

Things Past

Newsletter 98

April 2016

Mount Evelyn History Group Inc

PO Box 289 Mt Evelyn VIC 3796 A0051327F



Dates for your diary

National Trust Heritage Festival, 16 April - 29 May. Includes events at Mont De Lancey in Wandin, and Gulf Station in Yarra Glen. See www.nationaltrust.org.au

Silvan War Memorial unveiling, including plaques to Major William Scurry and Vice-Admiral Sir William Rooke Creswell. Sunday 24 April, 2pm out front of Silvan Primary School.

ANZAC Day Dawn Service, march back to RSL Clubrooms, free community breakfast. Monday 25 April, 5.45am at the Mt Evelyn RSL Memorial Gardens.

No History Group meetings April or May.

History Group meeting Monday 20 June, 7.30pm at Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road.

A sawmill on Monbulk Road

During preparations for the Mt Evelyn Primary School Centenary (2010), Beryl Taylor passed on these photos to the History Group.

They show a sawmill, which Beryl believed was on the corner of Monbulk Road and Aqueduct Avenue, almost opposite the Primary School. Beryl's family had owned the store that was later built on the same site.

The mill looks quite an extensive concern. It was apparently steam operated and had a large timber yard.



Above, the sawmill boiler house with water tank, chimney, boiler and stacks of sawn timber. Photos courtesy Beryl Taylor.



Above left, machinery shed and timber yard with unsawn logs. Above right, logs and machinery. Note the two axes in one log. It appears the logs were trimmed with axes before being sawn.

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Sawmill, from p.1

The sawmill site, now a vacant block, was later the site of the old McKillop Store and Golden Fleece Service Station (below) and also a dairy. We are not sure of the timeline for these various enterprises. Can anyone help us out with dates?



Above, the old McKillop Store, Post Office and Golden Fleece Service Station when owned by A. & H. Jones, 1960-1963. The store was on the site once occupied by the sawmill. Photo courtesy Pat Poock.

Mount Evelyn

Easter Holidays.

Again it has been proven that Easter is easily the most popular season in the hills. From Thursday to Sunday special and ordinary trains brought scores of people to Mt. Evelyn, until every guest house and furnished cottage was packed to capacity. Some idea of the number of visitors may be gained when it is estimated that nearly 1000 persons returned to Melbourne by rail Monday night. A remarkable feature of the holidays was the large congregations at all churches. At the Anglican and Presbyterian churches services were held two or three times on Friday and Sunday, and each saw the building packed. The same thing applied at St. Mary's Catholic Church when early mass was observed. Though not quite complete, this church was pressed into service for Easter. A combined service was held at the Mechanics' Hall on Sunday night, and seating and standing accommodation was taxed to its utmost capacity.

Under the direction of the Rev. A. T. McNaughton an inter-denominational Sunday school teachers' convention, comprising over 50 participants, took place at "The Outlook." The Church of England Boys' Society held camp on the banks of the Otford Creek, under the guidance of the Rev. L. Nash.

At "The Rest" a party of girls from the Methodist Central Mission, in charge of Sister Ella, were encamped. With this party was "Mary," a curly haired lady from the Fiji mission, who endeared herself to all who had the pleasure of meeting her.

In lighter vein the visitors were entertained with a successful sports meeting on Saturday, under the auspices of the combined Silvan-Evelyn Football Club, which proved a great success socially and financially.

Dances on Saturday and Monday were well patronised.

A successful sale of gifts was held by the ladies of St. Mary's Catholic Church on Saturday afternoon.

Easter in Mount Evelyn, Lilydale Express 14 April 1939.
Thanks to Anthony McAleer for sharing this clipping.

World War II sites in Yarra Ranges

How many sites associated with World War II can you think of in Yarra Ranges? Here's a short list, including non-military sites specific to wartime but excluding war memorials. Information about aircraft crashes is from Peter Dunn's 'Australia at War': <http://www.ozatwar.com/>

Healesville area (Gordon's Gully) Crash of P-43 Republic Lancer, 29 April 1943.

After the war (1951), the guest house Summerleigh Lodge, Healesville, was acquired by the Army and became the Army School of Health.

Mt Dandenong Gun emplacements? No confirmation of this, but it could explain the circular concrete structures outside the Sky High Restaurant. Mt Dandenong, commanding a wide view, would be a logical place for artillery.

Mt Evelyn Army camp at the Recreation Camp, June-September 1942. *Things Past* #89.

Powelltown World War II-era airfield on Airstrip Road, built in case of invasion and possibly to patrol the water storages. The site can be seen on Google Maps satellite view.

Wandin North The Army tested explosives in the concrete-lined basin of the O'Shannassy Aqueduct c.1942-1943. *Things Past* #16.

Warburton area Crash of Supermarine Seagull A2-7, 26 October 1939.

There must surely be other war-related sites in the shire. Can you add to the list? Here are a few from neighbouring shires.

Christmas Hills Crash of Lockheed Hudson A16-151 near Yarra Glen, 15 April 1942 (it's not clear whether the crash site was in Yarra Ranges or Nillumbik).

Gembrook The Kurth Kiln off Soldiers Road produced charcoal as an alternative motor fuel during wartime petrol rationing.

Kilsyth/ Bayswater North Crash of Lockheed Hudson A16-139 corner Gatwick and Stephenson Roads, 26 March 1942.

Rowville Army camp and later Prisoner of War camp, Stud Road/ Wellington Road area.

The airfield at Powelltown raises a question for me. In the event of an invasion, vital infrastructure – airfields, ports, bridges – would probably have been destroyed rather than left to fall into enemy hands. What were the plans for Melbourne's water storages if the worst happened?

It's very likely that the dam walls were fitted with explosives and would have been blown up had Melbourne been invaded.

Trams from Bendigo

John Keane from Montrose shared this picture of the Cave Hill tram. This is Reg Falkingham's photo of 'Mitchell's Tram' taken on 3 March 1927 at Mistletoe Bend (site of Mt Evelyn Reserve). In this uncropped version we can clearly see the STOP LOOK LISTEN sign, which places it at the level crossing of the road and tramway. As far as we know, this is the only dated photo of a Cave Hill locomotive.



Above, Mitchell's Tram at Mistletoe Bend, 3/3/1927. Photo Reg Falkingham.

Bendigo Tramways ceased using steam engines in 1903. David Mitchell bought two of their locomotives that year: No.2, built by Baldwin of Philadelphia USA, and No.7, built by the Phoenix Foundry, Ballarat.¹ The photo below shows No.2 engine in its glory days at Bendigo.

We can't be certain that it's the same engine in both photos. The obvious difference is the funnel. The tram locos in Bendigo had plain straight funnels. At least one of Mitchell's trams received a flared funnel-top with a spark arrester, as in Reg Falkingham's photo. This would have been a superficial change and wouldn't definitely distinguish between the two ex-Bendigo engines.

When Ralph Alger and his father hitched a ride on the Cave Hill Tram in 1926, the cabin and even the paintwork were still in good condition. He described the colours as 'reddish-brown with lighter brown around the windows'² – probably the original paintwork, somewhat faded after more than 20 years. Bendigo Tramways stated that their steam engines at that time 'were painted dark red with gold lining while the boilers were green with brass bands.'

Alger theorised that the engine he rode on might have been kept in reserve and not used till the other was retired. In Reg Falkingham's photo, taken only a year later (1927), the cabin of the

locomotive is in very poor condition. If this was the same engine Alger remembered, its exterior must have deteriorated very quickly. If it was the other engine from Bendigo, the two must have overlapped briefly. By 1928 only one engine was in use.

The Bendigo Tramway locomotives replaced an earlier steam engine that arrived at Cave Hill in the late 1880s.

In connection with the carriage of firewood from the more distant parts of his own property, Mr Mitchell has had a very substantial tramway constructed, some two miles in length, and the wood is brought in on trucks, horses contributing the motive power. It has, however, been decided to substitute steam for horse power, and a metal road is now being constructed upon which a traction engine will run, the latter now being on its way from England. Lilydale Express 21/1/21 1887

This passage seems to mean that horses were about to be replaced with a steam engine on the tramway and the rails (probably wooden) replaced

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Bendigo Tram engine No.2 and bogie trailer No.6, c.1892. The engine was one of two from Bendigo that David Mitchell purchased for the Cave Hill tramway in 1903. The engine was dark red and gold with a green boiler, the bogie red and cream with gold and blue lettering . Photo courtesy Bendigo Tramways.

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with iron. An 'iron road' is a railway or tramway track but traction engines didn't run on rails (unless converted). The passage is confusing but does indicate that the original tramway steam locomotive arrived in or about 1887. This was likely to be the gear-driven engine pictured at right. The track in the photo appears to be narrow gauge, either 3' or 3'6", not standard gauge (4'8½").³ It is possible to trace the progress of the tram line from newspaper references from then on.

At first [the tramway] only reached a few hundred yards or so, but year by year it has been extended until it covers at the present time a total distance of over three miles. The zigzag course of the tramway shows how the clearing has progressed in conjunction with the supply of firewood for the lime-kiln.

The Australasian 23/7/1892

By 1897 the tram line was five miles long.

The work of clearing is going on steadily, a locomotive being used to bring the firewood.

The line at present extends a distance of five miles.

Weekly Times 26/6/1897

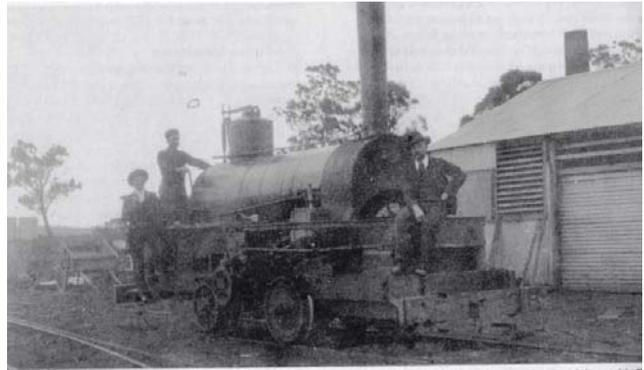
Mitchell was thinking well ahead. He bought the two Bendigo tram engines in 1903 but it was not until 1908 that he secured the land through which they were to run.

With characteristic foresight Mr David Mitchell has recognised the necessity of securing sufficient supplies of firewood for the Cave Hill lime kilns, and for that purpose he has purchased the properties of Messrs C. Baker, J. E. Taylor and Thompson, which adjoin the south-eastern boundaries of the Cave Hill estate. The tramline, upon which a steam locomotive conveys the firewood from the stacks in the bush into the kilns, is being re-ballasted and extended to reach the newly-acquired timber, and new railway tracks are in course of construction.

Healesville & Yarra Glen Guardian 22/5/1908

The properties Mitchell bought were the selections south of Hull Road and west of Olinda Creek, where the timber tramway was gradually extended. If the tramway was already five miles long in 1897 but did not reach past Hull Road until 1908 or later, the line must have gone somewhere else. This is further evidence for a branch of the tramway in the David Road area, as Alger argued in his article. Mitchell had bought Lot 30C, where David Road now runs, in 1883.

If Alger was right about the route of this tram line, it had some very tight curves. A narrow gauge track and a geared engine would have suited the terrain. Any existing sections of track that were



From this photo of the earliest Cave Hill locomotive, above, it's possible to estimate the gauge at approximately 3'6". The Bendigo Tramway engines were standard gauge. Photo courtesy Franc and Leonie Smith.

to be used by the ex-Bendigo locomotives would have had to be relaid as standard gauge.

In 1918 residents opposed the extension of the tramway along York Road, claiming it would be inconvenient, dangerous and would reduce property values (*Lilydale Express* 30/8/1918). The tramway must have reached Mistletoe Bend about 1920 and was eventually extended along Olinda Creek to beyond Hunter Road (*TP #40*).

Arthur Winzenried's report on the Cave Hill Tram states that one of the locomotives was cannibalised for spare parts for the other. The Baldwin and Phoenix engines were almost identical, even though built by different firms in different countries. After the tramway closed in early 1934, 'the remaining locomotive sat for a while on a siding some distance from the works and out in the weather before it was finally cut up shortly before the second world war broke out. The boiler was set aside for use at the works (part of an experiment with the production of Carbide gas) and several other parts were retained as of possible use. The majority however was sold to Japan for scrap.'⁴

One item of rolling stock may survive. An undated catalogue from the Puffing Billy Museum at Menzies Creek listed a 'four wheel timber truck used on the David Mitchell Estate Tramway at Cave Hill'. The truck was not on display and was awaiting restoration. The Puffing Billy Museum is being redeveloped and cannot provide information about their collection at present.

¹ Arthur Winzenried 1985, *The Cave Hill Tram, Lilydale*, APW Research Report 10, APW Productions, p.6.

² Ralph Alger, 'Reminiscences of the Cave Hill Tramway', *Light Railways* No.111, January 1991, p.3.

³ Frank Stamford, 'Steam Locomotives on Victorian Timber Tramways' Pt 1, *Light Railways* 208, August 2009, pp.5-7.

⁴ Winzenried 1985, p.9.

Karen Phillips

The Secret Life of Hoarde... errr Collectors

Part 2. Marbles

As a child at Yarra Glen Primary School, I often played marbles at lunch time. In many ways marbles is like a mini game of 'boules' or 'petanque' or 'bocce'.

You built up a marble collection by winning games. Starting with just one marble, you could join a game, and if you could hit another person's marble, you could claim that marble as your own. A bit like drag racing for pink slips! A large marble sack was proof of prowess!

Because your marble represents you in the game, rather like your foot soldier, you can become very attached to them. It could be heart breaking to lose a marble you regard as your 'Champion', and so I always checked whether substitutions were allowed. If there were no substitutions I didn't play.

If substitutions were allowed, when you got to a point where you looked like you were about to lose (one of your opponents was so close to your marble that their next play would surely hit or even break it) you could call 'substitute' and replace your marble with a more common one. If they got you before you called 'substitute', you were in big trouble. They either got to keep your marble or you needed to trade big time to ransom your favourite!

The substitute needed to be of a similar quality, but have no sentimental value. I kept a range of substitutes so the winners could select something they wanted for their collections, sometimes even get their own favourite back. So I managed to keep my favourite marbles into my teenage years.

'Cat's eyes', fairly common now, were a novelty in the fifties, and highly prized as substitutes because they needed to be bought with money. Kids with no soft-hearted relatives could only get them by winning or trading. A collection containing a cat's eye of every colour was much admired.

Agates, or 'aggies', were rare, and often china balls that resembled agates were called 'aggies'. The china balls needed protection as they chipped and broke easily. I wrapped each one carefully in cloth and tissue, before dropping them into my marble sack, as often they broke in the sack.

Other rare marbles were the glass balls from the necks of bottles. Later we tried the plastic spheres from the Mum roll-on deodorant bottles, but they were too light.

This childhood pleasure developed into coveting eggs made from rocks (real 'marble') and china,



Above, Paula's collection of marbles, kept in a gumball machine. They do look delicious!

and marbles of differing sizes and hues.¹ I keep my glass marbles in a large gumball dispenser, and in glass jars of different sizes.

When I was teaching, I glued clear glass marbles (took me a long time to locate them in a home decorating/ floral arrangement shop) to the heads of large flathead nails, and used them in physics classes to model how a rainbow is created when light passes through a raindrop.

My original marbles are still in their 'sack', wrapped in tissue! Many years ago I went through all my spare marbles (hundreds of them) and used them to make up marble bags for the lucky dips at the various fetes and fairs I supported. I sewed red vinyl bags for them.

More recently I was able to supply replacement marbles for the marble towers used with the Woolworths domino games – the little plastic marbles they came with were very quickly lost.

Another thing my family will curse me for when they clean up my house eventually!!

***An occasional series
by Paula Herlihy***

¹ Marbles, especially the larger kinds, used to be called 'alleys' in the 1950s. You don't seem to hear the word much now.

Seeking stories of baby scales

Liz Gibson is currently custodian of the original set of baby scales from Memorial Infant Welfare Centre (*Things Past* #76). Yarra Ranges Regional Museum had agreed to accept the scales for their collection if we could provide more information about them. We hoped to interview nurse Cindy Dale but her untimely death on 15 February prevented this. Ruth McLean describes the input the Museum would like to receive.

'Do you know of any photos of the Mt Evelyn Maternal and Child Health centre, particularly from during the time the scales were being used? We have a few photos of other centres, but none of Mt Evelyn. Our ideal photo would have Cindy using the scales at Mt Evelyn, but that may be too much to hope for. If there are such photos, and people are happy for us to copy them for the collection, we have the capacity to do so at the museum.

I am also wondering whether there would be anyone else that we could get a few words from. Do you know of anyone who used the Infant Welfare Service, particularly very early on? If we could get a few statements about the service and the role it played for people in the area, that may provide us with more of the story we are seeking.'

Architect-designed

The Mt Evelyn Memorial Infant Welfare Centre opened in 1960. This simple little building was designed by the noted architect John Buckland Hipwell (1920-2007).

John Hipwell's other works include Warrandyte Uniting Church and Loch Uniting Church. He designed a number of houses in Warrandyte, including his own home in Research Road. He also designed apartment buildings and Shell service stations and, later in his career, worked on Federal Government projects.



Simple yet pleasing: Memorial Infant Welfare Centre, above, was designed by John Hipwell.

Hipwell served in the Army from 1940 to 1942 and the RAAF 1942 to 1946. He served in New Guinea with 2 Radio Installation and Maintenance Unit.

In 1958 John Hipwell and his wife Betty were founding members of the pottery cooperative Potters Cottage. An old miner's cottage on their property was the original 'Potters Cottage'.

See Wikipedia entry 'John Hipwell' (architect) and <http://www.mclaren-pottery.com/HISTORY/PottersCottage.html>

Dandenongs Townships Trail

Last month Ben Ellis wrote about the proposal of the Friends of Water Race and Quinn Reserve to develop the Water Race Trail, Borang Avenue to Hazel Street, potentially linking with the proposed north-south trail through the Dandenongs.

The route of the proposed 'Dandenongs Townships Trail' has now been published. It runs from Montrose in the north to Tecoma in the south, with a side trail to the top of Mt Dandenong (*The Age* 14/3/1916).

There's no reason why we couldn't have an alternative starting point in Mt Evelyn. As Ben pointed out in his article, Mt Evelyn is the northernmost point of the Dandenong Ranges National Park and so a reasonable place to start the trail.

From Kev's rain gauge

Rainfall for March 2016 for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, Melbourne and the Melbourne average.

Mt Ev	McK	Melb	Melb Av
61.5mm	62.0mm	35.2mm	50.1mm

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

Kevin Phillips

Contact us

As a courtesy, please address any issues with the content of *Things Past* to the Editor.

Editor: Karen Phillips
karen.m.l.phillips@gmail.com

President: Paula Herlihy
herlihy@alphalink.com.au or
telephone 9736 2935 and leave message

Memberships & newsletter distribution:
Kevin Phillips, kev.phillips@bigpond.com

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:
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