



# Things Past

Newsletter 124

February 2022

Wurundjeri Country

PO Box 289 Mt Evelyn Vic 3796

Incorporation Number A0051327F

## Dates for Your Diary

**Annual General Meeting**, Monday 21 February, 7.30 pm, at Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn.

**'History of the Whaling Industry 1700s – Late 1800s'**, talk by Ross Martin, Saturday 19 March, 1.30 pm at Hardy House

**Power and the People – 150 Years of Local Government in Yarra Ranges**, March to July, exhibition at various venues in Yarra Ranges. See p. 11 for current details.

*Meetings are 3rd Mondays of even months, 7:30 pm at Hardy House for General Business Meetings, and speaker and activity times are on alternate months at times by arrangement - please check your email inbox.*

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## Mt Evelyn's Parklet



***Mt Evelyn's newly installed parklet, December 2021.***

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## Mt Evelyn's Parklet

When Yarra Ranges Council proposed building a parklet in Mt Evelyn, the concept was explained as follows:

*This initiative has been funded by the State Government in response to the Pandemic. ... The parklets are designed from sustainable and recycled materials, and exhibit works from local artists. They provide additional amenity for the activity centres of town and support business by providing safe outdoor dining spaces to sit and enjoy lunch or a coffee, leading to people spending more time in centre. ... Each parklet is unique to its township, with varying colours and artwork giving them a striking point of difference.*<sup>1</sup>

Finding the right spot for Mt Evelyn's parklet was tricky. At least six possible locations were proposed, but all were deemed unsuitable. Either they were too far from pedestrian crossings, or traders objected to losing parking spaces, or the traffic control officers rejected them for blocking visibility. The location that was finally chosen, behind the fence in the main car park off Wray Crescent, was probably the best option (hopefully better wheelchair access from the footpath can be provided).

The Shire's publication *YR Local*, 9 December 2021, stated that the Mt Evelyn Parklet had been installed. At that date it had not, and Paula requested a retraction in the interests of historical accuracy. The claim was however 'true-in-advance' (expected to be true when the magazine was in preparation). Installation was delayed by the impact of Covid on the building industry and

supply chain issues with materials. The parklet was in place and ready for use by 23 December.

Created from a recycled shipping container, the parklet features the work of artists of the outer east: Rebecca Wolske from Upwey, Palawi artist

Amanda Wright from Boronia, and Ali Griffin from Badger Creek. Four poems by Mt Evelyn Primary School students are included – creative responses to the lockdown.

10 parklets have been installed in Yarra Ranges townships.<sup>2</sup>

*Photos this page and p. 1  
- Kevin Phillips.*



***Rebecca Wolske's 'Russell the Rosella' is hard to see behind the fence and creeper.***

## 'Reimagining Your Creek'

The area now covered by Melbourne's suburbs had many creeks that were piped underground when the land was developed. Melbourne Water's 'Reimagining Your Creek' project is 'daylighting' creeks: returning them to the surface and restoring their environment.

The current program includes five creeks. Two are in the outer east: two kilometres of Tarralla Creek between Dorset Road and Eastfield Road Croydon, and Blind Creek between Manuka Drive and Scoresby Road Boronia. The others are the Moonee Ponds Creek through Strathmore and Oak Park, Arnolds Creek at Melton West, and Stony Creek at St Albans.<sup>3</sup>

The works at Blind Creek are complete. Work is still under way at Tarralla Creek (perhaps a place for an excursion in the future?) The Tarralla Creek Trail is part of the Warburton to Carrum Trail, which begins with our own Rail Trail.

<sup>1</sup> Tamara Meadows, YRC, email 30/7/2021.

<sup>2</sup> <https://insidelocalgovernment.com.au/yarra-ranges-council-builds-on-covid-parklet-project/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.melbournewater.com.au/building-and-works/projects/reimagining-your-creek-program>

## **A Multi-talented Mt Evelyn Resident: Cedric/Louise Hordern (1914-2000), part 2**

(Cedric Louis Hordern's name and gender were changed in 1987 to Louise Hordern. When referring to her early life the pronoun 'he' will be used.)

Cedric and Olive Hordern lived in Sunshine, then Raleigh Street, Thornbury, for most of the time between 1938 and 1951. When their first son was a baby, Cedric helped renovate, jack up and move (7 feet) Florence and Arthur Padfield's Spring Road home at Mt Evelyn, demonstrating considerable aptitude for building and engineering.

Cedric obtained work as an insurance salesman for a time, then as a labourer. Ultimately he did an International Correspondence School's course in draughting. "In those days it was rather frowned upon for wives to be working." Olive had been 'doing relief work and moving around a bit' but eventually Cedric was able to support his family by himself.

After working as a sheet metal worker assistant, early in the Second World War, in 1939, Cedric got work at the Central Drawing Office, Maribyrnong. He later transferred to Bingham Food Manufacturing Equipment Supply at Montague, Fishermen's Bend. Further positions followed at Moulded Products then at Australia Paper Mills (APM). In 1949 a friend from Monbulk, Ray Kemp, asked Cedric to replace him at Moldex so Cedric worked there for a time, then obtained work at Australian Food Corporation, Kings Way, South Melbourne. Cedric and Olive were still living at

Thornbury, and the trip to work was taking fifty minutes so they reasoned that it would actually be quicker to drive from Mt Evelyn.

### **Back to Mt Evelyn**



*Cedric and Olive in their Mt Evelyn home.*

In 1951 Cedric built a new house on the blocks belonging to Olive and her mother in Park Road, Mt Evelyn. He built the house over three years on weekends and holidays. He used innovative engineering to install a moving external window wall that could be wound down into the floor to reveal a huge patio. The block was 5/6 of an acre (0.34 hectares). Later he bought the block next door and removed from it a shanty with six feet high walls. After the death of his grandmother Harriet in 1947, Cedric received a bequest from his great grand-father (most likely the youngest son, William, of Anthony Hordern the founder of the Sydney retail 'empire').<sup>4</sup> This bequest facilitated the completion of the house.

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<sup>4</sup> See Part One, note 3. Harriet (Tinie) was the eldest daughter of N G Bull Esq. JP of Cabramatta Park, Liverpool, NSW and married Priddle William Hordern in 1887. *The Argus* 1887 18 June p 1. Harriet's (1868-1947) death notice (*The Argus* June 23 1947) did not acknowledge her grandson Cedric but gave some indication of the tragedies she had lived through. She was widowed in her 40s, in 1911, and lost her second doctor son Cedric to double pneumonia (1915) soon after his wife Louise (nee Knibbs) died of appendicitis within a month of giving birth to Cedric

Louis (May 1914). Her single companion daughter Edith Marjorie died in April 1922 and her eldest son, William Guy, at Bendigo in 1924. *The Argus* 23 June 1947, p18. Her first daughter Harriet May Hordern was a prize-winning and scholarship student from the Presbyterian Ladies College, the first woman to graduate from Melbourne University with a Master of Laws. Harriet May married Nigel Abeckett Talworth Backhouse in 1919 and moved to Sydney. Victorian Births Deaths Marriages, *The Argus* 18 June 1904, p 17, *The Argus* 14 Feb 1920, p13, *The Argus* 1



Cedric still moved around for work, freelancing for some time after a project dried up at APM, then working closer to Mt Evelyn for Turner's Cabinet Makers in Nunawading. Anticipating the building of Dunlop's Industrial factory in Bayswater, he obtained work at Dunlop, Fishermen's Bend and, after seven months, was able to move to the Bayswater Drawing Office where he worked for 23 years. He became the chief draughtsman.

Meanwhile Cedric and Olive became members of the Mt Evelyn community, raising three boys and attending the Church of England.



***Cedric, his three sons and one other in the Main Street (Wray Crescent) early 1950s. The Hordern Collection.***

Cedric and Olive shared some hobbies, often sitting together at night doing needlework. At some time during this period Cedric began to dress as a woman at home but he honoured Olive's wish that he did not do so publicly while she was alive. Olive died in 1985 and in 1987 Cedric became Louise and dressed permanently as a woman. She took a trip overseas and wrote a booklet called 'Around the World in a Skirt' (1989). Some community and family members struggled with the transition but many, particularly newer residents in Mt Evelyn, were very accepting. Louise took part in a number of community activities including helping out with historical

research and providing the research for the chapter on the Mt Evelyn Aqueduct for *Tracks to Trails: a history of Mt Evelyn*. Two personal memories follow.

### **Knowing Louise in Mt Evelyn – Paula Herlihy**

Louise and I met around 1990 when Louise joined Mt Evelyn Environment Protection and Progress Association (MEEPPA), and found we had a lot in common. I admired Louise's honesty, humour, straightness of character and bravery in standing out from the crowd.

Louise was very rational and regular in her habits. She kept her records immaculately in vertical files, and had embraced computers and the relatively complex formatting needed for the early word processing packages in order to print out her family tree records. Cedric had done extensive family tree research on the Bull and Hordern families, and he corresponded with relatives all over the world. Louise and I both used the *Wordstar* word processing

package, and when Louise wanted to convert these files to newer formats, rather than re-type, my son Brian

wrote a conversion program for her, and I tidied the conversions. By this time we were firm friends. Louise had a personal photocopier, which printed in three colours (requiring three separate passes). She showed me how to lay out a booklet so that the numbers on the two pages on the same foolscap or A4 layout sheet summed to a constant number to ensure that when the pages were printed they were in the correct order for collating and stapling. I had done formal layout for a magazine for the Victorian Hang Gliding Association (the *Flypaper*) so was fascinated by this 'backyard' printing.

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## The Flame Trees

We were cheered by the sight of 'Flame Tree the Younger' in bloom this Summer ('Younger' is the well-grown specimen at the pedestrian crossing near the Station House). We were inspired to attempt a timeline of the Flame Trees of Mt Evelyn.

'Flame Tree the Elder', on the west side of the street, stood in the front yard of the house attached to Mt Evelyn's original general store. Alf Knowles remembered it as a sapling when he was a boy. Alf was born in 1918 and came to Mt Evelyn when he was four, which would date the tree to the 1920s. He said there was a longish path, and the Flame Tree was planted on the right as you walked towards the front door. At first the tree was small enough for him to jump over.<sup>5</sup> The business became the old IGA supermarket and expanded onto the house site, with the tree in front. When the supermarket was due for demolition in 2000, 'Elder' came under threat.

*'Oh no! Not the Flame Tree!' Howls of outraged disbelief greeted the news that the planned re-development of the old supermarket and shops might involve cutting down the beautiful Illawarra Flame Tree (Brachychiton acerifolius) in Wray Crescent. As happens so often, we had only a few days left to object when we heard the news. Paula and Tim Herlihy organised a petition to save the tree.'*<sup>6</sup>



*Flame Tree the Younger at the pedestrian crossing. Photo Gwenda Donaldson, January 2017.*

Gwenda Donaldson's photo of the Elder Flame Tree in bloom captured its beauty and strengthened MEEPPA's campaign to save the tree. The community's voice was heeded. A photo of the Federation Festival in late 2001 shows the bank/ pharmacy building under construction, with 'Elder' protected by fencing. The northern section of the building (housing the Op Shop) was set back to preserve the tree. A wooden bench seat was erected around it in the early 2000s.

Two Flame Trees were planted on the east side of Wray Crescent, probably in the 1990s. One was 'Flame Tree the Younger'; the 2001 photo seems to show it already about four metres tall. The other stood at the carpark entrance between the Station House and St John Ambulance.

*MEEPPA put in a suggested plan and themes for Mount Evelyn. Repeating the Flame Tree with at least two more was part of that. I think the younger trees were planted after the Station House got a renovation. ... One was removed after vandalism. The surviving younger tree had a near miss also, when the traffic lights were*



*Federation Festival 2001, the bank under construction, with 'Flame Tree the Elder' behind fencing. 'Younger' can just be seen above the canopy to the right of the wooden pole. Photo Tim Herlihy.*

<sup>5</sup> Told by Alf Knowles to Paula Herlihy.

<sup>6</sup> FWRQR Newsletter, May 2000.



*installed in Wray Crescent. It was to be removed in case it obscured the lights. I think the council ... got the 'think again' from MEEPPA. It took so long to get the council to plant anything and it was just becoming a tree. I remember saying how about you just trim it if it gets in the way.<sup>7</sup>*

More recently three more were added to the streetscape, two uphill from 'Younger', one further downhill. These are currently about a metre tall. We now have a total of five Flame Trees in Wray Crescent. There are three more juveniles near the roundabout at the top of York Road (in the garden in front of Subway). These last three are visible on Google Maps Street View dated September 2019.



***The Elder Flame Tree in front of the old IGA supermarket. Photo Gwenda Donaldson.***

'Elder' was nominated for heritage listing but at present has no heritage protection. 'Younger' and the juvenile trees may be a different species of *Brachychiton* from 'Elder'. Their leaves appear to be different (but *Brachychiton* are known for their variable leaf shapes). We would appreciate any help in pinning down the dates when the various trees were planted. If all survive and bloom in unison, they will make a spectacular display and will give Mt Evelyn a distinctive 'look'.

***Karen Phillips & Paula Herlihy***

## **Vale Susan Irene (Sue) Roby (1950 – 3/8/2021)**

Sue Roby was a popular Mt Evelyn figure. She had many interests, and did everything well that she turned her hand to. Naturally athletic, she trained as a Physical Education teacher.

Sue volunteered and worked at Morrison House, particularly in child minding and After School activities. She was active in organising After School Basketball at Mt Evelyn Primary School.



***Sue on her wedding day.***



***Sue and Nigel Roby at a Campfire event at Mt Evelyn Scout Hall. Photo Paula Herlihy.***

As one of the original committee members of the Mt Evelyn Community Rag (MECR), Sue interviewed and wrote about local people. She had the gift of engaging sympathetically with all kinds of people. Her interviewees included Yarra Ranges Commissioner Wal Elms, who built York on

Lilydale; Don Mahoney, a champion body builder; 'Andrew', a young man who was wheelchair-bound; and Mina Lister, the Shire of Lilydale's 1989 Citizen of the Year. Sue also compiled the After School Basketball reports and wrote a history of Mt Evelyn Football Club for MECR.

The Mt Evelyn History Group (MEHG) formed from people who met through their involvement with MECR. Sue was a supporter of MEHG, though not a member. She was interested in family history, and claimed to be descended from Welsh royalty. Sue passed away peacefully on 3 August 2021, aged 71, survived by her husband Nigel, their children Warren and Michelle, and grandchildren Tenisha, Mackenzie and Cailey.

<sup>7</sup> Gwenda Donaldson, emails January 2022.

## More on the Naming of Wonga Park

In Things Past #122 I took issue with the naming of Wonga Park, as stated on the Wurundjeri Stories board at Wittons Reserve. The text claims that the suburb was named after Wurundjeri Ngurungaeta Simon Wonga.

The suburb name came from a property owned by William Brown, which was known as Wonga Wonga in the 1870s, and as the Wonga Park Stud by 1888. The unanswered question was why the property was named 'Wonga'.

Dr Jim Poulter writes that Simon Wonga (c.1821-1875) encouraged his people to learn European ways of working and farming. Wonga became Ngurungaeta in 1846.

*He then began to put his plan into action by getting teams of Aboriginal men and women to gain employment on the farms of local settlers, so they could learn crop cultivation, building construction and livestock management skills.*

He tells the following story:

*The only part of the story left to tell is how Wonga Park got its name.*

*When a new station was set up near Warrandyte in the mid-1850s, Wonga sought employment for his men. Asked if they could muster horses, Wonga said yes, so the owner pointed to a herd of horses in the distance, inviting Wonga to round them up and put them in the corral.*

*Expecting Wonga to get on a horse and crack a whip, he was surprised when Wonga instead went to the corral, opened the gate and started neighing like a lead stallion. Within minutes fifty horses had put themselves in the corral and Wonga simply closed the gate.*

*The owner was so impressed that he gave them all jobs and named his new station Wonga Park.<sup>8</sup>*

It's a great story. The association with horses fits with Wonga Park, which was a race horse stud. It confirms that the suburb name came from the

property name, but it leaves some points unexplained. Who was the station owner? It would be highly unusual for an owner of that time (or even now) to name his estate after an employee, however impressive. And what was the source for the story?

Imitating animal and bird calls was one of the skills of Aboriginal hunters. Simon Wonga was a superb mimic. Protector William Thomas describes Wonga calling a herd of horses, and then dispersing them, at Ryrie's station near present-day Yarra Glen.<sup>9</sup>

Jim Poulter explained that there was no documentary evidence linking Simon Wonga to Wonga Park. Drawing on oral history from Wurundjeri Elders, he was extrapolating from William Thomas's horse-calling story to illustrate how events might have unfolded at Wonga Park.

Aboriginal people did work at the Wonga Park property, probably over several decades. McGivern's History of Croydon mentions a burial ground near Lower Homestead Road for Aboriginal stockmen who died there. Descendants of pioneer families confirmed the existence of this cemetery. On the origin of the name, McGivern cites both Simon Wonga and the Wonga Pigeon.<sup>10</sup>

The Elders did not claim that the horse-calling incident ever took place at Wonga Park. There is no proof, and no specific tradition, of any connection between Simon Wonga and the property, or the name.

**Karen Phillips**

## Aboriginal Flag

The Commonwealth government has acquired the rights to the Aboriginal flag, created by Luritja artist Harold Thomas in 1970. This means the flag can now be used freely, with no copyright restrictions.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-01-24/aboriginal-flag-copyright-transferred-to-commonwealth/100778324>

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<sup>8</sup> J. Poulter, 'Simon Wonga – a Man of Destiny', Birrarung Stories, Warrandyte Diary, September 2017, p.15, [https://warrandytediary.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/SEPTEMBER\\_2017\\_Diary.pdf](https://warrandytediary.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/SEPTEMBER_2017_Diary.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> P. Byrt, 'Simon Wonga, Aboriginal Leader', *Victorian Historical Journal* Vol.76, No. 1, April 2005, p.12.

<sup>10</sup> M. McGivern 1967, *A History of Croydon* Vol.2, pp.121-125.

## Vale Jean-Maree Blencowe nee Baker (09/12/1943 - 31/07/2021)

A Requiem Mass and celebration of Jean's life was held at 10:30am on Thursday 9 December 2021 at St Mary's Catholic Church, Mt Evelyn, followed by a short graveside service, once Covid 19 restrictions eased.

Though a resident of Kalorama, Jean was well known to students of St Mary's Primary School. Initially a classroom teacher, Jean trained as a



**Photo of Jean Blencowe used with permission of Ian Blencowe.**

librarian and established the library at the current St Mary's church and school complex. Jean is remembered fondly in the Mt Evelyn community for her involvement in the early days of Morrison House, in particular her work setting up the Lillydale Toy Library

with Reba Dare Schutenko. Reba and Jean were inspired separately by the Noah's Ark Toy Library for children with disabilities. They joined forces to create the Toy Library which now outlives both its founders.

In 2004, Jean and her husband Ian attended the 25<sup>th</sup> birthday party for the Toy Library in the Mt Evelyn Public Hall.

When the Shire wanted to sell Farndon's Hall on Mt Dandenong, Jean, Ian and others lobbied Council to save it for the community. As part of the plan to generate funds to maintain the Hall, Jean was the founding Secretary of the U3A Mt Dandenong until ill health compelled her to retire. She and Ian have been active in promoting the U3A. Jean was a member of the Mt Dandenong and District Historical Society.

Coincidentally, Andrew Sutherland contacted the Mt Evelyn History Group on 9 December, saying 'I was reading in one of your past issues of *Things Past* (Issue 53 - 2012) [an item] written by Jean

Blencowe. I remember Jean, as my brother and I were among the first kids to be at the school (at the old St Mary's Church).' On being informed of her death, he replied, 'Very sorry to hear the news Paula. Mrs Blencowe started our library from scratch when the school did move into the new site at Clegg Road.'

Jean is survived by her husband Ian, their children, and large extended family.

This photo at left of Jean at the footy comes from the announcement in the *Herald-Sun* 5/8/2021.

## Pebble Art at the Memorial Gardens

The RSL Memorial Gardens received some mysterious additions late last year: a dozen or so pebbles, beautifully painted with poppies and memorial crosses.

Who painted them? No one has claimed responsibility.

The Grade 3 and 4 children at Mt Evelyn Christian School sent the RSL some drawings for Remembrance Day. Perhaps the anonymous pebble artists were from MECS too?



**Examples of the pebble art. Photos Kevin Phillips.**



## **Cool! *Koolasuchus cleelandi*. Victoria's State Fossil Emblem. Congratulations Lesley Kool of Mt Evelyn.**

In August 2021 Museums Victoria opened up voting for a Victorian State Fossil Emblem from a shortlist of eight fossils selected by palaeontologists, geologists and other scientists. All fossils were found in Victoria and are housed in the museum's collection. One of the shortlisted fossils has a connection to Mt Evelyn, being the type species *Koolasuchus cleelandi*, which was named in 1997.

The genus *Koolasuchus* is named for Mt Evelyn palaeontologist Lesley Kool, who has worked tirelessly in the field for decades. The species name *cleelandi* honours Michael Cleeland, who found the first fossil.

11,563 Victorians voted online, and on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022 the state's official fossil emblem was announced! *Koolasuchus cleelandi* is the winner!

'*Koolasuchus cleelandi* was a car-sized amphibian that lived alongside dinosaurs in Victoria during the Cretaceous period approximately 125 million years ago.

Resembling something between a huge newt and a crocodile, *Koolasuchus* was adapted to life in the rushing rivers that once separated Australia and Antarctica. Fossils of the extinct amphibian have only been found at a few beaches and coves in South Gippsland on Bunurong Country.'

Mt Evelyn also has a connection to Victoria's Bird Emblem, the Helmeted Honeyeater *Lichenostomus melanops*, although sadly the bird is no longer found here.

On 9 November 1884, on a 'Club excursion to Olinda Creek near Lillydale (sic)', members of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria took for the first time the nest and eggs of the Helmeted

Honeyeater. Jack Hyett, naturalist and author, and a teacher at Mt Evelyn Primary School in the 1950s, tells us this nest is now in the National Museum.

*Things Past* (#122) described the Woodlanders and their visits to Walden Hut on Olinda Creek. Two of the Woodlanders, Charles Barrett and E. Brooke Nicholls, were members of the Field Naturalists Club, and they made the last recorded sighting of the Helmeted Honeyeater near Olinda Creek in the early 1900s. Barrett thought it was close to the same spot where the nest and eggs had been collected a generation earlier.

The Helmeted Honeyeater was chosen as the symbol of the Mt Evelyn Chamber of Commerce, and of Mt Evelyn Primary School. A footnote in the school history states that the logo was designed by Joanna Berlowitz in 1981 and was intended as 'an Eastern Spinebill on Bluegum blossom'. It was re-interpreted in the 1990s as the Helmeted Honeyeater.

Victoria's Floral Emblem, the Pink Heath *Epacris impressa*, was widespread in Mt Evelyn, and can still be found here.



***This re-creation of Koolasuchus cleelandi was supplied by Museums Victoria for the ABC news website.***

Congratulations Lesley – what wonderful news!

***Paula Herlihy***

## A Multi-talented Mt Evelyn Resident: Cedric/Louise Hordern (1914-2000), part 2

from p. 4

At right is a dot matrix printout Christmas Card Louise created as an example of the three colour reproduction she achieved. In her photo she is wearing a bargello 'tapestry' vest with added embroidered roses, which she designed and made.

Louise became the treasurer of MEEPPA when I was secretary, and we were both very drawn to the history of Mount Evelyn being researched and published in a local newsletter called the *Mt Evelyn Community Rag*. Louise wondered if she was too old to be on Committee, and I undertook to take over the job should she be incapacitated. Louise always hoped MEEPPA would revive a Progress Association Garden Club but MEEPPA was more focussed on indigenous flora.

Louise crafted a large wooden table, and restructured the cupboard in the dining room to store the leaves. She created the embroidered (half cross wool embroidery) seat coverings for the chairs. I was given one of Louise's framed satin stitched wool embroideries from the estate of her neighbour Gwen Watkins.

Louise ate the same meals every day with only minor variation in the sandwich or the pudding. When she arranged to collect the yellow Johnson dinnerware in use at Hardy House, she purchased similar settings for herself in white. She usually ate Pork Strasbourg, and alternatively, a Kraft cheese slice, made up into white sandwiches which were wrapped, and frozen and stacked in a large chest freezer. She made up puddings and dished them into the bowls, after which they were wrapped, frozen and stored in the freezer (ie in the bowls). She either took them out early to thaw or defrosted them in her convection/microwave cooker. I had never seen one in use before. She cooked her cakes and puddings in the convection

oven. I have forgotten how she cooked her biscuits, but she froze the excess.

Louise was tickled pink that her vicar had announced from the pulpit that God had given Louise the gift of perfect shortbread, and she often repeated the story. She had made up two wooden guides, about 5mm thick, upon which the rolling pin rested as it rolled, so that the dough was always an even thickness. She then cut methodically with the medium sized fluted circular cutter, and they were cooked retaining their pale cream colour. They were perfect. (Recipe available on enquiry).

Louise's faith in God and membership of the Anglican Church was a large part of her life, and she regularly collected newspaper for recycling to raise funds for the Anglican Church. She was tall



**Paula and Louise 20 March 1999.**

**Photo: Clare Worsnop.**

and strong and stacked the tied bundles of papers directly into her trailer, always stacking

precisely so she knew without weighing when the final weight was reached-

Louise was fond of saying, 'God made me a man for 80 years and a woman for the next 80 years. After that I'll see what He has planned for me'.

**Janet Wilson** wrote of her memories in emails to me on 11 May and 3 September 2021.

'We knew Cedric Louise very well, as Cedric and Olive were committed members of the Church. He was a backbone of St Mark's, Mt Evelyn, a warden for years and Parish Treasurer. Doug (the Vicar of the Anglican Parish of Lilydale, which included St

Marks in Mt Evelyn 1979-89) valued his knowledge and practical skills enormously. After beautiful Olive died Cedric felt free to transform. (It did cause a bit of chaos in Doug's Church due to unfounded apprehension from some members.) Olive became concerned when Cedric took the fairly common entertainment of men dressing up as women 'quite differently and spent hours getting ready.' 'He was a most caring husband and really looked after her unstintingly when she became an invalid – and it was at this point he began dressing up again. After Olive died Cedric rang Douglas and said he had something to tell him...'

'On one occasion Louise visited the Wilsons' home in order for Doug to witness her new passport. Another parishioner happened to be there at the time. Unexpectedly this person announced that we should all kneel and say a prayer for Louise. I was horrified by this invasion of privacy but Louise happily knelt down and we joined her. The prayers the parishioner delivered were loaded and I felt sick. Next day Louise rang me and told me she had been saying her evening prayers when the phone rang. It was a helpline: a young man who was in desperate confusion due to his transvestite leanings. Louise talked to him, soothed his angst and possibly saved his life. "So, Janet, that told me that God is quite happy with my change and I can care for people whether I dress as a man or a woman." I told Louise she was wonderful whoever she chose to be. Louise joined the Seahorse Club in Melbourne where she became a valued member, often counselling younger participants.' (Janet Wilson)

Louise was hale and hearty before entering Knox Hospital in 2000 to have a bone spur removed from her heel. She never recovered and died in Ringwood Private Hospital, nursed by an ex daughter in law. I visited in her last days and Louise was enchanted by having a small Christmas tree decorating her room which had changing displays of light taken fibre optically to the ends of the needles. I was pleased to see that a photo of Louise displayed at the entrance to her funeral

service was the one I had taken when we were shopping together at Chirnside Park.

***Paula Herlihy and Janice Newton***

## ***Power and the People – 150 Years of Local Government in Yarra Ranges, coming in 2022***

The Mt Evelyn History group is a member of the Yarra Ranges Heritage Network (YRHN), which is organising an exhibition around the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Local Government. Paula Herlihy and Louise Fitinghoff attend YRHN as our representatives.

Our contribution is one of sixteen from across the Shire, and is the story of the creation of Morrison Reserve and the wonderful public facilities we have as a result.



***Morrison's Orchard, 1950s.***  
***Photo courtesy Tony Sykes.***

The exhibition will run across at least four venues as a whole display, then be split up to tour smaller spaces. It is hoped that the whole exhibition will be on display at the new Council Offices, but there is currently no opening date.

The first venue will be the foyer space at The Memo, Healesville, currently envisaged from Wednesday 9 March – Sunday 1 May, and the second venue will be The Chambers at the Museum, Lilydale, from Saturday 21 May – Sunday 31 July. Watch for emails and postings on our Facebook page as these dates might alter and new dates will be posted.



## Storm Photos

John Keane, a resident of Montrose, sent us this sequence of photographs of a house on Canterbury Road in Montrose near the Fire Station. The photos were taken soon after the Storm in June, then around the end of October and finally quite recently.



John also sent a link to a tour of parts of the Mt Dandenong Tourist Road above Mt Evelyn, taken soon after the storm as the roads were still being cleared and trees were still falling:

<https://youtu.be/Q4DwONTNW2Y>

<b>From Kev's Rain Gauge</b>				
Rainfall (in mm) for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, and Melbourne for the last three months.				
	Nov-21	Dec-21	<b>2021 Totals</b>	Jan-22
Mt Evelyn	66.9	34.8	<b>1013.4</b>	72.2
McKillop	76.7	42.9	<b>1134.6</b>	67.9
Melbourne	96.6	27	<b>680.5</b>	79.8
McKillop readings courtesy Jean Edwards Melbourne figures from Bureau of Meteorology: <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/">http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/</a> <div style="text-align: right;"><b>Kevin Phillips</b></div>				

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