

Greensborough Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter

Edition 21, March 2016

Incorporation No. **A0054430X**

ABN **64 318 435 402**



President's Report March 2016

It is good to see our membership has grown to 87 and attendance at our monthly meetings fairly consistent.

I'd like to welcome new members June Frost, Sue Brenkovich and Peter Simmenauer. Sue and Peter have joined our Thursday research group at our History Resource Centre making quite a difference to our work load.

In recent times we have been able to assist a number of visitors to the Centre as well as enquiries via our web site and Victorian Collection and that is quite gratifying to all concerned.

Of our monthly meetings Jim Poulter's talk "The True Story of the Batman Treaty" drew an attendance of 35 and raised a few questions on the day and a response from another author who will be putting his theory on the same subject at our AGM in September.

Though attendance at our February BBQ at Yellow Gum Park (Blue Lake to some) was down to 16 we all had a great time in a lovely location, though the lake was more of a green colour it is worth a visit and remember it is our taxes that are paying for its upkeep.

Sue Ballantyne has been joined by Peter Simmenauer in adding items onto the Victorian Collection and once again Greensborough Historical Society has been commended for its efforts in V C's Newsletter.

Merilyn Mullavey at present is working on the origin of street names in our area which I'm sure you will agree is a huge task and time consuming, Merilyn is to be congratulated for her perseverance,

We have sold most of our first publication "As I Recall" with only 40 copies left out of 900 printed and this has been most successful thanks mainly to the Greensborough Newsagent that has sold most of them but also thanks go also to the St Helena Newsagent and Montmorency Echo Balloon & Party Supplies for their efforts, we couldn't have done without them.

There have been enquiries as to when another book is due and we hope to put together another collection of local stories and postcards in the next 12 months.

We currently have a display at the Greensborough Plaza for two weeks thanks to the Diamond Valley Community Support that has been relocated to the top floor with reduced window space but still

sufficient for us to promote ourselves with a display and our new promotional leaflet designed by members Adrian and Dawn Bennetts will be permanently on display there.

The Plaque commemorating the deaths of seven pioneer children next to the Plenty River that was instigated by Nillumbik Historical Society and funded by Greensborough Rotary in 1986 has been replaced and updated at our initiative and we are most grateful to Greensborough Rotary for once again funding this project in conjunction with our Society.

An unveiling of the new plaque is to be held at 10am Saturday April 2nd with representatives from Greensborough Rotary, Nillumbik Historical Society, Nillumbik Shire Council and ourselves.

If you wish to attend parking is best in Corowa Crescent opposite Warrool Court and you will need to walk down the adjacent concrete path to the Plenty River and turn right and walk a little way to the cemetery.

Best Wishes to you all

Noel

Committee 2014

President	Noel Withers 9435 4513	Vice President	Sue Ballantyne 9439 5454
Secretary	Norm Colvin 9435 2903	Treasurer	John Gibson 9435 0097

Committee Members

June Hall	Anne Paul	Marilyn Smith	Peter Van Eeken
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Contact the Greensborough Historical Society

Web Site: www.greensboroughhistorical.org.au

Email: info@greensboroughhistorical.org.au

By Post: Greensborough Historical Society Inc.
4 Jenna Close, Greensborough 3088.

In Person: **Resource Centre**
34 Glenauburn Road (off Para Road), Lower Plenty
Open Thursdays from 10.00am to 3.00pm
Visitors welcome

Meeting dates and times for 2016

New members and visitors are most welcome to join us at our meetings.

Committee meetings are generally held at 7.00pm on the third Wednesday of each month. Venue: Resource Centre.

The History Resource Centre will be open on the second Saturday of each month for research into your family or the local area. All welcome!

Date	Day	Time	Activity	Venue
09/04/16	Saturday	1.00 pm	Open day	History Resource Centre
30/04/16	Saturday	1.15 pm	ANZAC Meeting	Diamond Valley Learning Centre
14/05/16	Saturday	1.00 pm	Open day	History Resource Centre
27/05/16	Friday	1.15 pm	Special General Meeting	Greenhills Neighbourhood Centre
11/06/16	Saturday	1.00 pm	Open day	History Resource Centre
25/06/16	Saturday	1.15 pm	Forum	Diamond Valley Learning Centre
09/07/16	Saturday	1.00 pm	Open day	History Resource Centre
29/07/16	Friday	1.15 pm	Special General Meeting	Greenhills Neighbourhood Centre
13/08/16	Saturday	1.00 pm	Open day	History Resource Centre
27/08/16	Friday	1.15 pm	Forum	Greenhills Neighbourhood Centre
10/09/16	Saturday	1.00 pm	Open day	History Resource Centre
30/09/16	Friday	1.15pm	Annual General Meeting	Greenhills Neighbourhood Centre

Old Greensborough (from our Archives)

Below: Ashril Cinema – Main Street facade
Thanks to Gillian Riley



Above: All Saint's Church Greensborough
(for more photos see the last page)

Picnic at Blue Lake

It's been a long hot summer and what better way to celebrate the end of the season (though not the end of hot weather!) than with a picnic and BBQ at Yellow Gum Park - known to Greensborough locals as "Blue Lake".



On Saturday February 27, an intrepid group of GHS members travelled the unmade 'pioneer' road from Yarrambat to the Yellow Gum carpark.



This event was a social alternative to our usual monthly meeting.

HISTORY OF BLUE LAKE *(Thanks to Norm Colvin for sharing his knowledge of the area and to John Gibson for sharing his photos from the day)*

Prior to 1957, the land today known as Yellow Gum Park where the quarry is located was part of the historic "Clear Hill" property, which stretched from the Plenty River east to Oatland Road. These lands were predominantly used for dairy farming along with grazing and minor cropping. As a result of severe bushfires during 1957, the Clear Hill estate was subdivided into

smaller allotments. The portion now known as Yellow Gum Park was purchased by Reid Quarries Pty Ltd who quarried the area to produce materials that were used in the construction of many of Melbourne's early 'Sky Scrapers'. Quarrying operations commenced during 1959 and Boral Australia took over the site in the 1960s.



Albion Reid Quarry Layout

The plant was closed in the early 1970s because of ground water seeping into the quarry hole. The ground water seepage has produced the lake which many locals known as "Blue Lake".

From Norm: Many kids from Greensborough hiked up there in the early 70s to swim in the lake, including me. I remember a large amount of pumice stone floating on the surface. We used to walk through it to have a swim.



Gathering for the BBQ

To continue with our "Summer" theme, we have a story of the Plenty River Pool in Greensborough. Thanks to Gary Partington for his reminiscences and to Marilyn Smith for gathering the story and articles and photographs to accompany it.

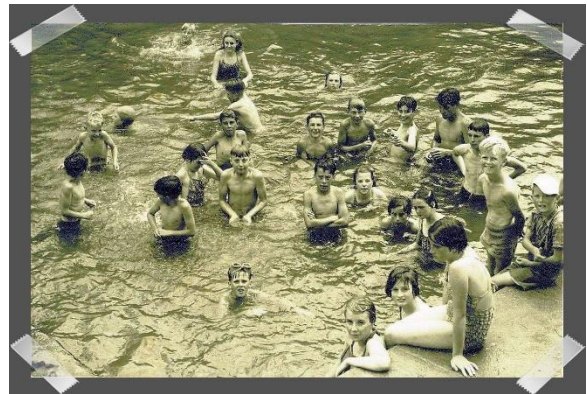
The Plenty River Pool - Gary's story

I was born in the Boro and not having a swimming pool as such we had to swim in the Plenty River. In the 1940s, 50s and 60s the Plenty River was quite big. Those days it was fed by the Yan Yean Reservoir and kept running all the time with fresh water. It had concrete paths and wall at the end (which is still all there) and a proper constructed diving board. The bottom sadly was mud; it was not very exciting standing on a muddy bottom. Some idiots would throw bottles, sticks and other rubbish in.

I remember when I was about 12 give or take, I stood on broken glass and sliced the arch of my foot open, many stitches had to be inserted. Another time I dived off the diving board, the dive was too deep and I split my head open, saw many stars and once again more stitches. The little kid's pool was a bit further downstream, more towards the bridge. It was great for the little kids - it was constructed better than the big pool, all concrete sides and bottom and had a huge big cork down the bottom of the wall to let the old water out. Most of the Boro kids would swim there. When the river was flooded by rain and the Yan Yean Reservoir was let go it was too dangerous.

Sometimes if we could afford the train fare we would go to the Eltham or Diamond Creek baths or sometimes we would ride our bikes. These baths were properly constructed pools but they were pretty disgusting - no chlorine etc. Some kids would get infections from the water; to put

it nicely it was like pea soup. Other Plenty River swimming holes were the Rock pool (near the skate park now Yando Street), Middy's pool was near Willis Vale, Partington's Flat or along Para Road behind Lovitt's factory - it was called Benny Were's Hole, it had a good rope swing. We were never game to swim in Buck's Dam, we were always told it was too dangerous and it didn't have a bottom. When we got older and had cars (about 16-17) we might go over the Yarra to swim, Pound Bend and different holes. There was another swimming hole called Peck's Dam near Grand Boulevard, Monty.



Can you pick Gary from the kids in this photo?

One story Faye (my sister) reminded me of, I was told not to go to the Boro pool, I had too many chores to do (always heaps of things to do on the farm). Mum was working at O'Neil's fruit shop so I thought I'd sneak down, have a quick swim and be home before she got home. I told her I never went swimming and had done all the chores. I forgot to hide my togs, mum found them. I got the cold shoulder for a few days. As Faye said I couldn't handle the cold shoulder, that was worse to me than the strap or something like that.

Another thing with the River pool it doubled as a fishing hole in winter - Redfin, Roach, Blackfish and Trout. Also we used to make canoes and try them out in the pool before we paddled up the

river. We would just use a sheet of old corrugated iron a 4 x 2 board at the front and a wide board at the rear - the old holes we would fill with a blob of melted tar (complements of the Heidelberg Council)

When the Plenty used to flood with runoff water and again letting the Yan Yean go it was nothing for the river to rise up 25 to 30 feet. It would lap the old blue stone bridge right up to the road surface. Friends of mine the Smiths lived right down close to the river (the old tea rooms) down from Joyce Avenue. They copped it bad every big flood, right through their house.

The river will never ever have an old type flood again because they can't let the Yan Yean Reservoir go with our weather and bigger populations. So now it is just a dirty polluted drain, plenty of eels and European Carp.

Oh I wish we could have those days back again, so many good memories with old friends.

By Gary Partington, as told to Marilyn Smith

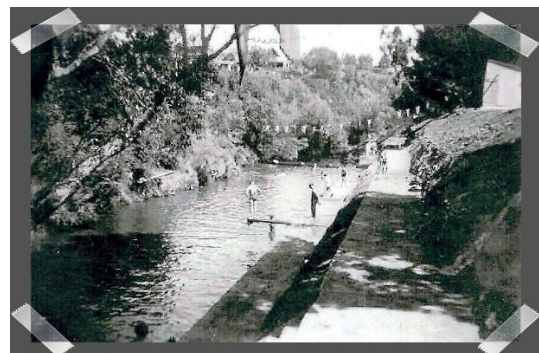
GREENSBOROUGH'S POOL - Huge crowd attends opening.

At the official opening of the new Greensborough swimming pool on Saturday there was a large crowd estimated at over 1,000. The occasion represents another step forward in Greensborough's history of progress, and it was gratifying to all concerned that the day was successful. Introducing the speakers, Cr. C. Jessop referred to the excellent work done by the men engaged on the construction of the pool, and mentioned Mr. Horton, foreman of the Heidelberg Council, and Mr. Purcell who had done fine work. Cr. Jessop said that there was still more work to be done to finally complete the pool, but that would soon be finished. Mr. Russell Clarke, M.L.C. said that "in the world to-day, the

race is for physical fitness" and swimming was one of the best exercises for everybody. He offered his congratulations to the people of Greensborough. ... The Mayor of the City of Heidelberg (Cr. Reid) officially opened the pool. He said that altogether there were no less than eight swimming pools in the Heidelberg district. This was very gratifying in view of the great benefit gained by those who used them, and the fact that it made children grow into strong healthy citizens. He congratulated Greensborough people on their valuable acquisition.

During the afternoon, Cr. Frank Beaurepaire, who is a former world champion swimmer, gave a running commentary of the swimming, diving, and life-saving exhibitions. An interesting demonstration of swimming was given by Mr. Alan Crawford, national 440 free-style champion of Australia, Miss Margot Lord, 440 intermediate champion of Victoria also gave a demonstration in conjunction with her two-sisters, Misses Theda and Marcia Lord. A great ovation rounded off an exhibition of fancy dives by Mr. Ron Masters, Australia's Olympic diving representative at Berlin. His twists and turns, which he alone can perform with such ease enthralled the onlookers.

Hurstbridge Advertiser, Friday 12 March 1937.



Plenty River Pool - Opening Day

From the past - The Perils of Country Life (Not all is well in the River!)

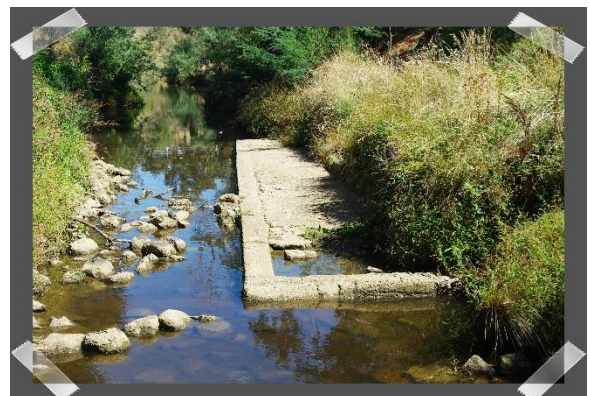
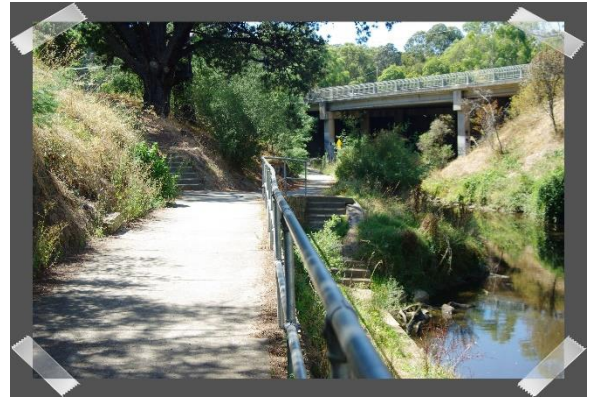
“Beware of Snakes”

The recent exceptionally hot weather is no doubt responsible for the prevalence of snakes, particularly near water courses. Thus, a number of local young people bathing at a favourite spot known as the Rocks in the Plenty River near the township, were scared at the appearance of a large tiger snake swimming about in their midst. When first seen, the reptile was curled up on a flat rock just above water level. Before the alarm could be given it had slipped into the water and apparently bewildered, swam about amongst the terrified children, seeking to escape. Fortunately, no attempt was made by the snake to attack, in fact all seemed to be of the same mind, the youngsters to get on the bank and the snake to reach a hole in the cliff. On another hot day near the spot a large black snake was seen disporting itself by flopping about on the surface like a large eel. It then arranged itself comfortably on a piece of driftwood floating down the river. The shouts of an observer brought a man with a gun, who dispatched it. Needless to say these two incidents have proved a fruitful topic and a starting point for some wonderful reminiscences concerning snakes...

Hurstbridge Advertiser January 1931

Written by David Medhurst (from Faye Fort's collection)

And a big thank you to Marilyn Smith for her photographs of the Plenty River Pool in 2016:



***To follow the lovely photo of All Saint's Anglican Church on page 3,
here are a few photos from Jean Luxford's Collection.***



***Greensborough Anglican Church 1930 - Kindergarten Group in Vicarage Grounds
If you are able to identify any of these children, please let us know.***



Anglican Church "Plant Stall" Ladies 1935

L-R: Jean Luxford, Doreen Olley, Margaret Cordner, Mrs Harry Ryan, Miss Cox

Printing of this Newsletter supplied courtesy of Colin Brooks MP.