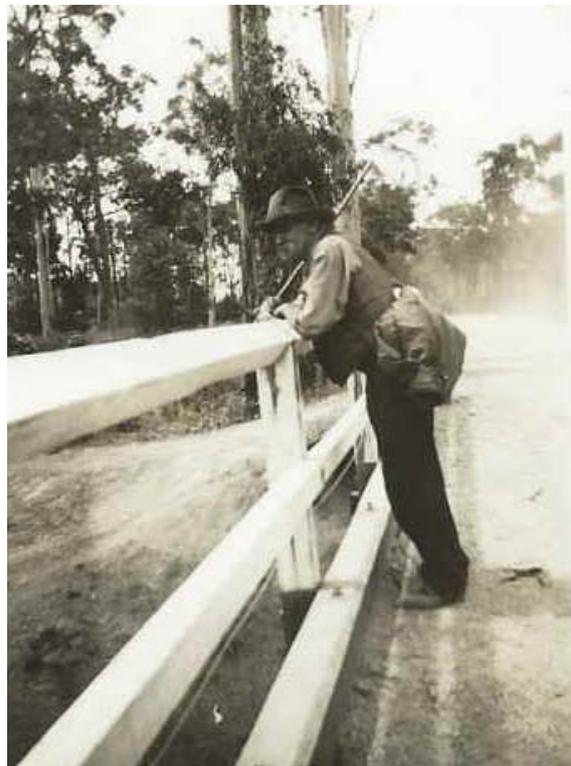
John William Tegart (1866-1942) and his wife Clara Maud (1876-1943) leased Valinda Park Evelyn during the years 1910-11 to 1912-13. Clara's family, the Rexters, had farmed Lot 24E



Above, Noel Kerr's sketch map of properties along York Road c.1940, with 'Tagart's House' on the corner of Inverness Road. Electoral rolls confirm that John Tegart lived in York Road.

on Edinburgh Road Montrose from 1878 to 1886 and were orchardists at Evelyn/ South Wandin by 1917. Clara's mother's family, the Axfords, also had a long association with the Shire of Lillydale. Clara was a niece of Jane Parr nee Axford (see *Things Past* #71).

Clara Tegart held freehold title to 18 acres of Lot 24B, Parish of Mooroolbark, from 1909 to



Two great photos of John William Tegart: at the orchard gate with two friends and on the bridge. From his age in the photos, they were probably taken during his time in Mt Evelyn.

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1916. This block was on Swansea Road Montrose, slightly south of York Road.

Electoral rolls show John Tegart, Labourer, and his wife Clara living in York Road in 1912, and again in 1917, after an interval at Richmond.

John and Clara had five children:

- Herbert Leslie 1897-1917
- John Stanley Alfred 1901-1976
- Linda Marion 1903-1990
- Albert Patrick 1906-1990
- Noel Frank 1908-1944.

The eldest son, Herbert Leslie, Brickmaker, enlisted for the First World War on 9 July 1915. He gave the same contact address for his next of kin (his father) as his uncle Charles had given in the Boer War 13 years earlier: 'Post Office Montrose Vict'.

John Tegart left for England on 1 August 1917 to do war work – though what kind of work would have required a labourer aged over 50 is hard to imagine. John was in England when he learned of his son's death at Ypres on 29 September 1917.



**Above, the Bellinghams, Albert and Linda (daughter of John and Clara Tegart), possibly at Lilydale. Photo courtesy Linda Coombs.**

John and Clara lost contact about this time. Both carried on an extensive correspondence with the Army about their son's personal effects, medals and grave, each claiming not to know the other's whereabouts.

On Arbor Day 1918, a row of five Flowering Gums was planted at Montrose State School in memory of former students killed in the war. 'All parents of the fallen heroes were invited to be present to plant the trees ... Mrs. Tegart planted for her son.' (*Ringwood & Croydon Chronicle*, 9/8/1918 – see p.5).

John was back in Australia and living in York Road Mt Evelyn by 1924. Noel Kerr's sketch map shows 'Tagart's House' on the corner of York and Inverness Roads. John continued to reside in Mt Evelyn until shortly before his death in 1942.

Two of John and Clara's younger sons, John Stanley and Noel Frank, served in World War II. Noel died as a POW in Java on 21 July 1944. This family gave a lot in war.

John and Clara's daughter Linda married Albert Walter Bellingham in 1926. The Bellinghams had a weekend block in Mt Evelyn in the 1940s and early 1950s. 'My mother remembers getting the train and from the station they went left to John Tegart's or right for Bellinghams', their granddaughter Linda Coombs wrote.

Linda visited her grandparents at their Mt Evelyn block as a small child. She would like to know if anyone remembers the Bellinghams or knows where their house was.

The Tegart, Rexter and Bellingham families, between them, leased or owned at least two blocks in Montrose, one on Mt Dandenong and three in Mt Evelyn between the 1870s and the 1950s.

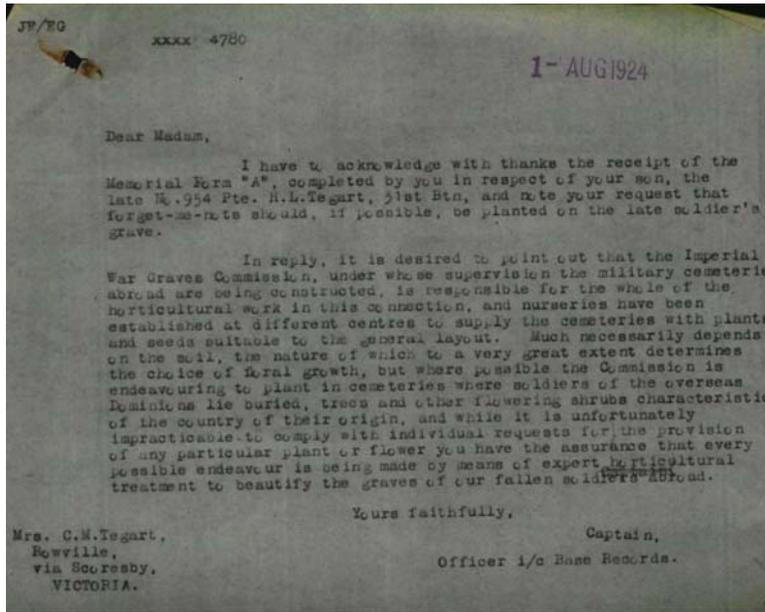
**Karen Phillips**



**Left, Mrs Bellingham and granddaughter Linda at the block in Mt Evelyn, c.1949. Above and right, the almost completed holiday house.**

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## War graves and memorials



In 1924 Clara Tegart wrote to the Army requesting that her son's grave in Tyne Cot Cemetery be planted with forget-me-nots. Above left is the reply from the Officer in Charge, explaining the basis for choosing plants to beautify war graves. Above right, the Montrose Primary School Roll of Honour with Herbert Tegart's name, courtesy Principal Neil Pollard. The memorial row of Flowering Gums planted in 1918 can no longer be identified.

### References From p.4

Electoral Rolls

Knoll, W., 'Pioneers of Silvan' blog.

McLennan, J., *Montrose, Settlement in the Foothills*.

Military dossiers, National Archives.

*Ringwood & Croydon Chronicle*, 9/8/1918,

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/92087637>

Newton, J. et al, *Tracks to Trails, a history of Mt Evelyn*.

Shire of Lillydale Rate Books.

Thanks to Linda Coombs for Tegart family photos.

Thanks also to Bronwyn Higgs and Montrose Primary School.

### Story with a local setting

'The Shirker', a fictional story by Beatrice Parsons, has as its main incident a coach accident apparently based on the one at the Devil's Elbow, Kalorama, on 27 December 1911. The story was published in the *Weekly Times* 10/11/1917: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/132697326>

The coach accident is referred to in the 'Diary of a Trip to Evelyn' in our publication *The Happy Hermits*. The Hermits and their friends saw the accident site on their way down the mountain the following day.

Montrose, Olinda and Mt Dandenong are mentioned in 'The Shirker', which seems informed by first-hand knowledge of the area. A Parsons family was living at Olinda from the time of the first land sale in 1895.

Beatrice Parsons published a number of stories in Australian newspapers between the 1900s and 1930s. Most are adventure stories, with or without romance. Some are set in Victoria but most, unlike 'The Shirker', don't mention real place names. The stories can be found via a Trove search on the author's name.

Parsons' book 'Lord of the outback: tales of the Australian ranges' was included in *Tales of the Jungle* (World's Work, London, 1939). Once again, the University of Melbourne Library has the goods.

### Olinda Creek Trail

At last the footpath outside the York On Lillydale has been completed, closing a missing link in the Olinda Creek Trail. Only the section between Inverness Road and Mt Evelyn Reserve remains to be finished. The Trail will then run from the Lillydale Reserve to Silvan Reservoir.

### History Group email address

The History Group has a new email address: [mtevelynhistorygroup@gmail.com](mailto:mtevelynhistorygroup@gmail.com)

Re the Winged Lion seat, we gave an incorrect email address in the last issue. Could anyone interested in purchasing or donating one of the seats please contact Paula at:

[pherlihy3@gmail.com](mailto:pherlihy3@gmail.com)

or

[mtevelynhistorygroup@gmail.com](mailto:mtevelynhistorygroup@gmail.com)

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work before it had even been decided to sell him the land.

*Healesville & Yarra Glen Guardian* 14/12/1940:  
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/60675281>



Above, St Mark's Holiday House (Brother Bill's) was taken over by the Army in 1942. The building burned down in the bushfires of 1962. Photo from Valentine souvenir folder.

The report above does not make clear whether Lillydale Shire Council sold the land to St Mark's or not, but seems to imply that it did. The communication between the Army and the Shire suggests on the other hand that the Shire still owned it in 1942. The reports read as if the Army leased the camp from the Shire, not from St Mark's and Brother Bill. The site is currently public land.

**Karen Phillips**

### In the snowy winter of 1953...



Paula recently located the photo, bottom left, showing one of the Winged Lion seats in snow in 1953. The picture below is labelled '1953, heavy snowfall main street'.

It's possible that both photos were taken from the same point at the top of Wray Crescent, facing in different directions. The fence behind the Winged Lion Seat would be the Station fence. The tree (cypress?) in the background may be one of the pair still standing behind the remnants of the old platform. The trees are thought to have stood one either side of the platform entrance.



### From Kev's rain gauge

Rainfall for June 2015 for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, Melbourne and the Melbourne average.

Mt Ev	McK	Melb	Melb Av
41.9mm	42.0mm	27.8mm	49.5mm

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

**Kevin Phillips**

### Contact us

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