

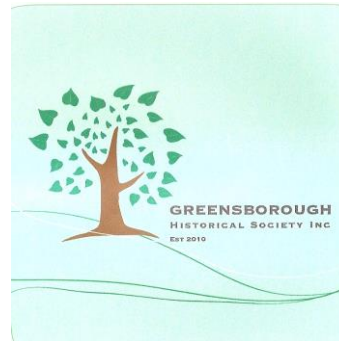
Greensborough Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter

Edition 50, June 2023

Incorporation No. **A0054430X**

ABN **64 318 435 402**



President's Report

Welcome to the June 2023 newsletter. No doubt all members will be pleased to hear the renovation and extension project on our History Resource Centre is nearly completed.

Upon hearing the news that the gateway had been widened I attended the site on Thursday 30 March and was suitably impressed with the new working space for GHS. However, the gate location was on a broken section of footpath. I duly reported the problem to the Banyule Ward Councillor Alison Champion who got the wheels turning and on 4 May a new section of footpath was laid. A good result and one more box ticked!

The following day we had our March meeting when Liz Pidgeon gave us a detailed presentation on the history of what is now the Yarra Plenty Regional Library. One of the first librarians was a World War I tuberculosis survivor. Liz also included the Bookmobile that visits primary schools. This was the first contact with the library for many students, me included.

The Greenhills Neighbourhood House unfortunately had a flood problem and instead we met at the Diamond Valley Library which was a fitting place in lieu of our subject matter. Over the course of our journey thus far Liz and Diamond Valley Library have been enthusiastic supporters of GHS.

Regrettably on April 21 Truus de Man passed away. Truus was well known throughout the district and variously worked at Deloraine Nursing home and Diamond Valley Community Hospital. Truus joined GHS in 2012 and was a regular attendee until recently. Her funeral was held at Le Pine, Eltham on 28 April 2023. She is survived by three sons.

On 27 April, another working bee occurred at the Resource Centre which cleaned more of the yard area.

At our ANZAC meeting on 29 April John Gibson gave another excellent presentation about a romance and 60 year marriage resulting from an accidental meeting in Spotswood during World War I.

On 2 May, Anne Paul represented GHS in a site visit to the Upper Janefield section of Plenty Gorge Parkland. We are contributing to identifying places of historical interest for the forthcoming extension to the Plenty River Pathway. Hopefully the path will be opened by the end of 2024.

On 8 May, a Disability Access consultant visited the Resource Centre and met with Sue Ballantyne and Albert Aboud from Banyule Council. She reviewed pathway and furniture positions in the building. A report will be issued to Banyule Council. This will help further fine tuning of the Resource Centre.

On 11 May GHS received an appeal for information about Greensborough Districts Cricket Club. The Plenty Valley cricket club based at Yarrambat is celebrating its 75th Anniversary on 28 September 2023. This club has absorbed several former local clubs and GDCC is one of them. Our esteemed member Eric Barclay served as President for a number of years. Any member having a connection with the club is advised there is a reunion coming up and if you have any memorabilia we would love to be able to digitise it for the GHS collection and share it with the organisers. The club existed from 1948 to 1989.

26 May saw our May meeting where Lewis Tulk did a talk on the Epping quarries he worked in, in the late 1950s. Also, Janelle from Greenhills Neighbourhood House introduced the Green Room Food Share service operating from there. Janelle explained about what is needed and volume of customers. GHS members generously donated non-perishable food items at this meeting. Donations can also be made at our June meeting.

On 31 May we received the marvellous news that Noel Withers has received an Award of Merit from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. Congratulations are extended to Noel for a well earned recognition of his commitment to GHS and the preservation of our local history.

At last on the 1 June SP Ausnet finally moved the power board and meter that has held up the finalising of the Resource Centre renovations.

On 13 June GHS hosted the Yarra Plenty Heritage Group Network meeting. It was good to see our building full of people. The new bigger meeting space served us well. The visitors were suitably impressed. And it has the nice fresh paint smell about it.

In June we met on Saturday 24th at GHNC where I gave a brief family history on the Joyce family. They are a lesser known pioneer family from our area and a number of their descendants were present. These were Lesley, Carolyn and John Hooper and Geoff Butterworth. John Hooper has been a GHS member since 2011 and this was his first attendance at a GHS meeting as he lives in Ballarat. Our late member Lorraine Coates was also a Joyce descendant.

Finally, I personally want to thank Sue Ballantyne for her perseverance and persistence in keeping the Banyule Council and building company people focussed on our job. Without Sue being a “squeaky” wheel, I am sure we would not be as advanced as we are.

Norm Colvin

Members' Corner

Vale Truus de Man, our condolences to her extended family.

Our best wished for a speedy recovery to members Rosie Bray and Murray Scaife who will undergo surgery in the coming weeks.

Greensborough Historical Society acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as traditional custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and been an integral part of the region's history.

Progress by Sue Ballantyne

There have been many changes in Greensborough and surrounding areas over the years – what a difference the railway made when it came through Greensborough in 1902 and to Montmorency in 1923, as described in this article:

The advent of electric trains to Greensborough is already proving a big factor in bringing this beautiful district into prominence as a residential suburb. Not many years ago, the needs of the district were supplied by a service of three steam trains a day, and Greensborough was only regarded as a weekend or holiday resort. The journey to the city used to occupy an hour, with the change of trains at Heidelberg; but this has now given place to the splendid present service by which the city can be reached in 35 minutes. Greensborough is but the same distance from the city as Sandringham, and nearer than Ringwood or Mordialloc, and an appreciation of these facts, combined with the natural beauty of the district, is causing numerous enquiries for home sites. Greensborough has a Yan Yean water supply through the township, and electric light will shortly be available as the Morwell scheme passes within half a mile of the town. All these facts will mean increased population, and it is significant to note that the volume of railway traffic at the local station has doubled in the past two years. (*Hurstbridge Advertiser 19 October 1923*)

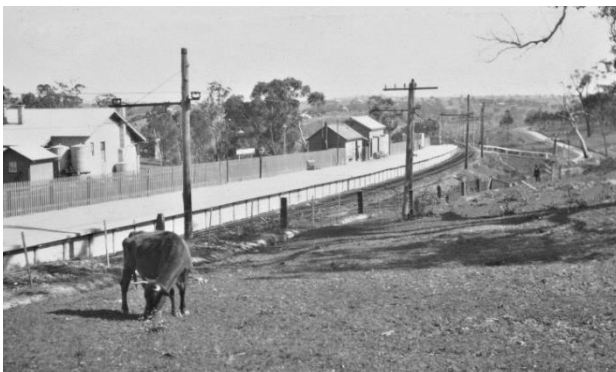


1 Greensborough Station, last century

Over the past few years, we have endured disruption as the stations at Greensborough and Montmorency have been redeveloped in the Hurstbridge line upgrade. What a different station we have in 2023, although not quite finished.



*2 Greensborough Station 2023.
Photo by Bryan Henderson*



3 Montmorency Station early 1930s



*4 Montmorency Station duplicated tracks 2023.
Photo by Bryan Henderson*

The subdivision of what had previously been farmland made a lasting change from a rural environment to the urban Greensborough of today.

This undated letter was found in a box of documents relating to the Greenhills and North Greensborough Progress Association, recently donated to the Society:

I overlook the ravaged pastures of "Pope's" land
What used to be a restful scene with horses grazing by the river
Is now a place of earthy mounds
Where council trucks dump excess soil from 'progressive' street schemes.

New indignities are to be heaped upon this pasture
Where neighbours came to live in green-treed places
The next 'development' for this area is a carpark and stadium
Good for basketballers, but they don't choose to live by day in our green places
I'd like to ask, why can't brick be built with brick in factory areas?
To leave in peace this restful river frontage
For playing fields, children's games, and even enjoyment from the railway.

The green is gone from Greensborough along the roadways, so let us keep what little we have by the river.

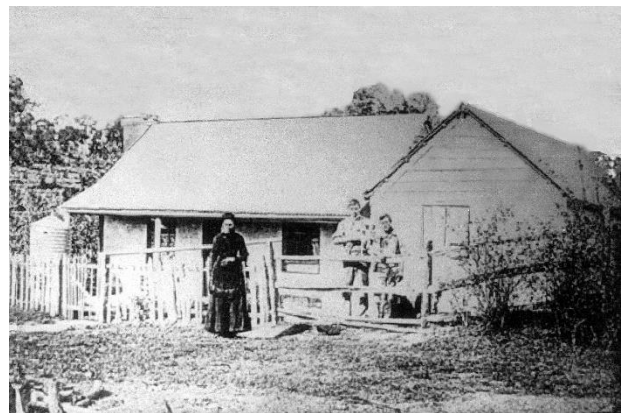
We need such spaces now – our streets are throbbing with bulldozers
So that our quiet, leafy back streets can be organized suburban speedways
To quicken the pace of life, which is already too fast.

We need peace to help us cope with paying the price of 'progress'

The letter is printed with permission of its author – GHS member June Roberts, formerly of "Blackjack" in Hume Street (June's story of life at Blackjack is told in the GHS book "Do You Recall", available from the Society).

"Pope's land" was formerly known as the Poulter farm in today's Poulter Avenue opposite the station. The earthworks referred to in the above letter created the Poulter Reserve, bordered by the Plenty River Trail and maintaining the 'green' along the river that June mentions. Fortunately no basketball courts appeared – possibly due to lack of parking nearby.

[Editor's note: Join Peter Van Eeken on Saturday 28 October 2023 for a walk through the "Poulter Precinct". Originally scheduled for 2022, the walk was postponed due to flooding along the Plenty River. This walk will replace our monthly meeting and be followed by afternoon tea at our refurbished Resource Centre. More details to follow.]



5 Mary Poulter and sons at Bonnie Vale, the Poulter home which once stood on what is now the Poulter Reserve

Road making has been a contentious issue since the early days of settlement in Greensborough. A dispute over who was to pay for the construction of Grimshaw Street was reported in the Hurstbridge Advertiser in 1935:

A meeting of owners of property at the eastern end of Grimshaw Street was held on Monday night last at the residence of Dr Cordner. The aim of the meeting was to discuss who was liable for the cost of construction of the southern side of the street. Discussion soon turned to times when Greensborough was virgin bush. Mr E. B. Green had purchased what is now Greensborough township and the opposite section by a Mr Brown. The only road was the government road (at that time only a bullock-dray track) which divided the two properties and afterwards became Grimshaw Street.

Grimshaw Street was continued as a 33ft. (approx. 10 metres) road to the ford at the river, near what became Britnell's, afterwards Poulter's, and at the present day [in 1935] Pope's Orchard. The main local streets were under the jurisdiction of the old Heidelberg Road Trust. Subsequently they were taken over from the Trust by the Heidelberg Shire Council, and have since been maintained by the council without any initial or subsequent charge to the owners of the land abutting on any of these streets; either for construction or upkeep.

It appears that this section of Grimshaw Street was also to be widened to 66ft (approx. 20 metres), and council was demanding another 33ft. from the doctor! All present were emphatic in affirming that at the time of purchase it was implied that the road was what is known as a government road, and that eventually it would be constructed as such [at no cost to the landowners]. Considering the many complications with this issue, it was decided to get the advice of a competent solicitor.

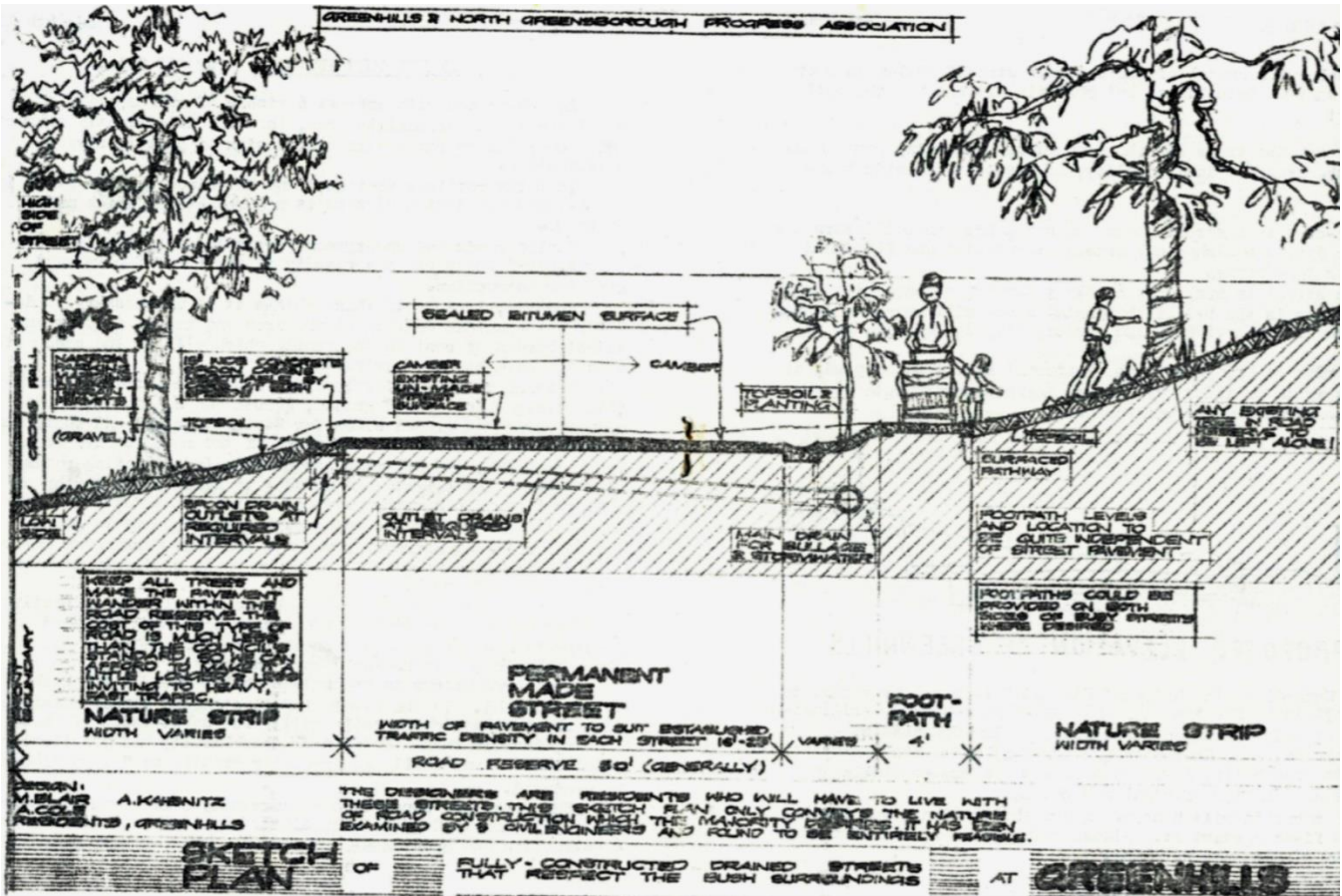
This article has been edited from the original. Read the full report on Trove: [13 Dec 1935 - GRIMSHAW STREET, GREENSBOROUGH \(nla.gov.au\)](#)

Quite apart from the concerns of those living on Grimshaw Street, the cost of roadmaking in suburban streets added strain to household budgets and changed the appearance of Greensborough from rural to suburban. Despite the cost, most residents agreed that a 'made' road was preferable to a muddy, pot-holed unmade one.

In Greenhills in 1969, the Progress Association suggested an alternative to the conventional road scheme, more in keeping with the 'semi-rural' character of that area.

A deputation met the then Minister for Local Government (Mr Hamer) and shared their view that roads should maintain the character of the local area. Members of the deputation included Diamond Valley Councillors McKenzie and Svendson, Mr A. Cole, Mr J. O'Connor (later a Councillor) and Mr C. Robieson. Topics covered included local road schemes, general planning matters including traffic management, zoning in the area – an attempt to control 'undesirable' subdivision of the large Greenhills blocks.

In Greenhills today, we can still see the result of the Progress Association's suggestion that 'fully constructed drained streets ...[should] respect the bush surroundings'. Many streets still have footpaths on one side of the road and nature strips only on the opposite side. Paths still meander around large trees.



6 Greenhills and North Greensborough Progress Association design for a permanent made street. Community News, December 1969. [thanks to John Gibson for retouching this 50 plus year old diagram]

Progress – the dictionary meaning is “to move forward to an improved condition”. We might not like it at the time, but progress does generally improve our quality of life.

As we remember the good old days, we often forget getting bogged in the mud on an unmade road or waiting for a train on a rainy day on a station without a roof.

June’s concern that we might lose the green near the river was unfounded. In Greensborough we are fortunate to have excellent green spaces close to the town centre, and the Plenty River Trail to enjoy the outdoors whether on foot or bike. Council acquisition of Partington land is responsible for this.

And I, for one, quite like Greensborough Plaza. But that’s a story for another day.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the Greenhills Neighbourhood House Green Room Pantry at our May and June meetings. Your donations will make a big difference to local families in need.



Archives Report June 2023

The first sample copy of our new book “Walking the Kurrum Yallock (Plenty River): History, Heritage and Environment” by Anne Paul has arrived and a final check is being completed before printing. This book of walks around the Lower Plenty River area will be launched at the Diamond Valley Library during local history month in October. A walk is also planned for a date close to the launch. Further details in our September newsletter.

The Resource Centre is nearing completion – building work is complete and the contentious electrical meter finally moved. Painting should be complete by the end of June.

A lot of time and effort has been expended in readying the Centre for use by members and it is close now.

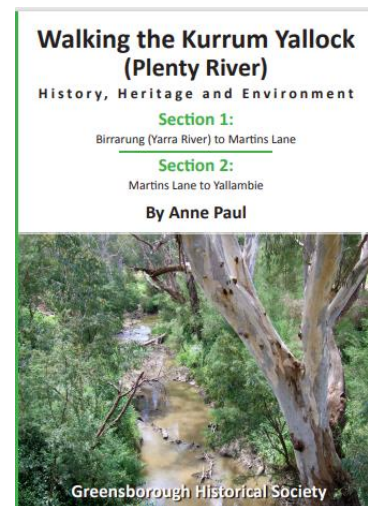
Recent donations:

- From Ada Allingham, a folder of her photographs of the carving of the original War Memorial Park chainsaw sculptures.
- Thomastown Golf Club – we have taken custodianship of this collection until a new home can be found. Although not in our area, the collection is too good to send to landfill. Thomastown is in the Whittlesea Historical Society’s area, but unfortunately they don’t have a ‘home’ right now.
- From Jenny Gowans, a collection of Greenhills and North Greensborough Progress Association newsletters and other publications. This added to a previous collection gathered by Noel from various past members of the group and we now have an almost complete collection.
- From Dawn Bennetts, a collection of Eltham Community Market memorabilia from her days as a stallholder. Dawn previously wrote a history of the market for GHS archives.
- From the Probus Club of Greensborough, 18 photo albums of Probus activities, all with captions. Many old Greensborough identities are featured throughout the albums, such as Tom and Beryl Vickers, and Jessie (Partington) Angus.
- From Bryan Smiddy, husband of GHS member Ellen, 4 manilla folders of notes and correspondence from his days as an ‘activist’ (his word!) against unwanted development in the area. More details on this as we have time to investigate the contents of Bryan’s files.
- Many smaller donations from members and friends.

Every piece of information adds to a greater understanding of the history of our area. All donations gratefully received.

We are almost back in business, and we are always busy. Hope to see you at the Resource Centre soon.

Sue Ballantyne



HELP WANTED: It is 10 years since I started editing the GHS Newsletter. Now I’d like to move on to other projects and we are looking for someone to take over the Newsletter from the beginning of 2024, and work with me for the rest of this year. **Any volunteers?** Contact Norm or Sue for further details.

Committee 2022-2023

President Norm Colvin 0409 815 246 **Vice President** Sue Ballantyne 0402 289 982

Secretary Peter Van Eeken **Treasurer** John Gibson 94350097
pve101@yahoo.com.au

Committee Members: Sue Brenkovich, Dianne Fox, Noel Withers

Newsletter editor: Sue Ballantyne contact Sue if you have articles or photos for inclusion in the Newsletter - email sueballantyne2010@hotmail.com

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

Meeting dates and times for 2023

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

Committee meetings are generally held at 1.30pm on the third Tuesday of each month.
The Resource Centre will be open on selected weekends for research into your family or the local area.

Date	Date	Time	Event
11-07-23	Tuesday	10am	Morning Tea
18-07-23	Tuesday	1.30pm	Committee Meeting
28-07-23	Friday	1:15pm	SGM GHNH
08-08-23	Tuesday	10am	Morning Tea
13-08-23	Sunday	1pm	Open Day HISTORY RESOURCE CENTRE
15-08-23	Tuesday	1.30pm	Committee Meeting
26-08-23	Saturday	1:15pm	Forum GHNH
12-09-23	Tuesday	10am	Morning tea
19-09-23	Tuesday	1.30pm	Committee Meeting
29-09-23	Friday	1:15pm	AGM/SGM GHNH
10-10-23	Tuesday	10am	Morning Tea
14-10-23	Saturday	1pm	Open Day HISTORY RESOURCE CENTRE
17-10-23	Tuesday	1.30pm	Committee Meeting
28-10-23	Saturday	1:15pm	Forum GHNH
14-11-23	Tuesday	10am	Morning tea

Printing of this Newsletter supplied courtesy of Colin Brooks MP.