



GLEN EIRA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Victoria Alexandria Wibberley 'Nurse Mac' (1863-1942)

Nurse Mac was a well-known figure in Bentleigh in the early years of the 20th century. She was a midwife who visited women in their homes to deliver their babies as was the norm at that time. She lived a rich and varied life.

Named Victoria but known as Alex (or sometimes Alec), she was the ninth child of eleven children born to William and Maria Wibberley. Born in the tiny village of Roston in the beautiful Derbyshire Dales, where she lived until the age of 22 when she married Thomas Woodhouse, a blacksmith from Waterfall, Staffordshire.

Alex and Tom emigrated to Australia leaving on 11 November 1884 on the *SS Orient*. They arrived in Melbourne on Christmas Day 1885. They were met by Alex's sister Seneth and husband Jonathon Sherlock and stayed with them at their home in Hawthorn Road, Caulfield for three months.

Tom looked for work. They moved three times in the first two years, before their son William Thomas was born in 1886. Another move followed to a house in York Road, Prahran where two more children, Edith Blanch 1888 and Pauline May 1890, were born.

The marriage was not stable and when Tom finally got work as a blacksmith and coach builder in Bacchus Marsh it was hoped their life might settle down. But it was not to be. During an argument with Tom who was a heavy drinker, Alex declared she had had an affair with Henry Bennet, a baker's driver.

During these unhappy years, Alex had been receiving some stern letters from her family in

Roston complaining about the lack of letters and news. Her brother Louis, also in Melbourne and married with five children, two having died, was also not a letter writer. Her sister Seneth and husband Jonathon with eight children had suffered a huge financial loss when the banks crashed in the late 1880s. Neither seemed able to help Alex with her problems. Another brother and sister were in the USA and Canada. In September

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Nurse Mac, undated
(Photo courtesy Jan Rigby)

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From the President

Our final Speaker Series for 2024 was a well-attended author talk held at a new venue for us – Murrumbeena Park Bowls Club in Gerald St, Murrumbeena. Author and academic Boris Frankel spoke about his fascinating book *No Country for Idealists: The Making of a Family of Subversives*, the story of how and why his father took the family from St Kilda to live in the Soviet Union in 1956, at the height of the Cold War, having escaped from there himself in the 1920s.

Our exhibition at Glen Eira Council Gallery, *Caulfield's Racecourse* was held in October with much interest from the community and many visitors over the nearly four weeks. Congratulations to Anne Kilpatrick and the team of volunteers who put this impressive exhibition together, featuring items and stories from our own Collection and other collections such as the Australian Racing Museum. This newsletter includes some of the many stories of the Racecourse we were unable to include in the exhibition.

We will continue to hold regular Speaker Series talks in 2025 with an occasional change of venue. In order to cover costs of room hire and supper we have decided to charge a \$5 entry fee.

We wish members and friends a Happy Festive Season and our best wishes for 2025. Our premises will close on Tuesday 10th December and will re-open on Tuesday 4th February 2025. We will continue to check emails from time to time during January.

**Barbara Hoad,
GEHS President**



Anne Kilpatrick, standing next to Rosanna Faraci's green straw hat and photo of her full outfit, for which she won Caulfield Cup Fashions on the Field in 2000.

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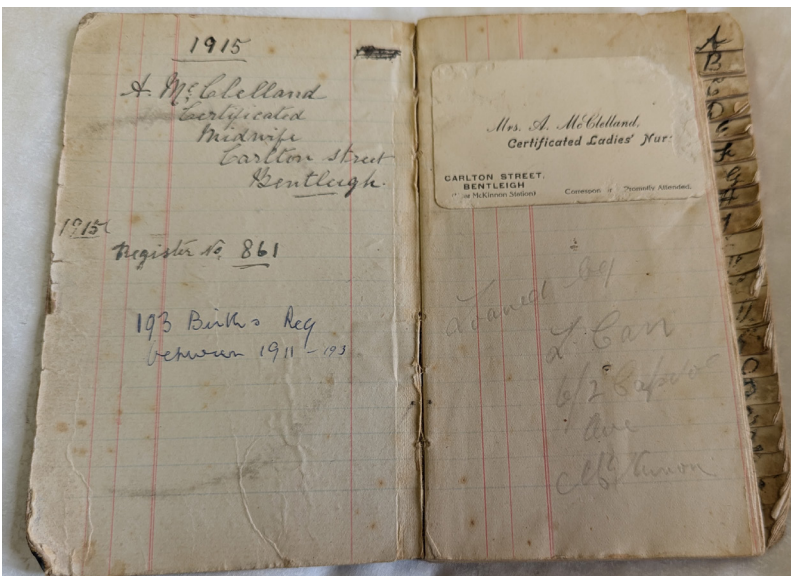
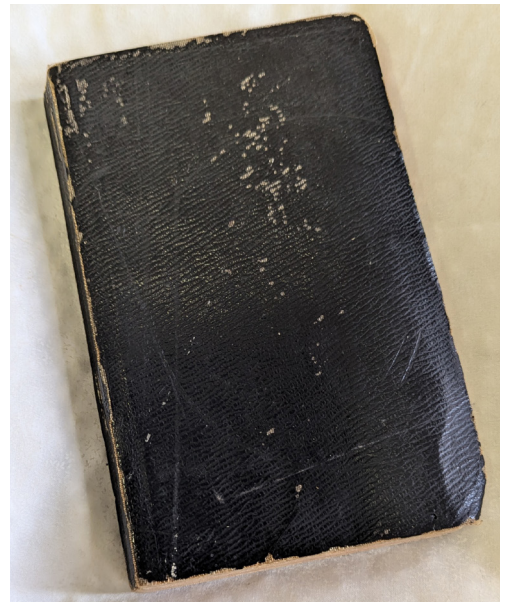
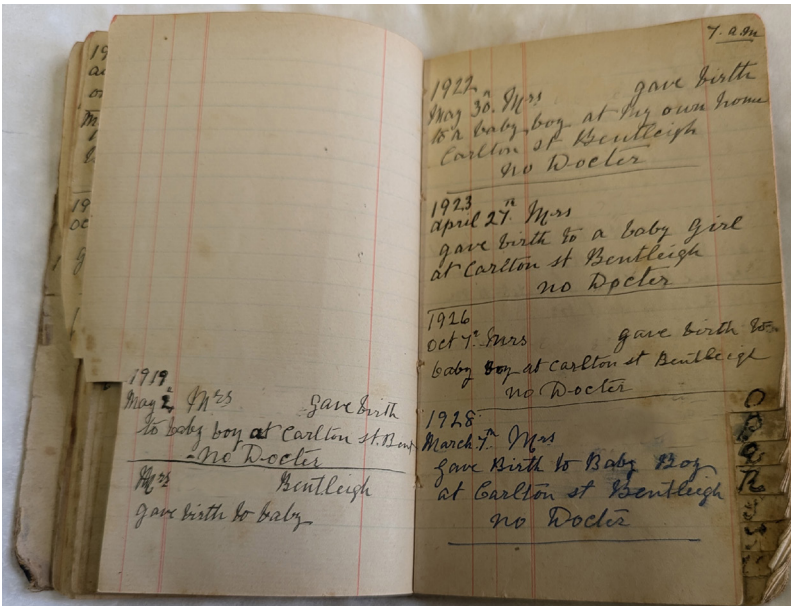
1892, their mother, Maria died at Roston, followed five months later by their father William Wibberley.

Alex was again expecting another child by Tom and a daughter, Clara Daphne was born in July 1893. Not long after, in December 1893, Tom turned Alex out of the house. Sadly their daughter Clara died of gastroenteritis on 21 December 1893 at the Childrens' Hospital in Carlton. She was buried on Christmas Day 1893 in a public grave at Melbourne General Cemetery. Tom petitioned for divorce in January 1894.

By July 1895 Alex was living with George McClelland at 47 Spring Street, Prahran and expecting his baby. George McClelland had a boot makers shop in Malvern Road, Malvern.

Vera Auraria Wibberley was born on 6 October 1895. Her middle name, Auraria, was the name of the horse that won the Melbourne Cup that year. On her birth certificate there is an amendment noting that Alex married George McClelland on 20 November 1895 but no record of the marriage has been found. Another daughter, Linda Beatrice McClelland was born to Alex and George McClelland in September 1898.

In February 1899, George died suddenly of a heart attack. He was 32. Alex was left on her own with two young children. Her first husband Tom had gained custody of their children, William, Edith and Pauline. Alex began cleaning houses and sewing for a living and was called on a number of times to help as midwife.



Nurse Mac's midwifery tools, donated to GEHS by Jan Rigby. Includes invalid feeding cup and register of births she attended from 1915-1933

By 1911 Alex was living at 28 Carlton Street, Bentleigh and had opened the two front rooms of her home as a ladies nursing home. As a registered ladies nurse she soon gathered a reputation as a competent midwife.

'Nurse Mac', as she became known, had a boarder George Edwards. They lived together at Carlton Street for many years. They had a cow called Daisy, a backyard of chicken pens and a Ford Essex car named 'Derby', after Derbyshire. In her early days in Bentleigh Nurse Mac rode a bicycle to confining mothers, stayed with the family until the baby was born, washed and fed the other children and took care of the running of the household. Her fee was paid in installments of a few shillings and more often than not another baby was 'on the way' before payment was completed.

Some years later, in April 1920, Alex travelled, by herself, via New Zealand, Honolulu and Canada to USA to see her brother William Albert Webberley and family. William, an elder of the Church of Latter Day Saints married 57 year old Alex to a 70

year old widower named John Larson in November that year. But three weeks later Alex returned to Australia and her new husband remained in USA. The reasons for this marriage were never known.

On her return Alex continued her nursing and during the 1930s depression helped many families by bringing them home grown vegetables, eggs and milk.

Of her children, daughter Vera Auraria married James Lees from a market garden family who came to the area in 1849, and daughter Linda married Mortimer O'Hare. Her children William and Pauline from her marriage to Thomas Woodhouse remained close to their mother and half-sisters Vera and Linda.

Alex died at Caulfield Hospital after a stroke on 1 March 1942 and was buried in George McClelland's grave in St Kilda Cemetery, Church of England, compartment D, grave no. 382

Jan Rigby, great granddaughter

End of an era Whitmuir Hall – Killearnan – Bentleigh Club

The sale of the Bentleigh Club in 2021, by the Melbourne Football Club, to Metro, a local property developer, brought to an end another era of a



Killearnan in the 1930s

(Courtesy City of Moorabbin Historical Society)

local mansion. The Bentleigh Club, which sold for \$23.7m¹ was finally demolished in August 2024.

Carol Poole from the City of Moorabbin Historical Society described it thus:

'Buried deep beneath the many extensions and modernisation is a house that was built sometime in the 1850s from handmade bricks of clay taken from the nearby Elster Creek, the history of which reflects the changing times and fortunes of the district and the people who helped write its history'.

Whitmuir Hall was built on land which was part of Henry Dendy's Special Survey of 1841. **Walter Adamson** (1798-1866) purchased 160 acres and built his home in 1854. But by 1856 his hotel business ventures had failed. He and his business partners became insolvent and he was forced to sell Whitmuir Hall to pay his debts.

The property had many owners over the years - Flora Rachel Wallace Dunlop, Sir Thomas Bent, Robert Gray Ford, Betsy Armstrong, Robert Crozier,

¹ <https://www.melbournefc.com.au/news/1017572/club-update-sale-of-the-bentleigh-club>

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The Bentleigh Club, Melbourne Football Club and now Metro Property.

Flora Rachel Wallace Dunlop (1807-1891) added Whitmuir Hall to her real estate portfolio in the mid-1850s – her husband died in 1852. Flora then returned to England, and for a time, the property was rented to various tenants. Flora returned to Australia and appears to only have lived at Whitmuir Hall for a few years, from 1872-76, with her son John. The mansion had become a local landmark by then. Rate books from 1877 valued the 156 acre property and 14 room dwelling at 225 pounds.

In 1877 **Thomas Bent** (1838-1909), 22nd Premier of Victoria and land speculator, purchased Whitmuir Hall and its surrounding acreage with a view to subdividing the land, anticipating a period of rapid development with the proposed railway line to Mordialloc which opened in 1881. Bent did not live in the property and within a year had subdivided and sold the land.

When **Robert Gray Ford** (1833-1891) purchased Whitmuir Hall late in 1877 from Thomas Bent, it consisted of the house and 15 acres. Robert, his wife Mary and their six children made their home at Whitmuir Hall. Robert leased two portions of his land to Chinese market gardeners, one for a rental of 100 pounds per annum and the other on which he erected a three roomed weatherboard house for the market gardeners to live in, for a rental of 50 pounds per annum.

Ford died in 1891 and left the estate to his wife and children. The property of nearly 20 acres was valued at 4,800 pounds, the house statuary and fountain valued at 1,000 pounds.

By 1893, Whitmuir Hall had been renamed Killearnan by a new owner, Western District widow, **Betsy Armstrong** (1837-1923). Having left her deceased husband's leased property Warrambine, she took two of her servants, John and Margaret Mc Kerral, to manage the grounds and animals. The Killearnan property now consisted of a two-storey white house, with private gardens and open paddocks, some of which were used as an open zoo, and a number of market gardens which Betsy rented to Chinese market gardeners.



Killearnan in the 1930s with marble fountain and statues (Courtesy City of Moorabbin Historical Society)



Marble fountain and statues at the Bentleigh Club in 2016. The fountain will be retained in the new development (Courtesy G. Paterson)

Betsy took a keen interest in her gardens and entered her flowers in many of the Brighton Horticultural Shows, often winning a prize. Betsy also helped out at the Chinese mission in Ormond.² Late in 1911 Betsy leased Killearnan, as she had purchased another property from L.K.S. MacKinnon (Mackinnon Stakes, horse race), Dunard in Toorak, and renamed it Killearnan. The original Killearnan was vacant for a few years and

² The Chinese Mission School, Murton Hall was built in 1893 cnr Wheatley Rd and Malua St Ormond

John McKerral remained as caretaker of the estate until it was sold.

Arthur Crozier (1856-1929) purchased Killearnan from Betsy Armstrong in 1912. He and his wife **Annie** with their young children made the house their family home, and used the surrounding acreage to agist and train race horses. With the death of Arthur in 1929, Annie was left the property and sold six acres of the property surrounding Killearnan.

This land was purchased by developers, Yawla Street was built and the land subdivided into 70 residential blocks. The blocks were auctioned on 10 May 1930. Annie and her children, Jean and Keith continued living at Killearnan. Annie died in 1938.

In 1936 Annie's daughter Marjory (Crozier) and her husband (Thomas) Ron Cameron, a former jockey and horse trainer, moved into Killearnan. Marjory and her family continued to live there until 1949. On February 7, 1949, the Crozier property was purchased for 8,100 pounds by a consortium of local business men.

Carol Poole describes:

A group of local business men and residents had seen the need for a **Men's Club** in the district and when the Killearnan property came onto the market, in 1949, their visions became a reality. They turned the old house into club rooms and a function area and the **Bentleigh Club** was born. A bowling green and tennis court on the grounds were built to cater to the sporting members of the club.

In May 2011 the **Melbourne Football Club** merged with the Bentleigh Club, assuming control in 2012. 10 years later, in May 2021 the property was sold to Metro. The buildings were demolished by the developers in August 2024, though the marble fountain has been retained. 35 new houses are proposed for the site.³

Sources:

This article draws largely from *If only the walls could talk*, by Carol Poole and Toni Grinberg, City of Moorabbin Historical Society, November 2021, and is reproduced here with permission.

Claire Barton and Joy Mawbey – GEHS Volunteers/
Members

Jan Rigby's recollections of the mansion, Whitmuir Hall

Mum and Dad (Bill & Linda (Lees) Tobin) and my sister and I, moved into Huntley Road Bentleigh in the mid-1950s. There was one house between us and Whitmuir Hall.

Our land, three blocks from Whitmuir Road had three large cypress trees fronting Huntley Road and we had many working parties sawing and chopping them down. Working parties, as they were called, were when friends and family came for the day to help out and after all the work was done, enjoyed food and beer.

My sister Lorraine and I were nine and seven years old. We referred to the mansion as *The Croziers* because we were told the two old Crozier sisters lived there, but it was already vacant so we thought they were dead and their ghosts lived there.

The grounds were overgrown and had a number of statues, but most had been vandalised with arms or heads missing, but we still draped them in daisy chains that we had made.

The fountain was full in winter but dry in summer and sometimes we ran our hands in the water and floated flowers. We weren't allowed near the house which wasn't a problem because we were scared of it. Mum thought there may be snakes in the bushes but there were rabbits.

As we grew older and more families moved into the area we found better things to do than play in the grounds and eventually the Men's Club with tennis courts took over. Our grandfather Jim Lees was a founding member of the Club and later his two sons Len and Jack joined. Jack Lees loved gambling in a room at the top of the stairs in the 1970s. Entry to the room was through a code or a type of key pad. In later years poker machines were installed.

Dad died 1970 and in the late 1970s Mum moved after selling our house to the Club. Our home was demolished and the land became a car park for the Club, as did the house next door.

³ Neighbourhood update/flyer August 2024, (Laurel Bentleigh/Metro Property)

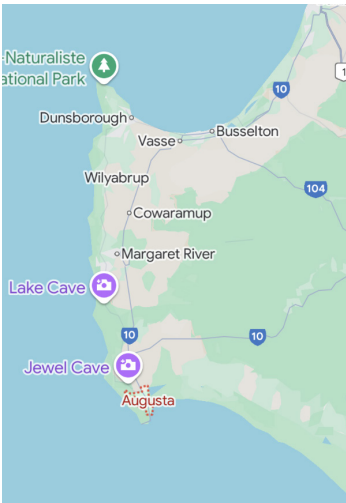
The Turner Family Album

James Woodward Turner (1780-1862) and his family

An old photo album found in an Elsternwick op shop was recently given to GEHS. On further investigation we realised that this family album had no links with our area but is related to the Turner family, early settlers in Augusta, Western Australia. Contact has been made with local history groups in WA and elsewhere in an attempt to find a home for the album.

Unfortunately there is no photo of **James Woodward Turner** in the album but there are photos of his children and their children. James Turner's name can be found today on the Welcome Walls⁴ of the Western Australian Museum in Fremantle. He is described as 'small in stature, huge on *Bulldog Tenacity*'.

James Woodward Turner, son of Thomas and Dorothy (Woodward) Turner was born in England on 30 January, 1780. He married Ann Rockley in 1810 and they had seven children. Following the death of Ann, James married her sister, Maria Rockley. They had one child, James who was



Map showing Augusta, WA



JW Turner, Perth 1861 (image from *Turners of Augusta* by Tom Turner 1956)



Turner family album, probably George (son of James) and his wife Christine Turner

born in 1827. The family lived in London where James Woodward was a builder, architect and a successful businessman.

The British Government at the time was actively promoting the development of the Colony of Western Australia and appeals were made to men of capital and resources to become involved in the project. Turner saw this as an opportunity for his family and responded to the Government's appeal.

On 24 October 1829 James Woodward Turner and his family joined about 50 emigrants on board the *Warrior* bound for Western Australia. After a five month voyage, they reached Fremantle on 12 March 1830. On arrival they found there was no land available on the banks of the Swan or Canning Rivers near Perth or Fremantle. All claims had been previously allocated. However, they were informed that a district was to be opened up further south.

So in May 1830 the Turner family boarded the *Emily Taylor*, embarking at Fremantle with Captain Stirling (Lieutenant Governor), Captain McDermott and settlers, the Bussell brothers, Captain Molloy and his wife Georgiana, and others. Their purpose was to explore land south in the vicinity of Cape Leeuwin where there were prospects of good land near a fine river and a reasonably sheltered harbour. They eventually landed at what was to become the town of Augusta and after making inspections, JW Turner and his family decided to remain and pioneer that district. They had land grants totalling 30,000 acres. The other settlers decided to move on to Vasse. The Turners found that they were alone at Augusta.

⁴ More than one third of Western Australia's population was born overseas. The Welcome Walls projects pay tribute to those migrants who arrived by sea, landing at Fremantle or Albany, and to the many benefits they gave to their new home.... <https://museum.wa.gov.au/welcomewalls/>

For nineteen years James Turner and his family worked the land amid all kinds of difficulties. When the Turners left Augusta they dismantled their home, 'Albion Cottage', which was transported and rebuilt in Perth. With the help of a tenant, JW Turner retained an interest in the Augusta property until his death in 1862.

The family had substantial capital and were accompanied by seven labourers, three of whom brought their own families. James's son **Thomas Turner** was 16 years old when the family arrived in Augusta and not long after, as an 18 year old he established a property four miles up the Blackwood River from 'Albion', his father's home. With the help of his younger brother, George, Thomas built a cottage, several outhouses and a large shed. He named this property 'Turnwood'. The brothers cleared and farmed the land.

However, in 1836 they were forced to abandon 'Turnwood' when the local Aborigines burnt the buildings. By then many of the Turners and fellow landholders had abandoned the area, as did most of the indentured labourers. Late in 1838 Thomas, George and John Turner rebuilt at another property, 'The Spring'. Here they ran cattle, sheep and goats, but this proved commercially unviable. In 1840 Thomas, George and John resettled at Vasse, 10 kms west of Busselton, a place Thomas had earlier surveyed and mapped.

Thomas Turner (1813-1895), painter, architect and surveyor, depicted Augusta in watercolour paintings and maps dating from 1830 to 1845. These were simple, competent records of the development



Thomas Turner and his wife Elizabeth (Heppingstone) Turner (Photo from the Turner family album, held by GEHS)



Holy Trinity Anglican Church (former), Taradale, Vic (<https://www.churchesaustralia.org/> By Mattinbgn - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=8108251>)

of this small, isolated place. Thomas painted the first representation by an early European settler of Augusta. His watercolour, *Augusta Hardy's Inlet First Settlement May 1830* is one of many of his paintings held in the Art Gallery of Western Australia.

Thomas Turner married Elizabeth Heppingstone in 1846. They left for the Victorian goldfields in 1852 and then to Taradale in 1854. In 1859 Thomas set up formally as an architect, surveyor and mapmaker in Taradale. Among his commissions was the design and supervision of the early Gothic Revival church Holy Trinity Anglican at Taradale.

The family next moved to Melbourne and Thomas was employed as a draughtsman by the Crown Lands Office from 1874. After several moves around Victoria, he and his wife settled with their younger son, Edwin, at Bargo, New South Wales in 1880, before moving to Sydney three years later. In 1885 Thomas selected 2,500 acres at Digby Grange, near Gunnedah, then sold out to Edwin and took up a selection at Brandon in the Forbes district. Thomas died on 3rd July 1895, the notice of his death appeared in *The Argus* Thursday 4 July 1895.

Turner – On the 3rd inst., at 8 Phillipson Street, Albert Park, Thomas Turner the dearly beloved husband of Elizabeth Turner, father of Mrs Thomas Gardner, Carlton; E. W. Turner, Gunnedah, N.S.W.; Tom H. Turner, Horsham; Geo. R. Turner, Bunbury, W.A.; and J. R. Turner, Tamworth, N.S.W., aged 82 years.

Thomas Turner's artistic training came more from his father than from drawing lessons at boarding-school (of which sketchbooks survive). It is noted that many of his drawings of houses bear a marked similarity to the architectural drawings which fill his father's London sketchbooks (British Library). In turn, Thomas's surveying skills, also acquired from his father, were passed on to Edwin, his son, who worked as a public surveyor.

Thomas Turner's first colonial building job was to help erect the prefabricated house in Augusta which his father James had brought out from England. In later life he compiled a picture diary of this house and the twenty-nine other residences in which he had lived, all from sketches made earlier on the spot. Several of these houses were built and presumably designed by Thomas. His drawings show a sharp eye for domestic detail and include humble buildings and people going about their everyday life. He was able to convey the mood of

a place. His Augusta drawings are most evocative of the settlement's isolation and poverty. Other sketches were the product of expeditions into the countryside, either on surveys or for enjoyment.

The photograph album that was donated to Glen Eira Historical Society most likely came to Victoria with Thomas and Elizabeth Turner but we will never know for certain.

Sources

Information on James Woodward Turner from an article, *Turner Family of Augusta* (State Library of Western Australia, undated)

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Turner-31554>

Information on Thomas Turner from a Biography of Thomas Turner, Design and Art Australia online. https://daao.library.unsw.edu.au/bio/version_history/thomas-turner/biography/?p=1&revision_no=29

<https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/5257>

Claire Barton – GEHS Volunteer/Member

Caulfield's Racecourse

Our exhibition *Caulfield's Racecourse* was held in October 2024 at the Glen Eira Council Gallery. Our research uncovered many more stories of the goings-on and the characters around the Racecourse and some of these stories from our Collection that didn't make the exhibition are included below.

Joseph Leslie (Squizzy) Taylor (1888-1927)

He lived for a period at 392 Neerim Road, Carnegie on the corner of Emily Street and also for a time in Edward Street, Elsternwick. Taylor trained as a jockey apprentice in his youth and was believed to be involved in race fixing. In 1922 Taylor attended the Caulfield Cup and was ordered off the course by a racecourse detective and refused a hearing by the VATC committee. Following this, 'a huge fireball was seen over the racecourse. On arrival firemen found the old wooden members stand ablaze. Later in a drinking binge Taylor boasted about getting square for the slight but police could find no tangible evidence to fit Taylor.' As Oscar Wilde said 'Racecourses are a sunny place for shady people'.

Been Everywhere & Seen Everything, a memoir by John James Whitty [c.1980s] - excerpts

A former taxi driver with Yellow Cabs, Whitty drove Squizzy Taylor and his wife on occasion. Whitty left taxi driving to work at Caulfield Racecourse (VATC) from 1928, known at the time as 'The Heath', because the centre of the course was covered with heath and had plenty of rabbits and snakes. A strapper was bitten on the leg and was treated in the course casualty room in Bond Street. A horse was also bitten and later died.

The rabbits became a significant problem due to multiple burrows causing menace. Greyhounds were exercised on the course and rabbits were used to give the dogs a 'kill'. A couple of school boys were given permission to bring in their ferrets at the end of the day when the course was closed, which was a success, and the boys always got a rabbit or two to take home. The ferrets failed to appear one day after entering the burrows and failed to turn up. Unfortunately they were later found to have killed all the pheasants in an aviary near the stables kept by Mr J P Arthur, Chairman of the Club, who lived at Booran Road. The ferrets were killed and drains were installed across the

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centre of the course, which controlled the rabbits.

Mrs Phillipson served tea, coffee, toast and hot dogs from a small brick building on the 'flat' past the winning post, to all the jockeys and trainers for one shilling and sixpence.

Another identity was Mrs Goodfellow ('Mrs Stayput') who caused quite a nuisance for the trainers and the horses through her behaviour. The Club wanted to buy her property but it took much haggling over some time before she agreed to sell.

Races were broadcast from the top of the [Presentation] convent [formerly 'Cambria'] in Neerim Road and later from the big white two-storey house in Queens Road opposite the five and half furlong barrier. Broadcasters were barred from working inside the courses at the time.



Presentation Convent in 1972 (Photo GEHS Collection)

old grandstand (the Whittier Grandstand) and permission to erect a mast on top of the new Rupert Clark stand. The first weekend broadcast went out from Caulfield Racecourse in March 1994 on 89.3FM band.

World War 2 and the Racecourse

During WW2 the Army took over the racecourse as a place of enlistment and initial military training. The course was closed from 1941-1945 and the Caulfield Cup was run at Flemington during that period.

These photos from the State Library of Victoria, taken in the 1940s, were part of the exhibition.



Photo from the *Argus* newspaper collection of war photographs. Officials on the dais include Cr Mayor Morris and Governor Sir Winston Dugan who took the salute at the march past, before a crowd of 80,000, c.1941 (State Library of Victoria Collection)

Golden Days Radio 95.7FM at Caulfield Racecourse

Community radio station Golden Days Radio (GDR) was granted vacant space under the



Military display at Caulfield Racecourse. Note the trees and houses in the background, most long gone but the distinctive tower (top left) of Nithsdale on Kambrook Road is visible c.1940 (State Library of Victoria Collection)

Heritage Matters

Community Stables and Booran Lodge stables at Caulfield Racecourse

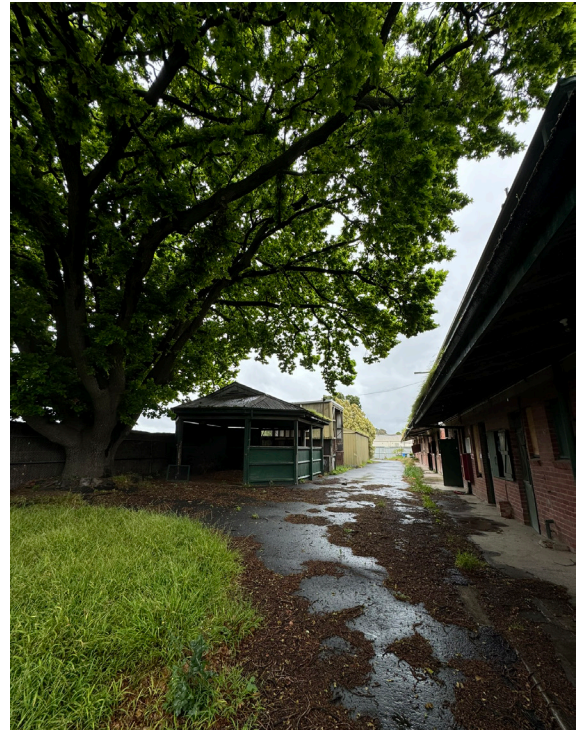
We were very disappointed on 3 October 2024 to learn that bulldozers were on the site of the Community Stables and Booran Lodge Stables in Booran Road at Caulfield Racecourse and demolition of the stables was underway.

These stables were built in the late 1950s and 1972 respectively, in response to a long campaign by the local community and Caulfield Council to have racehorse training moved out of the surrounding suburbs and into the Racecourse. In the years that followed, until racehorse training ended at Caulfield in 2019, many notable trainers, horses, jockeys and others worked out of the Community and Booran Lodge stables. Well-built and highly regarded, a Conservation Management Plan⁵ (CMP) in 2020 noted that in particular, the Community Stables were intact and in good condition.

This demolition was reminiscent of 18/1/2022 (the day the removal of 100 year old trees and some heritage buildings in the northwest grandstand area of the Racecourse was first noticed), as there was no public notice given of the impending

demolition of the stables. We now know that a Demolition Permit was issued by Glen Eira Council on Wednesday 25/9/2024 to the MRC, the day before the Melbourne Racing Club's (MRC) Annual General Meeting on 26/9/2024.

While that AGM brought about significant change to the MRC's Committee, it took until 3/10/24



Community stables at Caulfield Racecourse, 2021
(Photos courtesy Melbourne Racing Club)



⁵ Prepared for the Melbourne Racing Club by Lovell Chen

for official positions to be decided. By then, demolition was underway. We were advised by the MRC's General Manager Property Development, Sam McCartney on 3/10/24, in response to our enquiries, that trees on the site have been retained. That is some good news.

However with a Conservation Management Plan prepared by Lovell Chen for the MRC clearly indicating that both these stables had heritage significance, again neither the MRC nor Glen Eira Council nor even Heritage Victoria took formal action to protect that heritage. This time around, GEHS was not in a position to take up that challenge.

The CMP recommended that if the Community Stables were to be demolished:

'... one rectilinear brick stables building should be retained together with a connecting courtyard, and this would be sufficient to demonstrate design and layout of the complex.'

This recommendation was ignored. The result is that we have lost a key part of our local heritage, which

particularly the Community Stables represented to the City of Glen Eira and its residents, as well as to racing history in Victoria.

Where to next? CEO of Glen Eira City Council, Rebecca McKenzie, responded on 12/10/2024 to our email about this and other issues relating to the demolition. She said:

'In relation to your query about how future development/use of the site will celebrate the former use of the land including the stables, as well as associated racecourse operations, both the Caulfield Structure Plan (2022) and proposed planning scheme provisions to implement the structure plan seek, among other things, the provision of interpretative heritage elements, recognising the site's former use and development. How this will be achieved will then be the subject of further discussions with the landowner at the time that the concept plans are developed for the land.'

Anne Kilpatrick, Secretary

December 2024 Newsletter Editorial Team
Joy Mawbey, Barbara Hoad

GLEN EIRA HISTORICAL SOCIETY COMMITTEE
President / Treasurer - Barbara Hoad
Secretary / Vice-President - Anne Kilpatrick
Committee - Carol Mayell
Committee meets monthly

We thank David Southwick MP for printing this Newsletter.

We acknowledge that the Boon Wurrung/Bunurong peoples of the Kulin Nation are the traditional owners and custodians of the area covered by the City of Glen Eira

Community Bank · Murrumbeena

Bendigo Bank



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