

Greensborough Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter

Edition 38, Part 1, May 2020

Incorporation No. **A0054430X**
ABN **64 318 435 402**



President's Report

Hi everyone, I was wondering how you are handling this strange bubble we are in at present and what you are all up to.

Everything is so different, like lack of interaction with other human beings, hearing from people you don't normally speak to except at Christmas time and sorting out that cupboard or pantry that has been annoying you for ages suddenly becoming top priority.

When out walking we have passed and waved to people that we haven't ever seen before appreciating that we aren't alone in this disturbing time but most of us are at least comfortable at home with the heater on full bore and have most mod cons to link us to the outside world although many are not so fortunate.

Who would have thought of Facetiming, Skyping or Zooming neighbours who live just around the corner or playing draughts with the grandchildren electronically, it's a bit of a challenge but at the same time it's a bit exciting having to step out of our usual comfort zone.

Our Thursday crew are continuing their research at home and for myself amongst other things I've returned to restoring an A3 two sided document of Jessop's 1923 Greenhills Estate that was in 16 pieces held together with yellowed sticky tape plus bits in an envelope that I received about 12 years ago but was put into the too hard basket, as I just got bored with it and started a Historical Society instead!

Well it is on its way to completion, so if it hadn't been for this bloomin' virus it may never have seen light of day again, so opportunities do arise when things look grim and with any luck we will all get through our current situation and catch up with each other in the not too distant future but perhaps with a slightly different outlook on life.

Best Wishes to you all

Noel

Unfortunately, due to restrictions, there will be no MAY meeting of Greensborough Historical Society, and we look forward to better news in June. We will keep you informed as things change.

Committee 2019-2020

President Noel Withers 9435 4513 **Vice President** Peter Van Eeken
pve101@yahoo.com.au

Secretary Norm Colvin 9435 2903 **Treasurer** John Gibson 9435 0097

Committee Members: **Dianne Fox** **Sue Brenkovich** **Anne Paul**
 Marilyn Smith **Sue Ballantyne**

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 **CLOSED until further notice**

Meeting dates and times for 2020

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. **NOTE: During restrictions, Committee Meetings are being held online.** The Resource Centre will re-open when it is safe to do so.

| Date | Day | Start Time | Meeting |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| 20/05/20 | Wednesday | 7.00pm (online) | Committee |
| 29/05/20 | Friday | Cancelled | SGM |
| 09/06/20 | Tuesday | Cancelled | Morning tea |

The following are our published dates for the next three months, all are reliant on government restrictions on group gatherings.

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| 13/06/20 | Saturday | TBC | Open Day HRC |
| 17/06/20 | Wednesday | 7.00pm | Committee HRC |
| 27/06/20 | Saturday | 1.15pm | Forum GHNC |
| 15/07/20 | Wednesday | 7.00pm | Committee HRC |
| 31/07/20 | Friday | 1.15pm | SGM HRC |
| 09/08/20 | Sunday | 1.00pm | Open Day HRC |
| 11/08/20 | Tuesday | 10.00am | Morning tea |
| 19/08/20 | Wednesday | 7.00pm | Committee HRC |
| 29/08/20 | Saturday | 1.15pm | Forum GHNC |

A full list of dates was published with the December 2019 Newsletter and is available at the GHS website.

Feature Article (Part 1)

Thanks to Dawn Bennetts (nee Petts) for another interesting article on an aspect of Greensborough history. **Part 2** will be published in the June 2020 Newsletter.

'THE PICTURES' AT GREENSBOROUGH

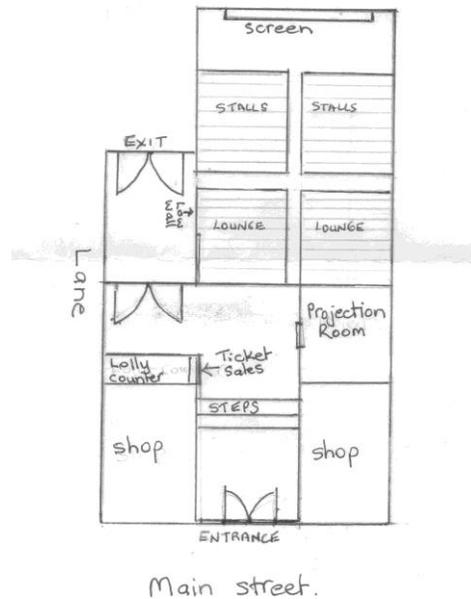
By Dawn Bennetts (Petts) 2019

One of the 'special memories' that I have from my younger years, is going to the Greensborough Picture Theatre with Glenice (my Auntie) and a friend of hers from Greenhill Road – Maureen Brennan. This might have been my first outing to the pictures because I know that I was very young. Around 60 years later, the only thing that I could remember about the film was that the young lady starring in it was called Tammy and there was a goat in the story at some stage. My son Ian has recently done some research to find out that the film was probably "Tammy and the Bachelor" made in 1957, starring Debbie Reynolds. At the age that I was then, the goat obviously made more of an impression on me that the romantic storyline of the film!

Glenice and I would often go on a Saturday afternoon, to the Ashril Theatre in Greensborough - mostly to see Elvis films. I remember watching out for the posters inside the front doors of the theatre that would be advertising what films were 'currently showing' or 'coming soon.' There were always two films each session with an interval in between – that is when everyone would go to the counter to purchase ice creams or lollies.

When the session had finished, the doors at the rear of the carpeted area adjoining the actual theatre would be opened, and we would all exit the building and make our way along the laneway to Main Street. The showing of pictures / films has provided many years of entertainment in Greensborough and I have researched as much as I can to show the progression of how it developed.

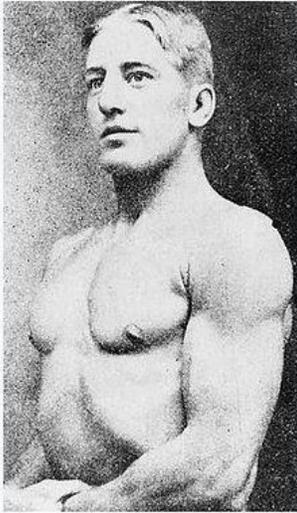
Ashril Theatre 1960's as recalled by Dawn Bennetts



The first known record that I have found of 'Pictures' being shown in Greensborough, is in a letter written by Campbell Duncan, dated 5 August, 1993. Campbell was living in Horsham at the time of writing the letter, but as a young boy he lived in Greensborough between 1914 and 1922 with his Grandfather – Louis Amiet.

"I have written down some memoirs of my life there. Amusements – virtually nil. The only time I saw a film was when a showman erected a tent near the school and showed a short length for 6 pence. The star was "Snowy Baker" - and as the man had very little film, he had to run it at a slow pace, causing the big fight scene to end up as a slow-motion farce."

Reginald Baker



| | |
|----------------|---|
| Birth name | Reginald Leslie Baker |
| Date of birth | 8 February 1884 |
| Place of birth | Surry Hills, New South Wales, Australia |
| Date of death | 2 December 1953 (aged 69) |
| Place of death | Los Angeles, California, United States |

From Wikipedia...Snowy Baker - Reginald Leslie "Snowy" Baker (8 February 1884 – 2 December 1953) was an Australian athlete, sports promoter and actor. His movies included The Enemy Within (1918) The Lure of the Bush (1918) The Man from Kangaroo (1920) The Shadow of Lightning Ridge (1920) The Jackeroo of Coolabong (1920) aka The Fighting Breed and Sleeping Acres (1921)

1921 - UNIVERSAL PICTURES

The next mention of pictures / films being shown in Greensborough was in 1921 – and advertised with "Electric Light." This may have only been temporary electric light though, as in October 1922 – 'pending improvements' – arrangements were 'being made to run the films by electricity'.

'Grand Opening Programme'

Includes Frank Mayo in 'The Girl in Number 29' (This was an American 1920 silent drama film). A Two Reel Western Picture 'The Girl and the Law.'

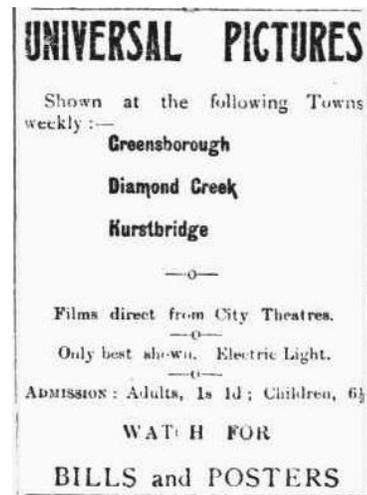
Pictures were being shown weekly at

Greensborough, Diamond Creek, Panton Hill and Hurstbridge according to an advertisement in the local paper, November 1921.



Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser Fri 25 Nov 1921 P2

The last advertisement that I was able to locate for Universal Pictures in the Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser, appears to be Friday 6 January, 1922, page 2. The Pictures were not being shown at Panton Hill by that stage. Admission cost: Adults 1s 1d Children 6 1/2 d.



Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser Fri 16 Dec, 1921 P2

1922 – ROYAL PICTURES

By September 1922 - Films were shown at Greensborough and Eltham by proprietors Preston & Lucas, under the name of 'Royal Pictures'. It is not clear exactly where these films were shown, however it appears that they might have been shown in a hall because of the news recorded in October, 1922. "Pictures are advertised to be shown every Wednesday at Greensborough and every Thursday at Eltham. The proprietors are Preston and Lucas and the programme for next week includes David Barthelmess in 'Tol'able David' and 'The Child Thou Gavest me'. As these two townships are fast filling up empty spaces, there should be ample people to keep the movies going."

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Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 29 Sept 1922 P 2

PRESTON & LUCAS.
ROYAL PICTURES
GREENSBOROUGH EVERY
WEDNESDAY,
ELTHAM EVERY THURSDAY.
Showing films right off City theatres.
BIG STAR PROGRAMME—
Wednesday and Thursday.
OCTOBER 4TH & 5TH.
DAVID BARTHELMESS in "Tol'able David." Powerful story of a Home Tragedy and a boy's noble fight against terrible odds. First National Attraction "The Child Thou Gavest Me," with Dicky Headrick, the greatest screen baby of all.

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) 29 Sept 1922 P 3

In October 1922, the pictures were not going to be shown for a couple of weeks because of 'improvements.'

The programme for next Thursday's pictures at Eltham is advertised. The pictures will not be shown at Greensborough for a couple of weeks, pending improvements. Arrangements are now being made to run the films by electricity.

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Friday 6 October, 1922 P 2

PRESTON & LUCAS
ROYAL PICTURES
Eltham every Thursday Night
Greensborough Re-opening in two weeks.
HARRY CAREY in "Marked Men,"
Jack Perrin in the "Outlaw," Two-
real comedy,, "His Fearful Finish," Gaz-
ette and Comedy.
Showing pictures equal to City Theatres.
Only best Dramas, Comedies and West-
ern pictures shown.
SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SHOW.
Watch local windows for programme.
Adults, 1s 3d; Children, 9d. We pay the tax

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 6 Oct, 1922 P 3

From IMDb – **Marked Men** is a 1919 American silent Western film starring Harry Carey.

Outlaw is a 1921 Western film starring Jack Perrin.

His Fearful Finish is a 1921 black and white silent comedy starring Charles Dorety.

1923 – VICTORY PICTURES

By March 1923, Pictures were shown by 'Victory Pictures', with the proprietors being Messrs. Nitschke Bros – residents of Greensborough. Around this time, 'Victory Pictures' were being shown in an open air venue at the rear of the old hotel and advertised as - 'Good Light and Steady Pictures'. The film

screening at the time was 'The Golden Snare.' A black and white silent film released in July 1921, starring Lewis Stone and Wallace Beery. Admission cost:-Adults 1s 71/2d Children 9d.

Pictures were shown in the Hurstbridge hall last evening to a fair audience, and a programme will be presented every week, also at Eltham, Greensborough and Diamond Creek. The proprietors of the Victory Pictures (Messrs. Nitschke Bros.) reside at Greensborough, and having an up-to-date plant, their films are well shown, the light being splendid, the pictures steady and the subjects good. These essentials should ensure payable houses in each place. For dates see advertisement.

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 2 March, 1923 P 2

The Victory Pictures
Will be shown as follows:—
ELTHAM—FRIDAY, March 2, at 8 p.m.
GREENSBOROUGH—SATURDAY, March 3, at rear of old hotel (open air)
DIAMOND CREEK—TUESDAY, March 6.
ELTHAM—WEDNESDAY, March 7. "The Golden Snare" will be screened.
HURSTBRIDGE—THURSDAY, March 8. Film, "The Golden Snare."
— — —
GOOD LIGHT. STEADY PICTURES.
Admission—Adults, 1s 7½d; Children, 9d.

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 2 March, 1923 P 3

The Victory Pictures screening at Greensborough 10th March, 1923 was 'Scrap Iron.'

From IMDb - a 1921 black and white film starring Charles Ray as a boxer.

The Victory Pictures.
will be shown as follows:
GREENSBOROUGH, SATURDAY, 10th March, "Scrap Iron"
HURSTBRIDGE, MONDAY, 12th March, "Scrap Iron"
DIAMOND CREEK, TUESDAY, 13th March, "Scrap Iron"
ELTHAM, WEDNESDAY, 14th March, "Scrap Iron"
— — —
STEADY LIGHT. GOOD PICTURES.
Admission: Adults, 1s 7½d; Children 9d.

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 9 Mar, 1923 P 3

Another screening for The Victory Pictures was the 1921 picture - 'Tol'able David.' From IMDb — a 1921 Drama starring Richard Barthelmess.

The Victory Pictures, for which dates are advertised, will screen "Tol'able David," featuring Richard Barthelmess. It is a very fine picture, with outstanding points, and one of America's leading actors being in the principal role makes it as realistic as it is fascinating. There will also be the usual variety of other pictures—all up to date.

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 23 Mar, 1923 P 2

The Victory Pictures.
will be shown as follows:
GREENSBOROUGH, SATURDAY, MARCH 24 — "Tol'able David."
HURSTBRIDGE, MONDAY, MARCH 26 — "Tol'able David."
DIAMOND CREEK, TUESDAY, MARCH 27 — "Tol'able David."
ELTHAM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28 — "Tol'able David."
— — —
STEADY LIGHT. GOOD PICTURES.
Admission: Adults, 1s 7½d; Children 9d.

In

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 23 Mar, 1923 P 3

1924, the Greensborough Hall underwent enlargement and renovations. The building at this time was owned by the Masonic Lodge, and alterations were to extensively change the front

of the building and include 2 shops, with a Masonic lodge room upstairs.

The Greensborough hall is undergoing enlargement and renovations which are now well advanced. It is hoped that at an early date a start will be made with an extensive new front of the hall and the erection of a Masonic lodgeroom and two shops on the property, which belongs to the Masonic body.

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 25 July, 1924 P 2

I have not been able to locate any advertising for pictures/films being shown in Greensborough from this point until 1926. There are several listings in the Hurstbridge Advertiser in January 1925 for 'Hoyts Pictures' at Ivanhoe however, so perhaps there was no operating picture theatre in Greensborough for a short time?

Hoyts' Pictures.
IVANHOE THEATRE.
 For Reserves Ring Ivanhoe 337.
 TO-NIGHT AND SATURDAY.
MARY PILBIN
 "The Rose of Paris" and "Code of the Sea."
 MONDAY, TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY, JAN. 19, 20, 21.
 GEORGE DE MULLER'S MASTERPIECE "TRIUMPH"
 also
BUCK JONES "AGAINST ALL ODDS."
 A Wonderful Thriller - Beautiful Music by T. A. A. Performers

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 16 Jan, 1925 P 2

1926 – GREENSBOROUGH PICTURES

In 1926, residents were able to attend the 'Greensborough Pictures' weekly, under the management of Mr C.R. Owens. The hall was fitted up with the latest projecting mechanism, and plenty of seating had been provided.

PICTURE THEATRE.

Greensborough Pictures, under the skilled management of Mr C. R. Owens, has opened a weekly display of the most up-to-date pictures from the leading studios. The hall has been fitted up with the latest projecting mechanism, and plenty of seating accommodation has been provided. The music is supplied by a costly pianola. The management on Monday (Eight Hours Day) gave their usual weekly show, and the programme compared favorably with any Metropolitan Picture House, and the packed audience thoroughly appreciated the bill of fare. Mr Owen, the manager, kindly went fifty-fifty with the Montmorcency football club carnival committee. His sporting action was favorably commented on. A dance was held after the pictures, but was not well attended owing to a late start.

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 30 April, 1926 P 3

In 1927 an advertisement lists Latest and Best PICTURES shown in Whittlesea Saturdays and Greensborough Mondays.

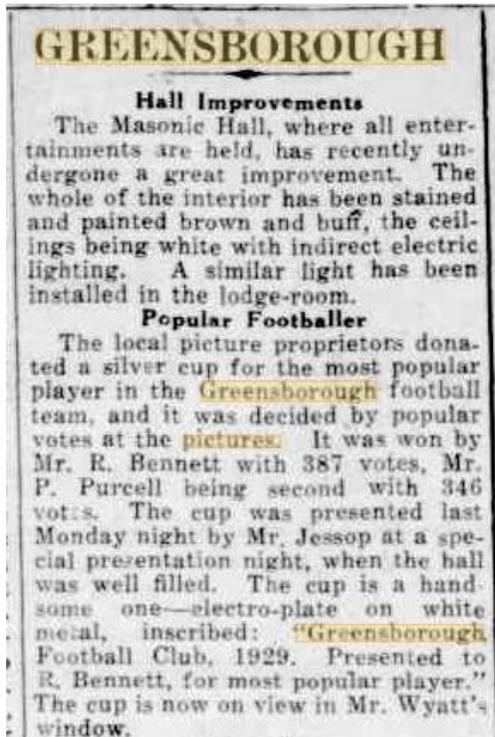
Latest and Best
PICTURES
 SHOWN IN
Whittlesea — Every Saturday
 AND
Greensborough Every Monday
 EQUAL TO ANY SHOW
 IN MELBOURNE
 COME ALONG.
 Commence at 8 o'clock.

Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 7 Jan 1927 P 3

GREENSBOROUGH Hall Improvements

In August 1929, the Masonic Hall underwent more improvements, both in the hall and in the upstairs lodge-room.

'The Masonic Hall, where all entertainments are held, has recently undergone a great improvement. The whole of the interior has been stained and painted brown and buff, the ceilings being white with indirect electric lighting. A similar light has been installed in the lodge-room.'



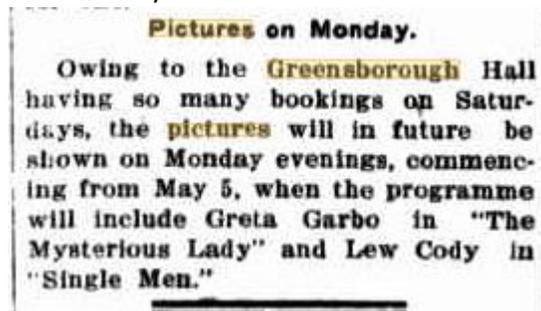
Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 30 Aug, 1929 P 2

Pictures on Monday

'Owing to the Greensborough Hall having so many bookings on Saturdays, the pictures will in future be shown on Monday evenings, commencing from May 5, 1930 when the programme will include Greta Garbo in 'The Mysterious Lady' and Lew Cody in 'Single Men.'

From IMDb - 'The Mysterious Lady' - 1928 silent drama/romance film. 'A Single Man' -1929 MGM

silent comedy film.



Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri May 2, 1930 P 4

In May 1930, The Greensborough Pictures changed hands, with the new management installing some new innovations – the proprietor being Mr Musgrove – a new resident of the township. The lighting, general appointments and attendance had improved to such an extent that owing to the number of requests, pictures were going to be shown again on Saturday nights instead of Monday nights.



Advertiser (Hurstbridge) Fri 30 May, 1930 P 1

Many thanks to Dawn for her work on this topic.

In our next Newsletter, we will conclude the story of the 'pictures in Greensborough' including the Ashril Theatre and the coming of cinemas to Greensborough Plaza.

Next Newsletter due out last week of June 2020.