



# Things Past

Newsletter 136

February 2025

Wurundjeri Country

PO Box 289 Mt Evelyn Vic 3796

Incorporation Number A0051327F

## Dates for Your Diary

**Association of Eastern Historical Societies (AEHS)**, Saturday 15th February 2025, at 1:30pm at Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. Interested members are welcome to attend talk (either on 'Genealogy and Local History' or 'Local History for the Future'). Please watch your email.

**Activity**, Saturday 15th March 2025. Visit to **Wanderslore Sanctuary** in Yarra Junction (details TBA).

**General Business Meeting**, Monday 21 April, 2025 at 7:30 pm, at Hardy House.

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

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## Seat in Memory of David Edwards on the Aqueduct Walk



**Daughters Beth and Julie, Jean Edwards and MEEPPA president Clare Worsnop with the seat.**

**Photo by Kevin Phillips.**

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## Feedback on Photos in our 2025 Calendar

Lori Johansen told me she was inspired by the picture of the Aqueduct (illustrating January in the calendar) to document her photos of the Aqueduct, as it passes at the back of her land and has featured in her life at Mt Evelyn.

Lorraine Fairweather provided the photo of Zeenie's Corner (illustrating May) from the Falkingham Family Collection which she has in her care. At the time I first copied the photograph, I was told that the photo showed 'Auntie Lois, Uncle Tom and Ina when they first cleared their land in Mt Evelyn in the 1920s.'



I used a lot of photos from this collection in the 2025 calendar. When I took around a calendar as a gift to Lorraine to thank her for her family's photographs, she commented that she remembered Zeenie's Corner well, but didn't know who Zeenie was.

She asked me how well I knew Falkingham Road, and when I said I'd just come from there and knew it fairly well, she described the Corner as the steep block where Falkingham Road takes a 90° turn to the left as you travel to the end of the road. To my amazement I realised it is the place in Falkingham Road, where my nephew Linc and his family now live!

All this inspired me to look harder for the names of the girls in the photo illustrating June (above right), showing four young school students at one of the railway crossings. I said York Road on the calendar, but the Monbulk Road crossing is more likely. I couldn't remember who had provided the photo, or when, but knew it was probably after

2002 when the Centenary Edition of *Tracks to Trails* was published.



In my hunt I stumbled across an email from Jean Edwards to me on 27/4/2012, in which she says, '... I came across a paper today with the generations of the Wridgeway-Varty families and it states that in the Railway photo the two in [the] middle are Evelyn (taller) and Mabel Wridgeway – approx. 1924-25'. They look like sisters as they are dressed similarly. Does anyone recognise the other two girls?

**Paula Herlihy**

## Dr Bill Hardy is Still Making Stories!

In his later years, Dr Bill Hardy was attached to William Matthews Funerals in Lilydale as a medical examiner.

Recently (18 December 2024) Bill Matthews recalled how Bill Hardy was cremated in his possum skin hat, which was a story we knew. What we didn't know was that Dr Bill asked for his ashes to be sprinkled over the entrance to Hardy House in Mt Evelyn, the RSL Hall in Birmingham Road. The Hall was named for Dr Bill and his wife Cr Gwen Hardy, as a thank you for their input into years of fundraising to build the Hall for the Senior Citizens Club.

The story goes that Bill said he wanted 'it to crunch when people walked over him and remind them of him'.

**Paula Herlihy**

## Evidence of Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Life in the Environs of Mt Evelyn

While the seasonal movements are not known in detail it is likely that the Wurundjeri spent summer on the banks of the Yarra and its tributaries, where water and food were plentiful, and winter in the lightly wooded foothills of the Dandenongs, ... around Lilydale and Mooroolbark.<sup>1</sup> The Aborigines who, very likely, camped regularly on the Olinda Creek at the site of the Recreation Reserve, were part of the Woiwurrung-speaking, Eastern Kulin people. Within this larger grouping the territory of the Wurundjeri balug clan and Wurundjeri willam patriline embraced the Yarra Valley and northern Dandenongs, and therefore Mt Evelyn as well.<sup>2</sup> A heritage survey for the Recreation Camp in 2004 gives us some more detail.

The adjacent Dandenong Range, *Corhanwarrabul*, was a source of kangaroos, possums, lizards, koalas, phascogales, water rats, bandicoots, wombats, birds (including the lyrebird) and plants. The 'pulpy heart of the tree fern was eaten and Austral mulberry used for making fire drills.' Bark from stringy barks was used for fire tinder, fishing nets, string bags and so on. During the 1840s large groups gathered for ceremonial occasions at Monbulk, near a spring, and to gather lyrebird feathers.<sup>3</sup>

The catchment area of the Olinda Creek is about 82 square kilometres and 'supports a diverse

range of native bird, reptile, macro invertebrate and mammal species, several of which are threatened or endangered.' Its Aboriginal name *Gnurt-bille-worrun* may refer to a species of duck.<sup>4</sup>

Eeling was common in creeks and swamps in the warmer months and the Bulbine lily, Milkmaid and Murrnong used as a source of food. Water courses like the Olinda Creek provided fish, yabbies, freshwater mussels and eels.<sup>5</sup> Water plants such as Cumbungi provided fibre and starch to the diet and Water Ribbon (*Triglochin*), also contained edible bulbs and leaves.<sup>6</sup>

Nearby the Lilydale area contained many stone resources: quartz, siltstone, sandstone, mudstone, basalt and silcrete. Although no sites were discovered in the 2004 survey of the 1650 square metre search of the Recreation Camp site, the alluvial flats of the camp site potentially contain buried artefacts. Within a 15-kilometre radius of the camp there were, in 2004, eighteen registered archaeological sites, including six scarred trees, five surface artefact scatters, five isolated artefacts, a collection of artefacts no longer locatable and a (now destroyed) stone arrangement.

Mt Evelyn resident midwife, Nurse Joy, remembered Aboriginal groups camping next to the Olinda Creek, at what was later the Mt Evelyn Recreation Reserve, around 1900 or before,<sup>7</sup> so it is likely this was a known and regular home to the Wurundjeri willam. The recent identification by an Indigenous group of a possible canoe tree on the northern side of the Olinda Creek adds credence to this proposition.<sup>8</sup> The Aboriginal groups

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<sup>1</sup> MEHG 2016, 11. Readers can access MEHG *Aborigines in the Yarra Valley and Northern Dandenongs*, Mount Evelyn History Group, 2016, for further information.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Victorian Communities, Sport and Recreation, (DVCSR) *Mt Evelyn Recreation Camp Archaeological and Heritage Survey*, Arup Environment and Planning, June 2004, 3.1, MEHG *Aborigines*, 4-5.

<sup>3</sup> MEHG 2016, 11, DVCSR *Survey*, 2.1.

<sup>4</sup> Melbourne Water, Olinda Creek Catchment; Muriel McGivern *Aboriginal of the Dandenong Mountain*, McGivern, 1972, 5. McGivern cites Brough Smythe's *Aborigines of Victoria* and says the name may refer to *gnuri* 'native duck', *bille*, meaning 'belly' and *worrun*, 'throwing';

hence 'Hunting the duck along the stream which comes around the belly of the mountain.'

<sup>5</sup> Since written history the creek has been home to black fish, probably the short-finned eel and galaxias, and freshwater mussels.

<sup>6</sup> DVCSR *Survey*, 3.1.

<sup>7</sup> J Newton, K Leadbeater Phillips, P Herlihy *Tracks to Trails: A History of Mt Evelyn*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) Mt Evelyn History Group 2001, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Bark canoes were used in similar areas in Victoria for crossing rivers or punting through wetlands in flood in order to collect eggs and catch fish and birds.

<https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/items/199797>  
; <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/articles/15212>,



remaining after the physical and mental losses and trauma of the colonial impact had, by this time, been gathered at missions and reserves such as the one at Coranderrk, Healesville, and then dispersed to 'assimilate' if they had European

ancestry.<sup>9</sup> Nurse Joy may have observed one of the last local reminders of how the first peoples lived prior to colonialism, or in the early contact period, when they may have worked as bark harvesters or timber workers at the saw mill.<sup>10</sup>

### Summary of Aboriginal archaeological sites located within a 15 km radius of the study area

AAV Site Number 7992-	Site Name	Site Type	Comments
036	Mooroolbark	Artefact collection	Could not be relocated during Ellender's 1991 survey
069	Eastwood Ave/The Briars	Surface artefact scatter/subsurface deposit/exposure in a bank	Du Cros 1988
090	Cardigan Rd, Mooroolbark	Stone arrangement	Du Cros 1988, reported destroyed Ellender 1991.
091	Wandin Creek Rd	Surface artefact scatter	Du Cros 1988
092	Old Baker Creek	" " "	Du Cros 1988
094	Doongalla Estate	Scarred tree	Sncek 1987
100	Wandin Yallock 1	" "	Du Cros 1988
200	MG 1	Surface artefact scatter	Recorded by Gabrielle Brennan
244	Bruces Creek 1	Scarred tree	Rhodes 1990
297	Defelice 2	Isolated artefact occurrence	Ellender 1991
302	Hill base	Surface artefact scatter	Ellender 1991a, 1991b
358	Wandin Yallock Creek 3	Isolated artefact occurrence	Du Cros 1988
359	Quayle Rd 1	" " "	Du Cros 1988
559	Mt Evelyn Railway	Scarred tree	Lane 1997
624	Sams 1	" "	Recorded by Bryon Powell
625	Sams 2	" "	" " " "
626	KC1	Isolated artefact occurrence	" " " "
627	KC2	" " "	" " " "

Department of Victorian Communities, Sport and Recreation, (DVCSR) *Mt Evelyn Recreation Camp Archaeological and Heritage Survey*, Arup Environment and Planning, June 2004, 5.3, table 5.5.

**Janice Newton**

(accessed 3 May 2023). The Olinda Creek flats nearby, adjacent to Swansea Road regularly flooded, and the Yarra River at Yering is a walk of two and a half hours away. Although the forest around the camp was logged from the 1850s and used to provide materials for the bark huts of mill workers, there is no reason to suppose that it was not formerly used to provide slabs of bark for canoes, shields, ceremonial objects and housing.

<sup>9</sup> Coranderrk was established in 1863 but by 1872-4 the model settlement, that was near self-supporting, had become run down and ultimately closed in 1924. Online National Museum of Australia. nma.gov.au/; Diane Barwick *Rebellion at Coranderrk*, Aboriginal History Inc, Canberra, 1998.

<sup>10</sup> See R Kerkhove and C Keys, Australian settler bush huts and Indigenous bark strippers: origins and influences, *The Queensland Review* 27:1, 2020, 1-20.

## A Visit to Ryrie's Station, Yering in 1841, Part 1

First extract from a new book on Melbourne's early contact history.

Marguerita Stephens and Fay Stewart-Muir's *The Years of Terror, Banbu-Deen Kiulin and Colonists at Port Phillip 1835-1851* was published by Australian Scholarly Publishing in 2023. The book provides a wealth of detail about the early years of the Port Phillip Colony, and, in particular, the mostly thwarted efforts of William Thomas, the Assistant Protector of Aborigines, to induce the Indigenous people to settle down on a station and to allow their children to be schooled.

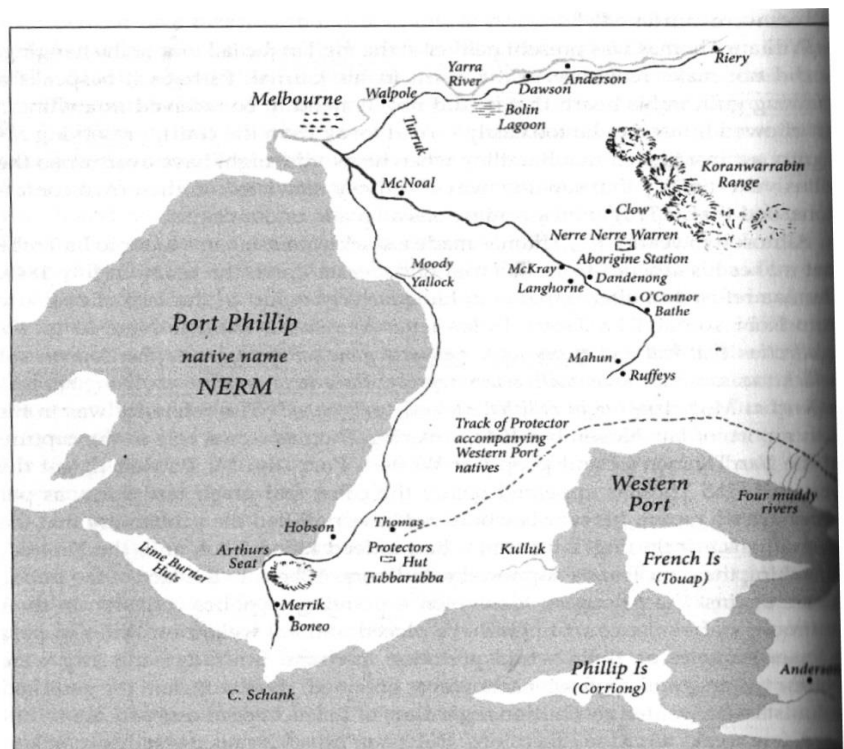
The crisis of colonisation saw rapid alienation of land and a barrage of new diseases and untimely deaths. This led to huge gatherings in Naarm, Melbourne, of groups from most of Port Phillip. There were many corroborees and very long meetings to discuss judicial issues, to carry out punishments and to consider future actions. In some sections of the book there are descriptions of travel and people around the northern Dandenongs and Yarra Valley.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 1841 Thomas left the Nerre Nerre Warren station, loaded the bullock dray with three months provisions, and with old Kollorlook and four young Kulin men set off northeast by east to the Koranwarrabin (Dandenong) ranges.

'They followed a narrow path beside a creek "named Munorer", "scarce wide enough for bullocks". After passing "over several ranges" at night they camped at a deep-water hole "named Balbalung" where the advance party had also camped, on a "table land" thinly timbered with "messmate stringy bark" trees, recently fired so that "little of the old foliage was left, but abundance of new shoots of thick foliage ... of lighter green" making a "striking" effect against the blackened trunks.' The following night they

camped near the headwaters of the Dandenong Creek, "on a high range called Bral Bral" as "thunder and lightning ...echo'd among the mountains." There were small pools with water lilies and tea-tree and the hoofs of cattle were evident. Once they came across a mob of two hundred cattle, untended and making for a water hole. And once they glimpsed the lofty ranges of the Great Divide through the towering trunks and ferns. There was much fallen timber across their path, slowing the bullock dray; but Old Kollorook "dexterously jumped" over such barriers "like [a] young man."

The bullocks strayed overnight then the small



Based on 'Thomas' faded 'map of Western Port by Assistant Protector William Thomas 1840', State Library Victoria, M821.3ECD 1840 Thomas.

Stephens 2023, 228.

party set off NNE, then bearing north, 'rounding the far side of the Koranwarrabin Range below Mt Dandenong, along a track that opened on to a "beautiful hill and dale country which bespoke [our] approach to the Yarra." In the afternoon they rested at Jackson's station and then made the final seven miles to Ryrie's extensive Yering run, on the upper reaches of the Yarra. After dinner at the homestead ... Thomas located 165 men, women, and children of the Taungurong,

Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung clans, comfortably camped on the riverside nearby.’

Disappointed that Thomas had no provisions for them, they refused to attend his Church service, and appeared to be planning to travel to Melbourne for traditional business. Kulpendure, leader Billibellary’s son, was sent as an emissary to the Wadawurrung clans of Geelong/Ballarat area as a prelude to dispute settlement.<sup>1</sup>

## A Visit to Ryrie’s Station, Yering in 1841, Part 2

Extract concerning journey of William Thomas, the Assistant Aboriginal Protector to Ryrie’s of Yering, from Marguerita Stephens and Fay Stewart-Muir’s *The Years of Terror, Banbu-Deen Kulin and Colonists at Port Phillip 1835-1851*.

While the members of the Taungurung, Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri Woiwurrung waited for the return of their emissary Kulpendure and the arrival of the main body of the Taungurung, ‘on the next new moon, those at Ryrie’s split into three parties: one to remain at Ryrie’s; one headed into the mountains where they would divide to hunt game; the other headed to the nearby Briggery Lagoon (north of Ryrie’s run on the Upper Yarra) to catch eels. At Pudg. ger. re Budgery Tom’s invitation, Thomas accompanied him to the lagoon. “I went with him,” wrote Thomas, & was surprised to find with what dexterity he set a reedy Swamp on fire. ... [He took} a small fire stick, squats on his knees, & gives a puff, & in 5 minutes the fire commenced & before 10 minutes as fine a fire as ever I saw, the flames rising one above the other for considerable height & as the fire approached the hollow part of the reed the cracking added to the effect.’

It was a grand sight while it lasted and Thomas tried unsuccessfully for an hour to catch an eel, ‘while about 70 men and women spread out around the edge of the swamp spearing eels. By

noon a “cart load” had been caught and divided among each family.

After a week the hunting parties returned, heralded by campfires in the distance. Other “stragglers” also came in ... exhausting nearby food sources,’ and debates began again about the need to return to Melbourne, Thomas doing his best, as always, to argue against such a move.

## A Short Excursion to the Headwaters of the Dandenong Creek, May 1841

This is the second extract from M Stephens *The Years of Terror*, 2023.

Superintendent La Trobe of the Port Phillip District directed Dr Baillie to tend to Aborigines at Nerre Nerre Warren station and William Thomas, Assistant Protector of Aborigines, took the opportunity with La Trobe’s clerk, Lee, to go on an excursion up the Dandenong Creek into the Koranwarrabin Range (Dandenongs) with a group of young Aboriginal men.

They were guided by Worwodor Young Murray and another youth. From the station the party headed due east – the protector and Lee riding, the young men on foot – and soon located a track leading to the ‘high ranges’, ‘made’ said Worwodor, ‘by Yarra Blks long long Time Back all Dead & Gone’. The track went steeply over ‘a series of low ranges’ towards a ‘lofty and precipitate’ summit ‘named Monbulluck’. From this peak, thickly covered in *kumbadick* fern trees, some 30 foot in height, and the stupendously tall and straight mountain ash, burst the many springs that fed the Dandenong Creek. One of the young men ascended way up a trunk for possums, ‘at least 100 foot high, making his staircase as he ascended with as much ease & as little fear as tho’ it was but 2 feet high.’

In the evening, the party camped in the hollow of a decayed eucalypt. The young men brought in a kangaroo and Thomas added tea and bread.

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<sup>1</sup> M Stephens *The Years of Terror*, 2023, 161-2.

Through the night, as rain set in, Thomas kept up a fire and kept watch over the horses, sleeping fitfully. In the morning the young men went hunting, and 'we cooed, & they Kooed' regularly to keep their bearings with the base camp. The report of their guns made a muffled sound through the thick bush. In a short time they returned with two *wimba* (wallabies) whose dark pelt was much valued by the Kulin, and four *bullen bullen* (lyrebirds), 'so splendid in Beauty and Shape.' The following morning they made their way back down the mountain, and back to Nerre Nerre Warren, shooting a few parrots as they went (p 178).

## Deaths at Ryrie's Nutbubbillorum Lagoon 1848

This is the final of three extracts from M Stephen's 2023 book *'The Years of Terror'*.

Assistant Protector of Aborigines William Thomas despaired of converting the Kulin people to Christianity and removing the 'awful superstition' that attributed untimely deaths to sorcery that required revenge. He was well aware, though, that the new religion and law 'brought their own injustice'.

'It is singular' observed Thomas after the trial of a white man, Stockell, on a charge of killing an

Aboriginal man, 'that of all the sacrifice of Aboriginal life, this is the solitary case in the District of conviction although 5 Aborigines have been executed [and] many transported & imprisoned.' [Stockell was sentenced to only two months in prison.]

Throughout the autumn of 1848 deaths continued to mount, largely from influenza, tuberculosis and the debilitating effects of venereal disease and malnutrition. Early in March news came of four deaths at the lagoon at Nutbubbillorum, by Ryrie's on the upper Birrarung Yarra, among those who had made the journey to the mountains with the Doctors months earlier. They included three 'old women' whom he had found ill there in January. They were aged 50, 51 and 58 – 'all very aged for blacks', remarked Thomas, forgetting that in

his early years among them he had seen men and women of a much greater age in robust health. Then on 11 March 1848, the great Boonwurrung *arweet* [leader] and Thomas's friend Pudgery Budgery Tom, died at Nerre Nerre Warren, aged about fifty years. He was 'A Man of Importance', noted Thomas. His eldest son, Bugup, once a corporal in the Native Police, followed him to the grave in October (p 401).

**Janice Newton**



Melbourne Water map of Dandenong Creek  
<https://www.melbournwater.com.au/water-and-environment/water-management/rivers-and-creeks/dandenong-creek>

## The Wild Cat of Lilydale

Since European colonisation of Australia there has been a mythology of dangerous wild cats in the bush. According to David Waldron in *Snarls from the Tea-tree* (2012) there were opportunities for this folk lore to grow out of the importation and escape of exotic animals and from possible sightings of the thylacine (Tasmanian Tiger). Most of the stories, however, reflected imagination more than solid evidence. The stories took hold on the borders of 'controlled agrarian land and the untamed bush'. They become public panics when stock losses appeared 'different', when unusual tracks, strange sounds and fleeting images were observed. A posse of well-armed men set off to kill suspicious wildlife in huge hunts throughout local bushland.<sup>1</sup> An incident in 1880s Lilydale followed earlier reports of a tiger sighting in Warburton in the 1850s,<sup>2</sup> and fits the pattern outlined in *Snarls from the Teatree*.

In June 1885 there was considerable excitement in Lilydale when Nicholas Nelson, employed grubbing trees on a Lilydale paddock of Mt Evelyn First Selector, Alfred E Wilson, was convinced he had seen a tiger. (Almost ten years earlier, in 1876, Alfred E Wilson held a property, Lot 31a, later taken over by Charles Baker, in what was to become Mt Evelyn, adjacent to Alice Street along the railway line). However, this 'paddock' of Wilson's, was close to Cave Hill, Lilydale.

Nelson observed the animal coming 'slowly across the paddock from the direction of Melbourne Road and Mr Mitchell's lime kilns' at a quarter past ten in the morning. He called out 'Tiger!' to warn some young children who were playing not far off, and the animal quickening its pace, passed within about 70 yards of him through a post and rail fence into Mrs Deschamps' vineyard.' The Deschamps had two main properties in Lilydale, one dubbed Deschamps Hill, bordered by Anderson Street, Deschamps Avenue and Belle Vue Street and the

other around Deschamps Street, west of Cave Hill Road and this is where the 'tiger' was sighted. The animal crossed the vineyard and finally disappeared amongst some green saplings in the direction of the cemetery in Victoria Road.

Somewhat incredibly, Nelson claimed that he had often seen tigers in a wild state and was 'positive that the animal he saw' was a smallish 'tiger'. About 2 ½ feet high and 4 feet long, the tiger had a short head and a yellow body striped with black and a wide thick tail. Paw tracks were found in the Deschamps vineyard 3 ½ inches long and 2 ½ inches wide, and deep enough to suggest an animal heavier than a dog. In the afternoon 'Constable Lawless and a number of residents armed with rifles and revolvers, went out in pursuit of the animal, but no further signs were met with.'<sup>3</sup> The locality where it was seen adjoined Mooroolbark Estate [South of Chirnside Park] where two horses were lately killed by some unknown animal.

A Lilydale correspondent believed this sighting was of the same animal reported in the Upper Yarra and Burwood districts and seen in the same week by Mr de Pury while he was driving into Lilydale from his residence at Yeringberg. When near Rosemount, about two miles from Lilydale, De Pury saw the animal come out of a paddock and cross the Healesville Road within about 10 yards of the buggy. He thought the animal was a large dog, yellow and marked with black, a cross between a mastiff and staghound. In 'foggy weather or amongst scrub it could easily be mistaken for a tiger.' 'The animal had 'committed numerous depredations, besides causing considerable alarm...'<sup>4</sup>

The *Lilydale Express* reported a few more sightings of what some claimed was the Upper Yarra Tiger in the 1890s but reporters were of the opinion the animal was a dog.<sup>5</sup>

**Janice Newton**

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<sup>1</sup> D Waldron and S Townsend *Snarls from the Tea-tree: big cat folklore*, Arcadia, Australian Scholarly, Melbourne 2012, 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Lilydale Express* 24 Nov 1893, 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ballarat Courier* 17 June 1885, 2.

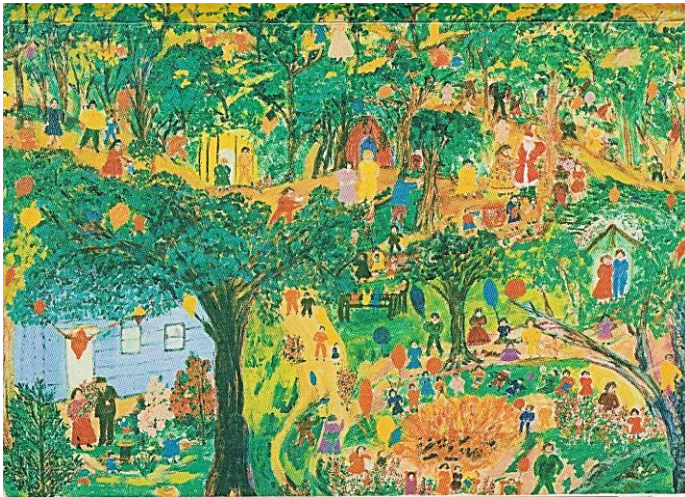
<sup>4</sup> *Australasian* 20 June 1885, 28.

<sup>5</sup> *Lilydale Express* 24 Nov 1893, 2, 15 Dec 1893, 3, 21 Aug 1896, 2, 11 Sept 1896, 3.



## Nan Yaxley's *Christmas at Billygoat Hill*

Nan Yaxley's painting *Christmas at Billygoat Hill* is used on the cover of our main publication, *Tracks to Trails: a history of Mt Evelyn*. Her family, represented by Dr Janice Newton, asked if we were interested in holding the painting here at Mt Evelyn. The painting is currently stored at Paula Herlihy's home.



Nancy Elaine Yaxley (nee Newton) was born in Melbourne on 3 February 1910, and died in Copping Tasmania in 1994. She lived in Northcote and worked in a cake shop in Thornbury in her early years. She holidayed in Mt Evelyn with her Newton relatives. After her marriage to William Frederick Yaxley she lived in Shepparton, where her husband served as branch manager for the Queensland Insurance Company. Later in life she followed her naïve artist son Bill Yaxley to live nearby in Yeppoon North Queensland, and even later to near Copping in Tasmania.

She took up painting late in life and adopted the naïve style favoured by her son. We are very fortunate to have her painting of Billygoat Hill as remembered by her as a collection of vignettes, some based on photographs, and linked in her memory by the green bush environment.

**Excerpts from Bill Yaxley's artist profile from Despard Gallery,** <https://www.despard-gallery.com.au/artistprofiles/bill-yaxley/>.

Bill Yaxley (1943 - ) held his first solo exhibition in New Plymouth New Zealand in 1969. He returned to Australia and settled in the central Queensland

coastal community of Byfield, north of Yeppoon, where he and his wife Helen farmed citrus fruits. Yaxley exhibited with Ray Hughes Gallery in Brisbane and later Sydney.

'In 1988 and 1990 his work was shown at the Galleria San Vidal, Venice, Italy. In 1993 it was curated in the exhibition *Dame Edna Regrets* at the Museum of Modern Art, Heidi, Melbourne, and in 2003 it was included in the exhibition *Beneath the Monsoon: Visions North of Capricorn* shown at Artspace Mackay. In 2004 his work was the subject of a survey exhibition, *William Yaxley*, at the Carnegie Gallery, Hobart; whilst later it was included in the travelling exhibition *Raw and Compelling: Australian Naïve Art – the continuing tradition*, a survey exhibition focusing on Australian naïve artists from the second half of the twentieth century curated by the Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery, Victoria. Bill Yaxley's work is represented in several public collections including the National Gallery of Australia, Queensland Art Gallery, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hamilton Art Gallery, New Zealand, University Art Museum, University of Queensland, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, University of Tasmania, Rockhampton Art Gallery and the Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra.'

## The Yabbie Pond near Mt Evelyn Railway Station

Leanne Groen writes, 'My sister ... [and I] are going through some of mum and dad's old photos and came across this of the old pond. Thought you might like it for the history page'.

Thanks Leanne – this is an unusual view of the Yabbie



Pond. The caption says 'Mt Evelyn Shops on this site [now on] York Road', most probably the Bowen's yard area.

## Vale Brian Raymond Donaldson (14 January 1958 – 19 November 2024)

Brian Donaldson, the owner of Evelyn Recycling (formerly Alf Luck's bottle yard) died in November 2024.



Brian photographed at Evelyn Recycling as an entry in the Photographic Competition organised for the 2003 Street Party. Photo possibly D. Beryl Phillips.

Brian was a good friend to Mt Evelyn History Group. He personally arranged (and bore the associated costs) of the collection, safe packaging and sending of our Lion Seat to Queensland in what was a vain attempt to have a mould made so that we could reproduce the seats. Unfortunately the news was that the ends were too worn to be reproduced and the project had to be abandoned, but the seat was returned to us in excellent condition.



From left: Peter Paterson, Brian Donaldson, Kevin Phillips and another (possibly Alan Price) load the Lion seat end onto Brian's truck for its trip to Queensland. Photo Paula Herlihy.

Thank you Brian. Your kindness and generosity is remembered and missed.

*Paula Herlihy*

## 1956 TE56 Ferguson Tractor with Olympic Rings

The Ferguson tractor pictured has an illustrious past! It was supplied to the 1956 Olympic Games Committee by British Farm Equipment (BFE), located at the top end of Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. The tractor was used by the Olympic committee employees to move props around on the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) oval during the 1956 Olympics. BFE also supplied a carryall, a tipping trailer and other equipment for use at the MCG.

The tractor features the Olympic Rings on the side of the bonnet (indicated on the photo).



John Taylor, with the Olympic tractor, in the back workshop of Foster Motors before John retired. Photo courtesy John & Nola Taylor, Foster & District Historical Society Inc.

The tractor was in a disused shed under the MCG buildings for many years before Mr Stringer, a committee member of the Foster and District Historical Society, purchased it from the MCG Trust Committee. It is now living out its retirement on a South Gippsland farm.

Thanks to John Keane, who arranged this photograph and text from Nola Taylor of the Foster & District Historical Society Inc., and many thanks to the Foster & District Historical Society Inc.

*Paula Herlihy, from information supplied by John Keane.*



## Employees Associated with the David Mitchell Cave Hill Estate H — Me

Cave Hill did not keep employee records, though probably David Mitchell (DM) Pty Ltd did keep limited records. The following gives a list of people known to be employed by the Mitchell family from various sources, including *A Child of Cave Hill* [1], *A Diva's Day Out* [2], *Tracks to Trails (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed)* [3], *The Longest Journey* [4], Mary Golds [5], Franc & Leonie Smith [6], *No Tombstones Vol. 1* [7] and the *Lilydale Express* (LE) per Sue Thompson. Many are from Mt Evelyn. The Cave Hill Social Club is described in TP#130, per Mary Golds nee Miutescu. SUT = Swinburne University of Technology; YRRM = Yarra Ranges Regional Museum; MDDHS = Mt Dandenong and District Historical Society. Abridged list compiled by Paula Herlihy.

Name	Comments	Date(s) & source
B H	Initials of typist for letter from Charles T Maple to G Miutescu	1 June 1971
Hamilton, Max	Has returned to 'the shop' after a painful accident to his hand	LE April 28 1950
Hansen, Laurie	TP#130. Delivery truck driver	Peter Wilson
Hare, Normie	Declaration of peace 1945, tied steam whistle down [5]	c. 1945
Hawkey, William H	Worked at David Mitchell's Cavehill Quarry.	Mt Evelyn RSL newsletter, Winter 2017 c.1890
Jordan, H (Mr)	[1] Manager, Cave Hill for 15 years. LE 21 Jan 1887, 8 Jul 1892.	1837–1892
Kenny, Patrick	TP#130	Peter Wilson
Kerslake, Fred	Looked after the cattle [1]	
Kilpatrick, R	Presented Cave Hill employees' address to Melba [2]	1902
Kirkpatrick, Matt	Slim Dusty's brother [5]	c. 1959–1972
Lena	Irish housekeeper [1]	
Ling, Harry	Picture of him sorting limestone	YRRM 1960
Luke	[1]	
Lyons, Cliff	Signatory of the Cave Hill employees' address [2]	1902
Mackin, Mr	Cut wood, kept tram lines and sleepers in order. TP#131	
Mackin, James	Possibly above. [3] p. 41. Lived in cabin on Appin property	c. 1904–1916
Maddigan, Jack	Picture of him sorting limestone	YRRM 1960
Maine, Fred	Electrician [1]	
Maple, Charles T	45 years' executive service, then chairman of DML	1985, 29 June 1992
Martin, 'Bags'	TP#131. Run over by a car & killed walking home from his shift	Peter Wilson
Mason, Dick	Firing for Roy Fulton on train.	1919–1922 M Wenker
Mays, Allan	TP#131. Part of large family supplying workers/drivers	Peter Wilson
Mays, Walter A	28 years' service, 49 in 1965. Also [5] (c. 1959–1972)	LE Aug 5 1965
McConnell, Ian	TP#130	Peter Wilson
McDonald, Keith Walker	David Mitchell Estate veteran, 30 years' service. Also [5]	LE Aug 5 1965
McKay, Hughy	Killed at Cave Hill tipping load of overburden with hand winch [5]	c. 1959–1972
Mellon, J	Decorated house next to I Fuller. Bouquet to Melba's hands [2]	1902
Meloni, Scott/Spot	TP#130. Bagger keen to break record for longest employee [1]	Peter Wilson

## Seat in Memory of David Edwards (29.5.1938 – 21.11.2022) on the Aqueduct Walk

On 7 January over 30 friends and well-wishers gathered on the Aqueduct Walk at a site between Hunter Road and Priestly Crescent to unveil a seat in memory of David Edwards. The seat is located at David's favourite spot, looking across the Olinda Creek Gorge towards the flank of Mt Dandenong.

The plaque on the seat reads: 'David S. Edwards 1938-1922 A friend of the Mt Evelyn Aqueduct Remembered with fondness and gratitude for his pivotal role in protecting and caring for the aqueduct for 40 years.'

David and his wife Jean were the prime movers in activating Mt Evelyn people to support

retention of the decommissioned aqueduct for the benefit of the community. They succeeded in getting both Labor and Liberal candidates on side.

David and Jean received the Yarra Ranges Environmental Achievers Award in 2014 for their work saving the Aqueduct and creating the Friends of Mt Evelyn Aqueduct Walk. Both were members and supporters of Mt Evelyn History Group, and Jean remains a member.

For more information and some lovely photographs, please go to the ME & You newsletter created by Joy Phillips at [www.mtevelyn.news](http://www.mtevelyn.news). The issue with David's seat is available at:

<https://mtevelynnews.substack.com/p/issue-56-thursday-january-16-2025>

<b>From Kev's Rain Gauge</b>				
Rainfall (in mm) for Mt Evelyn, McKillop, and Melbourne for the last 3 months.				
	Nov-24	Dec-24	2024 Totals	Jan-25
Mt Evelyn	48.1	51.3	955.7	43.7
McKillop	47.6	53.8	1040.9	42.7
Melbourne	62.8	38.6	590.4	62.6
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> <b>Kevin Phillips</b>				

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