



Things Past

Newsletter 125

May 2022

Wurundjeri Country

PO Box 289 Mt Evelyn Vic 3796

Incorporation Number A0051327F

Dates for Your Diary

General Business Meeting, Monday 20 June, 7.30 pm, at Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn.

'History of the Whaling Industry 1700s – Late 1800s', talk by Ross Martin, Saturday 16 July, 1.30 pm at Hardy House

NB There will be no meeting in May, due to the Federal Election being held that day.

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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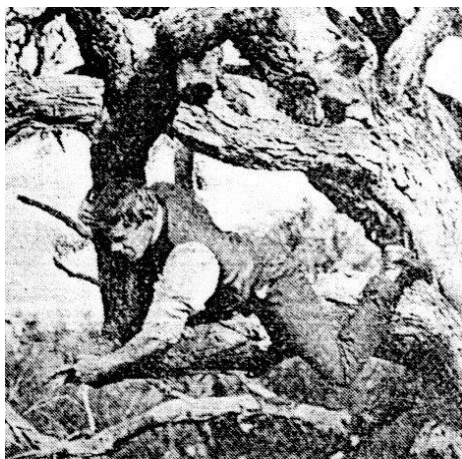
'Woodlander' Descendants Visit 'Walden Hut' Site



Don and Kim Campbell, descendants of Charles Barrett, with one of their ancestor's many books. Photo Janice Newton.

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On a sunny Autumn Saturday (23 April) MEHG members Kevin and Karen Phillips and Janice Newton met with the grandson and great-granddaughter of the renowned Australian nature writer, Charles Barrett. Don and Kim Campbell were keen to see the site of 'Walden Hut' where between 1903 and 1907, their 'Woodlander' ancestor (*Tracks to Trails, Things Past* #67, #122, *Hidden Histories*) met with E. Brooke Nicholls and Claude Kinane to observe nature in all its aspects and to cultivate a poetical appreciation of its beauty and complexity. Between 1905 and the 1950s Charles Barrett went on to write and edit about 100 books and hundreds of articles, and to nurture a love of nature with the next generation. After reading descriptions of the location of the hut and viewing images, Karen Phillips was able to determine the site of the former garden selection of David Parr, adjacent to the Olinda Creek Reserve, where 'Walden Hut' stood. In spite of a drastically increased traffic flow on Swansea Road, and the construction of a few houses on the western bank of the Olinda Creek, it is still possible to imagine the three Woodlander friends walking across paddocks from Lilydale railway station, to the partially cleared, bushy Olinda Creek



Charles Barrett points to a rosella nest in a gum tree, *The New Idea* 6/1/1907.

settlement (Olinda Vale). Almost 120 years on one can still hear some of the birds and see the marshy reeds staked out by the Woodlanders to achieve a perfect photograph of a bird or nest.

Don Campbell and his daughter Kim support MEHG in their efforts to get a sign and/or a bigger structure or replica hut to remember 'The Woodlanders' and their contribution to the

writing and appreciation of nature and the environment.



'Woodlanders' Charles Barrett and E. Brooke Nicholls at 'Walden Hut', in *Australian Wilds* 1919.

If any member has a book, booklet or article written by Charles Barrett, that may not be well-known, please email Mt Evelyn History Group. Kim Campbell is developing a full bibliography of her great-grandfather's work.

Janice Newton

A Local Mystery Solved

One of our readers, who asked to be identified only as 'a local', wrote as follows:

Re the painted stones at the war memorial: I placed them there. They were painted by my four granddaughters, two years ago, for the Anzac Day many of us celebrated at dawn by standing at our driveways with lanterns, listening to the broadcast of the service. ...

I am a local, as are my granddaughters. At the time, they



were aged 10 and 9. I have kept a few [of the stones] and placed them in my garden, but I thought it would be nice to put the remainder at the memorial.

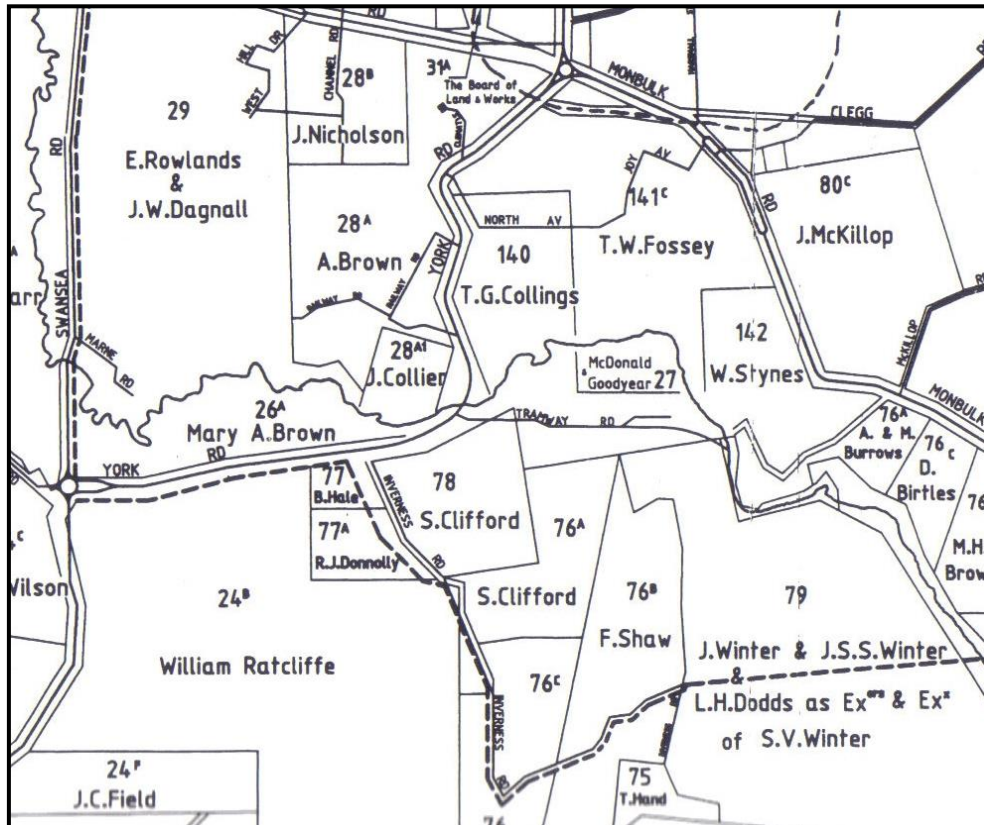
Thank you, 'Local' and girls. Your pebble art has given pleasure to RSL members and visitors.

Melbourne Cycling stopped at the Memorial Gardens to hold a brief Anzac Day ceremony and lay a wreath, before pedalling off down the Trail.

The Cliffords of Clifford's Corner, Part 1

In November 2005 Mount Evelyn History Group received a request for any information about 'Clifford's Corner' in Mt Evelyn. We knew of no such location, but as it happened, my home is in Currajong Avenue and I had noted in research that

Inverness Road was put though by the first Shire Engineer of the Shire of Lillydale, Thomas Hand senior, to get to work from his property on the mountain. The *Lillydale Express* of 15 November 1918 reported that 'the Dandenong Track (the track known as Hand's) from York Road alongside Clifford's can be driven up.'² Clifford's land stretched very close to Tramway Road in two lots



Map of original selections, with modern features such as roads overlayed to aid identification. Three blocks (76A, 76B and 78) belonging to Samuel Clifford are shown.

our land had originally belonged to the Clifford family.¹

The Cliffords were active in their community, and also experienced a great deal of tragedy in their lives, so snippets had been collected and recorded in various of our publications. The enquirer was Clifford Shearing, a descendant of that family and interested in all things 'Clifford'. He is the son of Amy Clifford, who attended (Mount) Evelyn State School.

I was pretty certain his 'Clifford's Corner' was the eastern corner of Inverness and York Roads, as

described as Samuel Clifford Lot 76A, 10307/19.20; 626/1692, and Samuel Clifford Lot 78 10341/19.20; 626/1694.

The Clifford family was among the first selectors in Mt Evelyn. Janice Newton notes that land selections of the late 1800s in Evelyn varied greatly in size. 'Former labourers obtained lots as small as 10 acres, whilst some were allocated over 300 acres, as the map of Mt Evelyn's first selectors shows. Some describing themselves as farmers had farmed elsewhere: ... Clifford at Scoresby ...'.³ Janice notes, 'The Cliffords on 76A cleared land

¹ J. Newton 1996, *The First Selectors of Mt Evelyn*.

² *Lillydale Express*, 15/11/ 1918.

³ J. Newton et al., *Tracks to Trails: a History of Mt Evelyn*, 2nd Ed., p12.

but appeared to keep nothing but horses. Their large family had farms elsewhere.’⁴ The family may have come from Tasmania.

‘In several instances the smallholders, singly or in groups, attempted to redress injustice by disputing claims and reporting divergences from the selection requirement of residence. Francis Brown, his own selection aspirations thwarted after illness, disputed Samuel Clifford taking up Lot 78 bordering York and Inverness Roads. Both he and Hale had already pegged the selection and Brown had applied to the Secretary of Agriculture for there to be set up “an experimental asylum farm house”. The original lot holder Thomas Powell, a tailor from Carlton, had wanted the selection so his wife could stay in the cottage “with her delicate mental health” and keep out of the asylum. Since Powell gave up the selection his wife had been sent to the Kew asylum. In spite of a positive interview with the Minister, Clifford’s selection went ahead.’⁵

Researching arguments and accidents, Janice notes ‘The Clifford ... sons, William, Robert and Benjamin in particular, were frequently in court for obscene language and being drunk and disorderly. In 1885 Benjamin was fined 5/- for ‘worshipping Bacchus worse than a heathen’. He was later gaoled for continual offences relating to drunkenness and vagrancy.’⁶ In 1888 a more serious matter was presented to the courts.

In September George Syme was charged by his mother-in-law, Margaret Clifford, with wilful trespass. She heard a row and found George under the house with his boots off. He had

done this several times before and had assaulted her once.

George had worked for Mr Hyne as a blacksmith but after a drinking spree had had to seek work at Hunter’s sawmill. Mrs Clifford purchased a house on the main road and established her daughter there as caretaker. George was allowed there only so long as he was sober. This was satisfactory until the September when he arrived intoxicated. The Bench discharged him as he promised to amend his ways but then he was summonsed for maintenance. He went to Melbourne to see a solicitor who recommended he talk to his wife and seek an amicable arrangement. He agreed but then got a revolver, a “5 chamber Bulldog” and returned to the house. When the baker called Mrs Clifford to the door Syme shot her, then fired repeatedly at his wife as she ran up the passage. After Mrs Clifford died Syme was charged with wilful murder but still claimed he only meant to frighten them.’⁷

George Syme was convicted and hanged for the murder. The victim, Mrs Margaret Clifford, was Samuel’s mother, and Mrs Jane Syme his sister. Margaret Clifford was 59 and had borne at least eleven children. Her daughter Jane was 36, and was pregnant with her tenth child.

The arrival of the railway in 1901 caused a township to grow around the station. Mt Evelyn

became important as a source of timber.

‘The railways put out huge tenders for firewood and sleepers. ... ‘

McKillop, Sam
Clifford, Daniel
Morrison and
James Varty turned



George Varty at local woodchop, location unknown. Photo courtesy Judy Kortekaas.

cont p 11

⁴ *Tracks to Trails: a History of Mt Evelyn*, 2nd Ed., p15.

⁵ *Tracks to Trails: a History of Mt Evelyn*, 2nd Ed. p18.

⁶ *Evelyn Observer*, 31/7/1885, 7/8/1885, *Lilydale Express*, 18/10/1890.

⁷ *Lilydale Express*, 12/9/1888, 3/10/1888, 6/10/1888.

Original leaseholder William Clifford died in 1887. In 1893 Jane Syme could not pay the rent due. District Land Selection Files, 626/1692.

Bernard O'Dowd, Radical Poet of Montrose

Bernard Patrick O'Dowd (1866-1953), a.k.a. 'Gavah the Blacksmith', was a well-rounded character: teacher, school principal, Supreme Court librarian, parliamentary draughtsman, socialist and poet.⁸ He was thought to have some unspecified association with Mt Evelyn. We now know that O'Dowd had a house in Montrose and that he did have a connection, if only slight and indirect, with Mt Evelyn.

O'Dowd had been impressed by a series of articles in *The Herald* on wildlife observations around Melbourne in the early 1900s, including references to Walden Hut on Olinda Creek. He wondered who the author was. Reviewing Charles Barrett's first book, *From Range to Sea*, for *The Socialist* in 1908, he realised that Barrett was the author of the articles he had admired.⁹ O'Dowd might subsequently have visited Walden Hut; according to Barrett, their visitors included 'a poet or two'.¹⁰

O'Dowd's best-known poems date from this period. He won the *Bulletin* 'Red Page' prize for the best sonnet about Australia in 1900. While not a 'bush poet', he celebrates Australia's ancient and unique environment:

*The cenotaphs of species dead elsewhere
That in your limits leap and swim and fly.*

but questions her intent:

*Are you for light, and trimmed, with oil in place,
Or but a Will o' Wisp on marshy quest?
A new demesne for Mammon to infest?
Or lurks millennial Eden 'neath your face?*¹¹

In 'The Bush' (1912), he sees Australia more in terms of her future possibilities than her present:

*For her the ages have been
long preparing:
She is a prophecy to be
fulfilled!*¹²

The Shire of Lillydale Rate Books show O'Dowd's wife Evangeline as the owner of a six-acre block at 'Long View No.1, Parish of Mooroolbark' in 1916. The Long View Estate, which dated from 1912, was located between Mt Dandenong Tourist Road and Browns Road Montrose.¹³ By 1920 Mrs O'Dowd owned two blocks totalling 13 acres with a house, and her husband another four-acre block. Their residential address was in Moonee Ponds.

After the couple separated in 1920, it seems that Mrs O'Dowd made the Montrose house her full-

time home. The house was narrowly saved from a bushfire in 1926. 'The fire now had about a three-



Bernard O'Dowd with his two younger sons at Montrose, 1915, Meanjin collection, University of Melbourne Archives, 2005.0004.00105.

⁸ 'Australian Dictionary of Biography', <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/odowd-bernard-patrick-7881>

⁹ *The Socialist* 11/1/1908.

¹⁰ C. Barrett 1939, *Koonwarra*, OUP, p.35.

¹¹ B. O'Dowd 1905, 'Australia', <https://allpoetry.com/Bernard-O-Dowd>

¹² B. O'Dowd 1912 'The Bush', <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-bush-2/>

¹³ https://www.imagesofyesteryear.com.au/products/view/montrose_07p
An advertisement in *The Argus* 26/9/1947 places Long View No.1 on Brown's Road Montrose. Janet Wilson remembered an old house called Long View on the Tourist Road, up from Sheffield Road.

mile front from Montrose to the mountain, towards Bernard O'Dowd's house'.¹⁴

A landslide completely destroyed the house in 1935. 'When a landslide occurred between Kalorama and Montrose, Mrs Bernard O'Dowd was nearly overwhelmed. Undermined by rain,



Wreckage of Mrs O'Dowd's house after the landslide. *The Herald*, 1/5/1935.

had been a pall-bearer at the funeral of his friend, Montrose artist William Blamire Young, at Lilydale.¹⁶ I could find no further reference to the O'Dowds in the local area after 1935. Bernard O'Dowd died in 1953, survived by his estranged wife and their five sons.¹⁷

Karen Phillips

'Buda' Castlemaine – a Klytie Pate Connection

Over Summer I visited Buda, the historic villa (and art/craft collection) and heritage garden in Castlemaine, centre of the Victorian goldfields. I purchased and read the booklet 'Buda and the Leviny Family'. The family were greatly gifted in silver-smithing and jewellery making, and the

the side of a mountain collapsed. With a roar like thunder, earth and rocks came hurtling down into the valley.'¹⁵ Mrs O'Dowd had left the house only minutes earlier.

In January the same year, O'Dowd

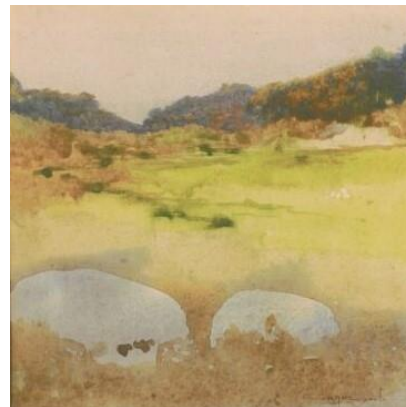
daughters followed the Arts and Crafts movement.

In the booklet I came across mention of Montrose potter Klytie Pate. The Buda collection includes some studio pottery by Klytie Pate – Art Deco coffee cups and saucers. On re-reading the article on Klytie in *Things Past* #115 page 7, I wonder if these are the



cups Lesley Barnes **Art Deco pottery by Klytie Pate¹⁸** was working on, attaching the sea-horse shaped handles, when she was a student of Klytie's.

Also amongst the Buda collection are the first recorded works of art purchased by the Leviny



Untitled Landscape c.1910, watercolour by Blamire Young, Buda Collection.

sisters in 1910 – two water-colours by Blamire Young, who also lived for a time in Montrose.

My time was limited in Castlemaine, but I intend to return to investigate further some of

the things written about in the booklet, and also to visit the Castlemaine Gallery and Museum, and the Botanical Gardens. The area for me was a truly step-back-in-time experience.

Delving into the story of the inhabitants of the house, as well as Castlemaine, was fascinating and absorbing. Buda is classified by the National Trust, and was named after the city of Budapest, Hungary – the homeland of Ernest Leviny.

Robyn Taylor

¹⁴ *The Age* 4/2/1926.

¹⁵ *The Maitland Mercury* 1/5/1935. This landslip was smaller than the great landslip of 1891, but in the same location.

¹⁶ *The Argus* 16/1/1935.

¹⁷ O'Dowd's Vale is in the *Courier-Mail* 3/9/1953:

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/51095474>

¹⁸ From booklet 'Buda and the Leviny Family' by Laurretta Zilles. Available from Buda Historic Home & Garden, Castlemaine, www.budacastlemaine.org

A Golden Summer's Afternoon at Watson's Creek in 1988

My father Max Tucker grew up in Ballarat and was an accomplished gold panner. From about 1954 he owned the Mobilgas Garage with Ray Smith in Bell Street Yarra Glen.

A work friend's children had visited Sovereign Hill with their school, and they asked my father to teach the girls how to pan for gold. He offered to take their two girls and my two boys up to Watson's Creek in Christmas Hills behind Yarra Glen and give them a real life experience.

My father had already taught me to pan, and I remember that day opening with him announcing, as he had taught me, 'the most important thing about panning for gold is to make sure that you don't waste your time by first making sure you put gold in the pan.' He still had his rusty pans with two and three ridges, including a small pan. My friend brought along two shiny new big ones with the single ridge from an army disposals store, which was good as we could compare the different pans.

He had iron pyrites and gold in quartz at home, and he showed it to us, to prepare us for being told later that what we wanted to collect was 'fool's gold' or iron pyrites.

My dad explained that we needed to go to where the gold is, and he chose Watson's Creek because he'd spoken to people who had found gold there. He explained that you needed to look for a rocky base or boulders so the gold was trapped in the crevices of the rock, and preferably on the inside of a curve, as the water needs to slow down on the inside of the curve and go faster on the outside for the water to keep a consistent flow. This he illustrated by getting us to line up into a marching squad and march forward, followed by a 'right turn'. Yes, he had been a drill sergeant in the Army! The inside marchers have to march on the spot and wheel while the outside ones have to take longer steps for the squad to turn. Because the water slows on the inside of a curve, any gold drops there out of the silt. With this in mind he armed us with old kitchen knives spoons and

forks, metal spikes like skewers, miner's picks, small shovels and old paint brushes. He carried all of this in a small bucket. He had also brought some little empty bottles.

Summer was best because the water level was low and you could more easily reach the area that the water used to flow over. The only problem was that there might not be enough water in the creek.

Because he owned a business in Yarra Glen, he knew everyone and had checked that the locals were expecting him. He parked off road and we walked up the creek looking for the sort of place he had described as ideal. Along the way we saw lots of evidence of previous panners. Finally we located an area with a rocky bottom, and my father was very pleased that grasses were growing in the crevices of the rocks that would have been underwater in winter. He explained that this was good because the gold was deposited with the silt and seeds, and as the plants grew the gold was tangled in the roots and if you were careful pulling the grass out and washing the roots into the pans you had a better chance of colour (gold). It also meant the area had not been panned out.

We each located a crevice with grass in it, and carefully pulled up the grass and put it, and any soil, into our pan. We gouged into the crevice with the utensils, spooned up as much as we could, and brushed the remains of the crevice carefully into the pan. Dad came around helping the children, explaining that the gold is heavy and would be lodged low in the crevice, so we needed to gouge out the lower soil. He gathered water from nearby waterholes and brought it to us, washing the roots carefully before discarding the plants.

He taught us to pan by example, as is pretty well taught at Sovereign Hill. You squat at the creek's edge, with the pan at an angle, and add water till you have enough to wash. You wash all the soil off the rocks and then discard the clean rocks, jiggling the muddy water carefully with your hands and jiggling the pan, imagining the heavy gold settling at the bottom before you scrape the top of the silt off out of the pan. Repeat! Dad kept the water

coming by bucket. Repeat till you only have a small amount of fine silt in the bottom of the pan.

By this time we realised that the best pan was the small rusty one with several ridges. It needed less water and was lighter, so you didn't tire as easily, and was better for the small amounts we were washing. The gold catches or 'sticks' to the rough rust, and is less likely to escape over the edge of the pan, and the ridges catch it as you wash and scrape the top silt into the creek. The clean pans are not as good, as the gold slips too easily over the edge into the creek, especially if they only have one catching ridge, as many new pans do.



The bottle containing the gold we panned that day at Watson's Creek – my boys added their flecks to mine.

As we got to the end we were unerringly and incorrectly identifying fool's gold, and wanting to collect it. Dad showed us that you collect gold (or iron pyrites) by licking your finger and pressing it hard onto the speck, then transferring it to the water filled bottle by holding your finger with speck over the top of the bottle and upending the bottle to wash what's on your finger into the bottle. We began to get nervous by the time we were at the end, and I confess Dad did the last swish of most people's pans, and especially each person's first pan, as we were afraid we wouldn't recognise the gold or that we'd wash it out of the pan by accident! With a practised swirl Dad would spread the last silt across the base of the pan and at the same time tip the silt and water out of the pan. There left on the base of the pan were the flecks of gold. Unmistakable.

¹⁹ Wikipedia, accessed 30/12/2021.

²⁰ Australian Geographic, <https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/science->

My friends say it is one of their fondest memories, and certainly a fond memory of my father, who died in 1996.

Paula Herlihy.

This article will also appear in the Gulf Station newsletter.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/places/gulf-station/>

The Pale Flame of 'Pinky'

Much to our surprise, the smallest of the Flame Trees in Wray Crescent (see #124) showed a hint of colour in early February. Salmon-pink blossom appeared, much lighter than the scarlet of the 'Elder' and 'Younger' Flame Trees. At about two feet tall, little 'Pinky' looked too young to be blooming (there are signs its main stem has been broken off). The other juveniles have not yet flowered. We look forward to seeing what colour they turn out to be.

Flame Trees are native to the sub-tropical forests of eastern NSW and Queensland. They are one of several plants known as 'Currajongs' or 'Kurrajongs', from *Carrejun* and *Carrejan*, the indigenous names for the trees in the foothills of the Blue Mountains.¹⁹ Aboriginal people used Flame Trees for food and as a resource. The seeds are edible and the inner bark was used to make string.²⁰



**Flowers from 'Pinky' and 'Younger' Flame Trees.
Photo Kevin Phillips.**

[environment/2019/03/everything-you-need-to-know-about-our-iconic-illawarra-flame-trees/](https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/science-environment/2019/03/everything-you-need-to-know-about-our-iconic-illawarra-flame-trees/)

A Giant Moth

I found this moth in gum-leaf litter beside Hereford Road Mt Evelyn on 12 January 2022. It measured just on nine centimetres long and weighed 18 grams. We did not measure its wingspread, but it must have been at least 18 cm. It was alive, but very sluggish. We placed it in a shady spot in the garden to live out whatever time it had left.

Could it be a Giant Wood Moth *Endoxyla cinereus*? Giant Wood Moths are found mainly in Queensland and northern NSW, but they have been reported in this part of Victoria.²¹ They are the heaviest moths in the world. The females can weigh up to 30 grams and have a wingspan of 25 cm. The males are only half the size. They live only a few days once they emerge as moths. Their short life and perfect camouflage mean they are rarely seen.

We've never seen this type of moth in Mt Evelyn before, but Kevin found this large grub in Silver Wattle wood and the moth pupa in eucalypt wood.²² The pupa was about 6 cm long. Kevin left it under an upturned

wooden drawer on an outdoor table. It continued to develop for some months, but is unlikely to complete its metamorphosis.

All three specimens are probably *Endoxyla*. The large moth and the pupa might have been female and male of the same species. The grub was probably from another species that prefers wattle wood. *Endoxyla cinereus* infests only eucalypts. Each species seems to have its tree of choice.

Moths and grubs were important to the diet and identity of Indigenous Australians. The witchetty grub of Central Australia is the larva of a species of Giant Wood Moth, *Endoxyla leucomochla*.²³ Tribes in the southeast moved up into the High Country in summer to feast on Bogong Moths, *Agrotis infusa*. The local clan name *Wurundjeri* means an edible grub, *jeri*, found in Manna Gums, *wurun*. Even the personal name *Barak* meant 'White grub found in trees'.²⁴



Larva, pupa and moth. The ruler and dollar coins (diameter 2.5 cm) indicate the size.
Photos Kevin Phillips.

Karen Phillips

²¹ <https://australian.museum/learn/animals/insects/giant-wood-moth/>

²² The pupa was found in a dead tree from the Edwards' place in McKillop.

²³ 'Giant Wood Moth and Witchetty Grubs' fact sheet, Queensland Museum Learning.

²⁴ Shirley Wiencke 1984, *When the Wattles Bloom Again, the Life and Times of William Barak*, p. viii.

British Road Names – Earlier Than We Thought

Five of Mt Evelyn's main roads were named after cities, towns or counties in the British Isles: Birmingham, Hereford, Inverness, Swansea and York. As we said in *Things Past* #105, the names were among a group of about 30 British road names concentrated in the Southwest Riding of the Shire of Lillydale. Some are now in the City of Maroondah, not Yarra Ranges.

The names seemed to date from the early 20th century. Information now available on Trove shows that most originated a decade earlier.



The Bridge on York Road. Mab Younger Collection.

Of Mt Evelyn's road names, York and Birmingham were in use by 1894,²⁵ Hereford and Inverness by 1896.²⁶ Swansea Road was not put through the Cave Hill Estate until 1911, but the name was applied to the southern section through the Village Settlement by 1902. 'The bridge on

Swansea Road over Olinda Creek has been repaired by the settlers.'²⁷

The name of Canterbury Road seems to have come first, and was in use by 1863.²⁸ 'Canterbury', at least, has an obvious explanation, as the road leads to the suburb of Canterbury. Perhaps it set the pattern for the other names, but not for another 30 years.

Newspaper reports of Lillydale Shire Council meetings in the 1890s show the names were already in use and apparently familiar to residents and readers. A report from September 1893 refers to 'the road lately named Cardigan', which provides an approximate date for that name.²⁹ Hull and Manchester Roads are mentioned in the same report.

In 1896 the following were listed: Bedford, Bayswater, Dublin, Oxford, Manchester, Hull, Lincoln, Cambridge, York, Inverness, Pembroke, Cardigan, Belfast, Birmingham, Croydon, Dorset, Ipswich, Durham, Norwich, Colchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Exeter, Plymouth and Montrose Roads.

By that time the 'scheme' of British road names was well established. On present information, its beginnings dated from the early 1890s.

Karen Phillips

Vale Helen Carlyle Coulson (nee Duncan) 8/12/1918 – 16/4/2022

Historian Helen Coulson, known in Yarra Ranges for her book *Story of the Dandenongs* (1959), passed away at the age of 103. *Story of the Dandenongs* was commissioned by the Ferntree Gully Shire Council to chronicle the history of the southern end of the Dandenongs from 1838 to 1958, and it is still widely referenced.

Helen lived in Echuca for the last sixty years of her life, and helped found the Echuca Historical Society. Her works have inspired generations to an interest in local history.

Paula Herlihy

²⁵ *Lillydale Express*, 29/6/1894, 13/8/1984.

²⁶ *Lillydale Express*, 1/5/1896.

²⁷ *The Reporter*, Box Hill, 28/2/1902.

²⁸ *The Argus*, 12/1/1863.

²⁹ *Lillydale Express*, 1/9/1893.

The Cliffords of Clifford's Corner... from p 4

a working trade into sport when they took part in woodchopping contests in district shows and athletic meets. Locals who participated were D. Morrison, J. Clancy, S. S. Clifford and J. Baker.³⁰ In 1911 Clancy organised a woodchop and participants included Morrison, Evans and Alexander.³¹ S. Clifford tendered for road work.³²

Much of the York Road area was held by absentee owners at the turn of the century. 'In 1912 the report of a fire ... gave a picture of the environs. Two old camps were burned and Baker, Clifford and Starr fought to save Starr's stables.'

'Sam Clifford remained on York/Inverness Road keeping horses, supplying the new Evelyn school with stable manure and growing some fruit. The family continued to be involved in tragedy.

Arthur Clifford, the 16 year old son of Samuel Clifford, was killed when he was thrown from his dray at the Olinda Vale railway station. He and a young farm labourer, George Christie, had loaded a dray of fruit from Cliffords, then collected plums from Christies. They were at the corner of the platform when some turkeys made a noise and frightened the horse, causing it to bolt. Clifford, who was standing on the dray, was thrown onto some wood and suffered serious injuries. Joseph Alexander saw the accident and ran to his aid but Arthur was bleeding from his ears, nose and mouth. The back of his skull, his collarbone and his ribs were all broken and he "expired immediately" after he was conveyed by rail to Lilydale.³³

The Evelyn Methodist Sunday School had its first anniversary in November 1912, with O'Connor, Morrison, Evans, Clifford, De Little, Bell and Robertson children receiving prizes.³⁴

There was very little continuity of family line between the settlers of the 1870s and residents remaining in the 1920s. Of the first selectors' families, Samuel Clifford remained as a carter or

labourer on his family's 100 acres off York Road. His daughter Amy attended Evelyn State School, and break-up sports were held at the family property.

In April 1911, Samuel's wife Sarah was elected to the first Evelyn School Committee.

'Mrs Clifford was the first of those very energetic, involved mothers who have contributed so much to the school through the years. With Miss Trant she took the children on the Bird Day excursion [in 1911]; at socials and fund-raising she did "splendid work"; when a garden was started, the Cliffords supplied stable manure. Home was at the corner of York and Inverness Roads, where she worked on the crosscut saw with her husband, and each day brought Amy up the hill to school on a led pony.'³⁵

On 8 May 1919, when a new School Committee was elected, Mrs Clifford was re-elected. She had just been rewarded for her 'great works' as a firefighter. Evelyn Estate property owners and the Victoria Insurance Co. had contributed to pay each man and Mrs Clifford £1/1/-, the 'lads' getting 10/- each.³⁶

Sarah Clifford died on 8 October 1923. Just five years later, in October 1928, Samuel Clifford's body was found in the bush. He had been cutting wood and the axe was still in his grasp where he lay, beside the partly-cut tree.³⁷ The 70 year old widower had lived alone on the corner of Inverness and York Roads since the death of his wife.³⁸

This is the last mention of the Cliffords in Mt Evelyn, until Clifford Shearing made contact with the History Group in 2005. Clifford, who was South African-born, was a criminologist from ANU, working on a project with Richard Watkins. Richard contacted us on Clifford's behalf. Clifford visited Clifford's Corner and the school on his first visit with Richard, and again in 2021. He was disappointed to find the school changed beyond recognition, with not even a trace of the school his mother had told him stories about.

Paula Herlihy

³⁰ *Lilydale Express*, 18/5/1900, 28/12/1900, 8/3/1901, 29/3/1901, 20/12/1901, 7/7/1911.

³¹ *Tracks to Trails: a History of Mt Evelyn*, 2nd ed., p 30.

³² *Lilydale Express*, 17/2/1905, 10/3/1905, 20/10/1911.

³³ *Lilydale Express*, 17/2/1905, 24/2/1905.

³⁴ *Lilydale Express*, 6/9/1912, 15/11/1912.

³⁵ *Mt Evelyn Primary School No 3652: 1910 – 2010* Centenary Edition, pp.4-5.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p.15.

³⁷ *Ibid.* p.24.

³⁸ *Tracks to Trails: a History of Mt Evelyn*, p.57.

Eloquent Tributes



A wreath from the RSL in the blue and yellow of Ukraine adorns the Mt Evelyn War Memorial.
Photo Kevin Phillips



End of the innings: a simple memorial beside Hereford Road. Australian cricket lost wicket keeper Rod Marsh and leg spinner Shane Warne on 4 March. Photo Kevin Phillips.

From Kev's Rain Gauge				
Rainfall (in mm) for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, and Melbourne for the last three months.				
	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	YTD
Mt Evelyn	7.9	48.6	82.1	210.8
McKillop	6.6	59.7	88.9	223.1
Melbourne	6.8	54.2	72.6	213.4
McKillop readings courtesy Jean Edwards Melbourne figures from Bureau of Meteorology: http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/ Kevin Phillips				

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