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The following articles were all written for Localtraders.com
The articles were commissioned by Fred Gillen as an addition to the homepages built for each suburb. Purists will no doubt find fault with some of my history but the historical accounts contained in this document were never meant to be an exhaustive study of Melbourne's history. They were designed to give local residents a sense of community and history and to that effect they succeeded. Students and other interested parties are welcome to use any or part of the articles providing the following information is included in the footnotes.

Written by Alastair Rosie ©
<http://home.iprimus.com.au/asrosie/>

ALTONA: SWEEPING PLAINS AND COAL MINES

Altona was named after Altona in Germany. Prior to 1835, it was inhabited by the Bunurong nation whose territory encompassed the Peninsula and Corio Bay areas. The first white person to set foot in Altona was Lieutenant Grimes, who visited the western plains in 1803 in the course of establishing the first ill-fated settlement at modern day Dromana.

John Batman arrived in 1835, and for the cost of a few trinkets purchased 600,000 acres of land from the aborigines. The 'treaty' at the time was not recognised by the Governor in Sydney in spite of Batman's and Fawkner's efforts to beseech the Crown.

Altona's first settler was Alfred Langhorne, a nephew of Captain Lonsdale who was an overseer in 1838. We assume he travelled overland from Sydney to somewhere near Dandenong and took out a pastoral lease at Truganina (Laverton). Langhorne's homestead was originally called Altona and Langhorne himself owned huge tracts of land by the time of his death in 1874. Other notable settlers were, William Cherry who took the land around the lake that now bears his name, he owned what is now Brooklyn, Altona North and East.

David Ross first settled in Wyndham (Werribee) and later moved to Altona North. E. Blackshaw took land at the west end of Blackshaws Road with Cornelius Welton taking land further East along the same road.

After Langhorne's death his property was passed onto J.J. Phelps and in 1885 was opened up for subdivision. By this stage, (1882) Altona was the site of the Cut Paw Paw Sanatorium; a hospital for infectious diseases, mainly smallpox. In 1887, A.T. Clark bought Altona for subdivision and he formed the Altona and Laverton Freehold and Investment Co. Ltd. The company laid mains water lines and signed a contract for a railway extension. The area was named after Langhorne's house, thus Wyndham and Laverton Beach became Altona. By 1888 the railway finally reached Altona. Coal mining played a significant part in the development of Altona and the Werribee Plains. Approximately 200, 000,000 tons of brown coal lie beneath the plains. Frederick Taegtow, a German settler from Williamstown, had been petitioning the government to test his theory that vast deposits of coal lay beneath the Werribee Plains. Unfortunately he was searching for black coal and when The Williamstown Coal Prospecting Company sank two bores near the eastern boundary of Wyndham in 1881 they found only brown coal. The company folded shortly afterwards. Various people tried over the next few decades to extract brown coal from the plains with varying degrees of success. In 1908 the Melbourne and Altona Colliery Company enlarged the shaft sunk by the Altona and Morwell Development and Option Ltd. and managed to extract over 31,000 tons of coal. Unfortunately, coal mining was never a successful venture in Altona and Morwell became the coal mining capital of Victoria. The coal mining experiments finally ended in 1931.

Employment came to the area in the form of an explosives storage area at Laverton in 1901. The army was also billeted there in 1916 and during the Second World War. Land sales in 1919 had opened the district to further expansion. The Commonwealth Oil refineries established their refinery at Altona in 1923. Altona was declared a shire in 1957.

Altona has grown steadily since then, from a population of 50 in 1900 to in excess of 32,000 by 1973. The town literally exploded from 1966 onwards with an influx of

migrants. These days Altona is now a part of the Shire of Wyndham and shares many of the same tourist destinations.

In 1994 as part of the State Government's amalgamation strategy for local councils, Altona joined together with Williamstown and Laverton to form the Hobsons Bay Shire. Attractions include the Altona Homestead which is open on the first Sunday of every month, the miniature railway, and Cherry Lake. Altona is also home to the Bayside Festival in March. It is advisable to log onto the Hobsons Bay Shire site to pick up on new events and initiatives.

In spite of its shaky beginnings, Altona has become a prosperous and vibrant city, nestled on the shores of beautiful Hobsons Bay.

Written by Alastair Rosie

Thursday, July 26, 1999

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Shire of Hobsons Bay Homepage

<http://www.hobsons.vic.gov.au/>

BAYSWATER'S PIONEERING SPIRIT

Set at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges, Bayswater was once the range of the Wurundjeri - balluk. This clan was part of the Woiworung tribe who roamed as far as Melton, Sunbury and Seymour. The Aboriginal name for the Dandenongs was 'Banyenong,' meaning 'Banye (a burning) and 'Nong' (the past). It is thought that it refers to the frequent bushfires in the area. Another translation states that the word may refer to the fact that the Dandenong creek came from a 'high' place.

The first signs of white settlement came in 1838 when Rev. James Clow purchased the Corhanwarrabul Run at the foot of Mount Corhanwarrabul (Mt Dandenong). The meaning of Corhanwarrabul is unclear and there are three separate possibilities. 'One of two large humps in the range,' one of the feathered tribe,' or a place with flying birds, jumping kangaroos and singing lyrebirds.' One of the difficulties lies in the mistranslation of aboriginal languages and the inability of Aboriginals to pronounce certain consonants. Many settlers and surveyors when asking the name of a certain place would be told that 'it is a battleground, sacred place etc. one notable example is the name Canberra which literally means 'dumping ground' or rubbish tip!

James Clow built his homestead Tirhatuan in 1841 on the Dandenong Creek. Born in Chartershall in Perthshire, Scotland he was apparently born with only one hand, which forced him into academic life. He was to become an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland was the first minister of the Church of Scotland in India before ill health forced him home. He arrived in Melbourne town in 1837 after a brief stint in Hobart town. A strict Presbyterian, he helped build the Scots church in Melbourne town. In spite of his efforts however, Rev. James Forbes was appointed official minister to the new colony. Nevertheless, Clow was appointed official protector of the Aborigines and had a reputation for kindness and generosity.

Ultimately, J.J Miller was the man who became responsible for naming the town of Bayswater. He had already purchased a liquor license in 1880 and sold it to Michael Cronin in 1894. The Bayswater Wine Saloon was built that same year on the corner of Bayswater Road and Mountain Highway. When the local primary school was built, it was named Bayswater State School in honour of his birthplace in England. Until then, Bayswater had been known to the locals as 'Germantown' due to the influx of German migrants in the late 1850s. It became Scoresby North and later Macauley, because of the type of bag (Macauley) that G.W. Leach carried. Macauley persisted because there were three different local names for Bayswater at that time. In 1894, it was named after the new Primary School, Bayswater.

Bayswater has always been a working class area, even in the early days when timber cutters lugged timber down from the nearby hills. As late as 1949, much of Bayswater North was still undeveloped. The building boom of the 60s and 70s this century saw increased industrialisation of the area as farms were cleared and land subdivided. It is now a well-established suburb within the Shire of Knox. Curiously, Bayswater North is part of Croydon (Maroondah Shire). This part of Bayswater remains the last to see the onset of the land developer and relatively unspoilt areas can still be found.

Bayswater has enough to satisfy most people. The Bayswater Hotel has gaming facilities, competing with the recently opened Kilsyth Club at Canterbury Gardens. The

shopping centre is a mixture of strip shopping, and the shopping mall of nearby Bayswater Village. The redevelopment of the railway station has turned it into a railway workshop, providing more local employment. Walks/Bicycle tracks along the Dandenong Creek take one through to Heathmont. For the more adventurous there is always Adventure Trek where the surrounding countryside can be explored on horseback;.

Bayswater has two pony clubs. McDonalds, Red Rooster and the Pie Stop provide 'culinary' delights at budget prices. The Bayswater Hotel provides sumptuous meals for a reasonable price. International cuisine comes in the form of traditional Chinese and Vietnamese fare. Christmas time heralds Carols by Candlelight at the nearby Bayswater Community Centre. This hosted by local church, Truth and Liberation Concern. This community was established in the early 70s as the God, Squad, (a Christian biker group) in an attempt to reach outlaw bikers and disenfranchised members of the community. TLC plays an important social welfare role in Bayswater today and is now home to a new bike club, the Longriders.

The Bayswater Wine Saloon can still be found in the same place and yes, it still serves wine. Miller's Homestead is now located in Boronia. The weatherboard saloon has stood the test of time for as long as I can remember and for me it will always symbolise the steadfast, working class town of Bayswater.

Festivals unique to Bayswater are the Outer Eastern Petcare Day (February) and Knox Eisteddfod (late June early July) a celebration of local musicians and bands, the Bayswater Carols by Candlelight (December) is also a popular event.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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THE LEISURELY LIFESTYLE OF BRIGHTON

Brighton has always been known as a plush suburb with large mansions set amid spacious blocks close by the sea and the historic bathing boxes. Once a stretch of rolling hills covered in light forest, early white settlers considered the land too sandy for cultivation did not touch the hills of Brighton. Not so the local aborigines who considered Brighton rich and the abundance of middens in the area suggests that they ate well. The open forest consisted of gum, she-oak, wild cherry, and honeysuckle, with tattered ti tree around the coastline. Further inland were smatterings of wattle and heath. Local legend tells us that the place we know as Brighton Park was the scene of an inter tribal battle between warring aborigines some years before white settlement.

The great rush for land bypassed Brighton as the squatters moved down the Peninsula seeking grazing for their cattle and sheep. The hills of Brighton however served as a stock route between the Peninsula and the markets of Melbourne. With hordes of migrants pouring into Williamstown and Geelong it is doubtful that Brighton would have become anything more than just another suburb in the burgeoning metropolis. Fate however was to step in at the last moment and in the process Brighton was to become a landmark in itself.

The new colony at Port Phillip began precariously. At the time, the largest settlement on the southern coastline was at Portland where seals and whales were to be found in abundant supply. The land at Port Phillip however was suitable for grazing and attracted many Vandemonians from Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). Nevertheless, the settlement needed capital if it was to secede from Sydney and so the government of the day ordered a series of special surveys in an attempt to attract foreign investment in the form of wealthy migrants.

Enter Henry Dendy, the son of a wealthy yeoman, Samuel Dendy, who owned land of the borders of Sussex and Surrey. Samuel died in 1838 and left his lands to his only son, Henry.

Henry was in an enviable position. He was rich beyond his wildest dreams and to all intents and purposes could have settled down to the life of a landed gentleman. Instead, he chose to immigrate to the Antipodes, taking advantage of the British Government's Special Survey regulations.

History does not tell us why he did this but perhaps he felt it necessary to prove himself in the eyes of his peers. In any case Henry did sail into Port Phillip on February 5 1841, just a few days before the regulations regarding the Special Surveys arrived from Sydney. Governor La Trobe was surprised by Dendy's arrival and there followed a long and bitter dispute between Dendy and La Trobe on the subject of his special survey. In hindsight, La Trobe had other considerations. He was trying to balance the needs of the squatters against the influence of landed gentlemen and speculators.

"It is truly monstrous to reflect that a company formed in London for the express purpose of monopoly, or that a single Landshark here, who has the money to embark in a special survey, is enabled to completely oust a body of squatters who for several years have entered into grazing or pastoral occupancies under the express permission of the authorities."

So thundered a Sydney newspaper of the times and under public pressure, La Trobe denied Dendy's original request for Williamstown and so Dendy was left hanging. Enter Jonathan Binns Were, a stockbroker who was to become the chairman of the temporary Melbourne Stock Exchange in 1841.

J.B. Were, was an astute businessman who had served ten years with the mercantile firm of Collins & Co. It is thought that a relative of his had been on the York when it docked at Port Phillip and that Dendy was referred to him. It was Were, with his intimate knowledge of the business world and the machinations of Port Phillip who was to obtain Dendy's special survey at Brighton. Dendy was after all, a landed gentleman with aristocratic leanings and in the real world of business dealings he was left floundering.

Dendy's survey of 5,120 acres went ahead in March 1841. H.B Foot surveyed the town. Foot's survey and plans were hastily drawn up but had to be extensively redrawn when it was found that his measurements were inaccurate. It was Foot however, who was responsible for the crescent shape of Brighton's streets. Some residents have thought it was modelled after English towns but that has since been refuted.

Dendy had visions of establishing the Dendy dynasty amid the rolling hills of Brighton and set to building Brighton Park, his castle from where the lord of the manor could ride forth to his workers at Brighton Estate. However when he brought twenty-nine families out to the colony, he had to turn them away, as there was no work for them. Dendy's dreams floundered in the sifting sands of Brighton and during the economic crisis of 1842-43, his lands were sold to Were, who was waiting in the wings for just such an opportunity. Dendy moved to Geelong to start his own brewery and died penniless.

Were wasted no time in subdividing the land and during the '50s Brighton became the third largest settlement in the south, no mean feat. Brighton entered into one of its most important roles during the 1850s when market gardeners took tenure on Dendy's old stamping grounds. Brighton became one of the bread baskets of Melbourne and was to remain a rural area until 1919.

The railway arrived in 1859 with a connection between Windsor and Brighton North, followed by the extension to Melbourne in 1860 and a further extension to Brighton Beach in 1861. Two years later Brighton was declared a borough in its own right and in 1867 was proclaimed a town.

The many Brightons does need explanation and is a hangover from Dendy's dreams of middle class English manors. Big Brighton sat on the site of his former home and is now called Brighton, Little Brighton or New Brighton was the original Brighton Estate where his yeoman farmers were to live, now called East Brighton while Brighton East was nearer Moorabbin.

Thomas Bent was elected to the Moorabbin Roads Board in 1863 and was to prove influential in the development of the region. He resisted efforts to carve Brighton up into further municipalities but Moorabbin and Sandringham successfully broke away. He became something of an icon in Brighton, proving an intractable foe and a pillar of society. He was Premier and Treasurer of Victoria, 1904-09.

During the period 1870- 1880, Brighton came into its own as the playground of the rich, with the formation of the Brighton Yacht Club in 1875 and the establishment of schools and refurbishment of churches.

The 1920s saw the rural nature of Brighton irrevocably changed as returning servicemen sought houses and Australia saw an influx of immigrants. The social divide between rich and poor would always remain but the market gardens were doomed. The tramway had already reached Brighton in 1906 but its electrification in 1923 spelled the end of Brighton's self-imposed isolation.

Brighton has become a well to do suburb of Melbourne and has weathered the changing economic fortunes of the city. It has worked its way into the hearts of Melburnians, being known for its multi coloured bathing boxes in Dendy Street and its beaches. With many reserves and a wealth of foreshore, Brighton will always retain its old world charm and elegance.

From aboriginal leisure lands to white paradise, Brighton has retained its relaxed atmosphere and will continue to do so.

Written by Alastair Rosie ©

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BRUNSWICK: THE PLAINS OF IMAROO

Brunswick lies on the grassy plains of Iramoo, once the domain of a subdivision of the Wurundjeri- willam people whose range extended as far west as the Werribee River and Mt Macedon and south to Kew and east to Wilson's Promontory. They were also known as the Crow clan or *Waa*; also known as the White Gum Tree clan. The clans of the Yarra, Goulburn, Campaspe, Loddon, Avoca, Werribee and Broken Rivers have become known collectively as the Eastern Kulin.

Their idyllic way of life was shattered with the arrival of John Batman in 1835 and the signing of the treaty of Iramoo. The signatories of the treaty were reputed to be three brothers known as *Jagga Jagga*. It is unlikely they knew the substance of the treaty they had just signed on the banks of the Merri Creek. Batman it is now known conned the unfortunate members of the White Gum Tree clan and the rest is history. The act of *Terra Nullis* enacted by the colonial government only magnified the problem further.

In 1839 Assistant Surveyor Darke surveyed the land that was the parish of Jika Jika, between Merri Creek and Moonee Ponds Creek (a bastardisation of *Jagga Jagga*). The first land rush was between 1839 and 1840 with land going for the princely sum of £3! Brunswick's streets bear the names of those early pioneers; Michael Dawson, John Holmes, Daniel Blyth, Edward Whitby, and Theodotus Sumner. The name Brunswick is shrouded in controversy with three theories offered up. The first is reputed to have come from an early resident Thomas Wilkinson who named his estate Brunswick after the late wife of King George IV, Princess Caroline of Brunswick who suffered in much the same way as Princess Diana. A second theory states that the suburb was named to commemorate Queen Victoria's marriage to Prince Albert in 1840, Brunswick being the royal house of the Queen. A third theory states that the name came from W.F.A Rucker who named it after Captain George Brunswick Smythe, who was officer-in-charge of the Port Phillip Police in 1839.

During the 1850s Brunswick was a stopping off place on the way to the goldfields, Brunswick was declared a municipality in 1857 and two years later the Melbourne Omnibus Service began running along Sydney Road between Coburg and the city. A tollgate was established on Sydney Road to help pay for the upkeep of the roads. But Brunswick was still a rural community in the '50s, with a scattering of people to the east and west of Sydney Road. But it was the goldrush that made Brunswick what it is today. It was a convenient stopping off place en route to the goldfields and Sydney. A large camp was set up where the Mechanics Institute now stands and a nearby Rag Fair opened next to the Wesleyan Church. The flourishing trade led to a string of hotels being opened up along Sydney Road, many of which stand today.

The establishment of the cable tramway along Sydney Road in 1887, combined with burgeoning industries opening up in Brunswick heralded the end of the gentleman squatter in Brunswick. The land boom saw parts of Brunswick carved up although planned estates at Hopetoun failed due to the economic downturn of the '90s. Subdivision in Brunswick was still in full swing as late as the 1920s spurred on by government initiatives in the latter part of the nineteenth century to provide land for an increasing workforce. The War Services Homes Commission acquired large tracts of land for returning WW I veterans. In

the 20th and now 21st Century, building a home in Brunswick requires demolishing an older house.

The migrant influx into Brunswick however is what the suburb is best known for, with Arabic, Turkish, Lebanese and Greek being commonly spoken. Many shopfronts have two signs, one in the owner's native language and one in English.

The first migrants were Irish, forced from their potato farms by the English, they were a formidable force during the war years when they formed the Anti-Conscription League; John Curtin was a Brunswick native. The next influx was the Italians, with Sebastiano Donnelly opening his spaghetti factory. An influential figure in the area, he inspired the naming of the first Catholic church, St Ambrose. The Gattardo family established the famous Holeproof factory, which saw many different migrants behind the machines. Bob Santamaria's father opened the first fruit shop in Sydney Road in 1883, beginning a tradition that has continued to this day; Santamaria was behind the Labour Party's split in the '50s. The Greek influence began in 1930 and by 1975 there were 15,000 Greeks living in Brunswick. The Greeks formed the first official ethnic community in Brunswick in 1930, the idea swiftly spreading to other suburbs and capital cities.

The Turkish presence dates from the late '60s with the abolition of the White Australia Policy and to many Turks Brunswick was the first port of call after the migrant centres. The Lebanese entered in force after 1975 with the commencement of the Civil War in Lebanon thus continuing Brunswick's proud tradition of ethnic assimilation. The cosmopolitan nature of Brunswick was recently celebrated in the inspiring book *Brunswick: One history, Many Voices* with chapter extracts translated directly into Italian, Greek, Arabic, and Turkish. A trip down Sydney Road or Lygon Street is an adventure into another world and the many cafés have become a popular meeting place for lovers of good coffee and good times. A special feature of Brunswick is the many cultural festivals throughout the year as migrants and Australians celebrate the diversity that has made this nation great.

Written by Alastair Rosie

RINGWOOD'S CLOCKTOWER

Ringwood's most famous landmark, the Clocktower, was built as a war memorial after World War One when local residents were casting around for a suitable monument to honour their dead. Although it has been in existence for many years, it took over eight years to come to fruition. Between 1919 and 1927, a series of meetings were held, with the clocktower winning out in the end.

At that time the war memorial fund stood at £1,807. The Lord Mayor dedicated it in 1928 and in 1934 a 26" 4—cwt. bell was installed.

The clocktower stood for many years in the middle of Maroondah Highway until the sixties, when with the upgrading of the highway, it was decided to move it to its current position on the corner of Wantirna Road and Maroondah Highway.

A field gun was added some years later to complete the theme of remembering the dead from many other wars. The gardens are also the setting every year for the council's giant nativity scene.

Written by Alastair Rosie

CRANBOURNE: BATTLERS TAMED A SWAMP

Cranbourne, named after Lord Cranbourne, is an area with a strong pastoralist heritage yet for much of Victoria's history it was passed over as being too close to the Big Swamp (Koo-wee-rup Swamp). This immense swamp was to prove a major obstacle in the early years of the colony with its treacherous ground and ancient legends. Even neighbouring tribes avoided it believing it to be the domain of the 'too-roo-dun' or 'bunyip.' The Bunurong however called it 'mar- ne-bek,' the good country. Their beacon fires in the forbidding swamp often providing the only means of navigation for early settlers. By the time the first squatters arrived in the area around 1832, the Bunurong had been decimated by the ravages of the sealers. A few years later seals were almost extinct in the area.

Tentative exploratory expeditions were mounted from 1826-28 when the military post was established at Red Bluff (Corinella) but these were mainly confined to the east. One of the early expeditions led by Captain Wright yielded the grassy plains beside the Yallock Creek, a point that was noted down for future reference. Some ten years later cattle from the grazing runs to the west began moving east and when John Highett crossed the Dandenong Creek to settle near Frankston, Cranbourne's face began to change.

The overlanders were a hardy breed of men who drove their herds south from the Monaro Plains to the verdant river valleys of Port Phillip. They were in direct competition with the Vandemonians emigrating from Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). To add to their woes, an increasingly embattled colonial government in Sydney tried desperately to control the land rush even as the French cast longing glances at the southern coastline. In effect, the settlement of Australia was a mish mash of conflicting forces jostling for position on what was essentially a military outpost of the British Empire.

The '40s saw sporadic guerilla warfare between black and white as 'settled' Tasmanian aborigines broke free from their 'protectors' and went 'native.' European settlers were on one occasion caught up in inter-tribal warfare and suffered as a result. But by the late '40s the area was more or less settled, leaving only the forbidding swamplands of Koo-Wee-Rup.

The swamp proved a major obstacle to graziers seeking the fertile pasturelands of Gipps Land (Gippsland) and it was not until 1859 that a permanent roadway was surveyed along the earlier track blazed out of the wilderness.

Cranbourne Township was surveyed in 1856 but by that stage however there was already a thriving population consisting mainly of Scots Presbyterians. These industrious immigrants were steadily developing the area even as Cranbourne's rival Dandenong continued to develop, with the prize being the Peninsula pastures. Cranbourne's dominance was assured as it sat midway between the Peninsula and Gippsland. The many agricultural shows became both a showcase for new and experimental farming methods and a meeting place for locals.

In the early '60s Cranbourne became known as 'meteorite' city when a large meteorite was discovered on the property of William Mackay. Early settlers had often gazed in wonderment at aborigines dancing around peculiar rock formations but had thought nothing of it until one man tried to tether his horse to what he thought was a tree stump. The find led to many other discoveries and brought eminent members of the aristocracy and scientific community from all over the world to Cranbourne.

Cranbourne's biggest hurdle however began in 1889 when work finally began on the Koo-wee-rup swamp. Council had finally allotted monies to the tune of £80,000 although the final cost would be many times that price. The drainage work came at a time when the country was reeling under the blows of economic downturns and fluctuating world markets. The work was back breaking and dirty and shrouded in industrial controversy. The rate of pay a good digger could make amounted to the princely sum of 10/-, and the work was plentiful. The main drainage channel eventually reached the Bunyip drain and lots were finally surveyed in the area of Koo-wee-rup. It was by no means the end of the troubles as the Bunyip drain proved totally inadequate for the purposes of draining the enormous swamp, which was some twenty miles long and five miles wide. The swamp was subject to frequent flooding thanks to the run off from the nearby Great Divide and the Lang Lang, Yallock, Dandenong, and Cardinia Creeks. A soldier resettlement scheme failed miserably as did many other schemes, surveyors, scientists and government officials debated the issue until well into the 20th Century. The story of the draining of the Koo-wee-rup swamp however would take an entire book.

The peat soil however proved conducive to growing potatoes and by 1927 Cranbourne provided 20% of Melbourne's potatoes. The early potato farmers used migrant Italian labour and the Italians laboured under racist taunts until they had acquired over 5,500 acres between them and their integration into Cranbourne society was assured.

Cranbourne continues to develop at a steady rate and in the latter part of the 20th Century it literally exploded with the building boom, and bust of the '80s. Now a major retail and industrial area it still retains its connection to the land combining the best of the old and new worlds. It remains the perfect starting point for many journeys into Southern Gippsland, the Great Divide, and Phillip Island.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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CROYDON: THE TARRALLA VALLEY

Croydon is situated in a valley between Dorset Road ridge and Croydon Hills to the north. The valley is on a bed of sandstone and served as a drain from nearby Lillydale. The Woiworung called the place Tarralla, meaning 'to walk fast,' referring to the fast flowing creek of the Tarralla. The creek meandered through white Swamp and Manna Gums, periodically flooding to form lagoons. The area was subject to massive flooding until the construction of dams in the last part of the nineteenth century. The Tarralla is now the main drain through Croydon. The Woiworung's territory bordered here with the Bunurong who were also known as the Westernport Blacks. The Woiworung inhabited much of what is now Melbourne.

The idyllic lifestyle of the Woiworung was shattered in the 1830s when John Batman landed on the northern shores of Port Phillip Bay and pushed inward towards Sunbury. Soon scores of settlers from Van Dieman's Land were flocking to the new pasturage across Bass Strait. One of the earliest settlers was a pastoralist, William Turner, a former Captain in the British army. He had been sent to Melbourne as part of the occupation army to oversee the hordes of squatters. He was to become Croydon's founding father but at this time, he was still an army captain. He resigned his commission shortly afterwards for reasons that are unknown. It is recorded however, that he had objected to the public flogging of convicts in the main street of Melbourne for trivial offences such as stealing a loaf of bread. In 1837, shortly after his arrival, he took pasturage in the Croydon area and true to his humanitarian attitudes, treated the local aborigines with respect. He later built a house in what is now called The Basin.

The area was surveyed in 1851 by Hoddle after Victoria's separation from New South Wales. The initial purpose of the survey was to lay out lots for Turner, Thomson and Lewis Robinson. The squatters around Melbourne had begun to cause problems because they were refusing to budge from their 'illegally' acquired holdings and return to Van Dieman's Land. Captain Lonsdale who had been appointed commandant of the Port Phillip colony demanded pastoralists obtain permits for £10 per year. Turner, Robinson and Thomson had several leases in the area. The law was designed to force the owners into using the land for grazing only, not agriculture.

The pastoral era closed around 1855 once Mooroolbark Parish was surveyed and the area opened up to selectors. Mooroolbark comes from the aboriginal term moor - ool - beek, meaning 'Red Earth.' The 'red earth' tradition continues every year with Mooroolbark's Red Earth festival. Turner sold his last run, the 'Stringybark Forest Run' for £20 in 1864. Stringybark Run comprised Bayswater North and Croydon South. Part of this run was later taken up by James Hosie who founded Hosie's Hotel in the city, *Boonong* (Aboriginal; Resting-Place) is still there today and has been classified by the National Trust.

The area was also important in the early history of Melbourne for timber and the various orchards, which supplied Melbourne, Sydney, and the local bird population with an ample supply of cherries.

By 1882, Croydon was already a recognised village, along with Birt's Hill, (1877) near Luther College and Brushy Creek, (1855). The addition of the railway line in 1883 provided impetus to the area. However, Croydon central was not declared a town until

1912 and did not become a shire until relatively late (1967). Further subdivision in the 1880s and early part of the 20th century opened up the area to an influx of new settlers. The surrounding suburbs have still retained much of the rural atmosphere that was part of early Croydon. The old Shire of Croydon is now a part of the Maroondah Shire.

Croydon boasts a number of natural resources such as: cycling tracks, a library, leisure centre, cinemas and adequate parklands and lakes. The Dorset Gardens Hotel and Croydon Hotel have gaming facilities along with the newly opened Kilsyth Club in nearby Bayswater North. Eastern College of Tafe (Swinburne) has an outlet in Croydon. One of Croydon's most famous features is the Sunday Market, once known as the Flea Market, which is open every Sunday. Croydon is within easy reach of horse riding facilities and the Yarra Valley Wine regions. The annual Maroondah festival is held in Croydon every year and is a big drawcard for the area. During the year there are various community houses hosting a plethora of short courses. Despite its rapid growth in the second half of this century, Croydon is still one of the more pleasant parts of Melbourne in which to live.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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WINDY HILL: GATEWAY TO EMPIRE

Situated to the north of Moonee Ponds, Essendon played a vital part, along with Moonee Ponds in the formation of the colony at Port Phillip. The colony, especially during those early formative years, teetered on the edge of failure as squatters and overlanders flocked to the newly opened pasturelands. With the discovery of gold near Ballarat, the success of the Port Phillip colony was assured. Essendon became part of the stopover that stayed,' according to Grant Aldous' book.

Visitors to Essendon during the Miocene Age however would never have recognised it. Essendon was part of a great sea that extended north to Keilor and west to Geelong. Evidence for this was found when the excavations for the Moonee Ponds Regional Library in 1967 unearthed fossilised sea-life.

The Wurundjeri were the original custodians of the land and found shelter amongst gigantic trees, and shady gullies. The trail of ponds at Moonee Ponds provided water and food, although the earliest white man to explore the area, Charles Grimes rejected it. Not so John Batman however who had sheep in the Moonee Ponds area in 1835. His rival John Pascoe Fawkner set up Pascoeville nearby. Pascoeville was to fall victim to the selectors in 1838, the year of the first land sales in the area. Over 5,234 acres went under the hammer for £11,654. In 1842, sections at what is now Tullamarine were sold off to W.V.L Foster, John Fawkner, John Grant, and the McNab brothers, Duncan and John. More land was sold at Essendon and Hawstead (Glenbervie) June 1854, with 1,050 acres going for £96. The buyers were mainly beneficiaries, either, directly or indirectly, of the wealth brought by the goldrush.

The name Essendon is thought to have come from one of two sources. The first was Essendon King, the son of Admiral G.P King RN; King was an early resident of Essendon. The second and most likely source of the name was the village of Essendon, Hertfordshire; the two Essendons were sister cities for many years.

Early Essendon nevertheless, was still farming country with eleven farmers, one grazier and Peter McCracken's Ardmillan Estate. McCracken became a founding member of the Essendon Football Club.

Not long after the establishment of a church in 1849 nonetheless, a farsighted visiting Presbyterian minister, Rev. David Wilkie in 1853 remarked,

"... A village, I understand, to be called Essendon, is to be built within a mile of the church, large portions of land are being sold in small allotments for building purposes, the impression is that the district is likely to become before very long, a highly important and populous one."

It is doubtful whether Rev. Wilkie could have foreseen the land rush of the late '80s that occurred in the new colony. A glance at the rate books of the times shows that Essendon jumped from 10,718 in 1890 to 15,245 in 1892. It was to drop off during the great crash to 13,000. But by Federation in 1901 it was up to 16,000 and by 1905 it was at 18,700.

The opening of a private railway in 1860 had doubtless helped to open the area up, although this was to close four years later. It wasn't until 1871 that the State Government reopened it. Most of the big blocks had been already sold off by then but subdivision didn't start in earnest until after 1880.

Essendon was also the last home to one of Australia's finest sons, John Hinkins, a schoolteacher who had worked with the aboriginal tribes along the Murray. His views if followed, would have seen indigenous Australians enter the professional workforce much earlier than they eventually did. He died in 1851 before his dream could be realised. Essendon in 1851 boasted Flemington House, built as a Government House and later called Travancore, and Ailsa built by Captain Bishop RN. Ailsa was later bought by the famous brewing family the McCrackens. Robert McCracken was inspirational in opening up the Essendon Railway Station, founding the Royal Agricultural Society, and the Essendon Football Club. He goes down in the annals of Essendon as being a founding father of the city.

Flemington and Kensington separated from Essendon in 1882 and Essendon was declared a city in 1889 with much of the population scattered throughout the southern part of the borough, close to the abattoirs at Newmarket. 1871 was a far more monumental year for Essendon, being the year that the Essendon Football Club was formed. Originally part of the first organised league, the VFA, it has remained a part of Essendon culture ever since. Essendon's other sporting heroes include champion middle distance runner Ron Clarke, cyclist Sid Patterson and boxer Lionel Rose.

In 1919, the then Lord Mayor of Essendon Cr. Arthur Fenton landed in Keilor Road in an 8 HP Maurice-Farman airplane. Little did he know that day that he was to open yet another chapter on Essendon's history. Two years later the Commonwealth Government bought 36 hectares of land at Essendon (part of Niddrie) for an airport. The airport grew from strength to strength especially during the war years and in 1950 was declared an international airport. It was only the opening of Tullamarine in 1970 that saw the airport revert to a commercial installation. Now a traditional working class suburb, its residents are justifiably proud of their club's exploits and aviation history. Essendon has a wealth of things to do and see including: the Essendon Football Club Hall of Fame, Essendon Courthouse Museum, Heritage Walks and Maribyrnong River Walks, and spectacular views of the city from the Lily Street Lookout. Woodlands Park boasts exotic and native vegetation, lakes and ample recreation areas and is home to a variety of animals and birds. For those wanting to join the fitness brigade there are facilities such as the Windy Hill Fitness Centre, Essendon Hockey Centre and other sporting facilities.

Essendon has always been at the forefront of progress in this state, from early stopover to international gateway. It has truly been the gateway to empire.

Written by Alastair Rosie

SOURCES:

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Essendon: The Stopover That Stayed

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Moonee Valley City Council Website

<http://www.mooneevalley.vic.gov.au/>

FAMOUS ROADS IN RINGWOOD

In the nineteenth century, roads were very often named for their destination. Therefore, the road to Mr Smith's property would be called Smith's Road and the road to Healesville was Healesville Road, etc.

We have tracked down the former names of some of Ringwood's roads, perhaps someone out there can help us with the rest.

Maroondah Highway and Whitehorse Road was once Old Gippsland Road. The original track veered past Lilydale running southeast through Woori Yallock and Loch Valley following the course of the Latrobe River. It eventually merged with the road from Port Albert and terminated at Sale. In the 1850s it was renamed Healesville Road and shortly afterwards Patrick Trainor built his Whitehorse Hotel at Elgar Road. According to local legend he hung a statue of a white horse at the front of the road and the road was known as Whitehorse Road. The CRB eventually changed the Ringwood section to Maroondah Highway, after the Maroondah dam.

Canterbury Road was Delaney's Road, and is older than Maroondah Highway. Originally an old stock route to the pastoral regions of Croydon and Ferntree Gully, it was considered too rough for wheeled vehicles.

Mount Dandenong Road was Sawmill Road and was surveyed in 1857. It led predictably enough to the old sawmill.

Wantirna Road was once West Prussia Road, in view of the many German migrants to the region. It was renamed Wantirna Road at the height of WW I paranoia.

Warrandyte Road was once Anderson's Creek Road once a popular gold mining region. The gold never paid enough unfortunately but the name stuck for many years. Warrandyte was known as Anderson's Creek until 1908.

Loughnan's Hill went through many name changes to reflect its constantly changing owners. Known as Forbe's Hill after James Forbes, it was renamed after 1876 when he sold his property to a Mr Monckton. Monckton's Hill was renamed Loughnan's Hill when Anthony Loughnan, the Chief Clerk for the MMBW took over the homestead at "Pinemont." Although he sold it in 1940, the name has stuck ever since. Perhaps residents were sick of constantly changing names by that stage!

Mullum Mullum is the Koorie word for 'place of many eagles.' When settlers first came to the stringybark forests of Ringwood they were entranced at the many eagles in the area. Place of Many Eagles was also chosen as the title for Hugh Anderson's bicentennial history of Ringwood.

Written by Alastair Rosie

FRANKSTON: FROM RESORT TO CITY

It has been said with some degree of honesty that Frankston has never been able to decide whether it was a country town servicing the Peninsula towns, a resort, a suburb of Melbourne or a self contained city. Perhaps all of the above definitions would suffice for Frankston, it is a resort town with its own industry and services many of the smaller towns on the Peninsula. Early paintings of Frankston however show an attachment to Melbourne, with their views of the sweeping foreshore and the distant metropolis.

The earliest inhabitants were the Bunurong people who fished the Kananook Creek and hunted the wallabies and possums in the area. Theirs was a precarious existence, as they too had to weather Melbourne's notorious winters. Early photographs show bearded warriors wrapped in woolskins. Their womenfolk, in a departure from traditional aboriginal society were hunters as well. Sadly, the Bunurong were doomed shortly after the arrival of the whites. William Buckley, the escaped convict who lived for many years with the aborigines is recorded as having passed through the area.

Frankston's first white pioneers arrived in 1854 after the first land sales on April 25 of that same year. The record shows that twenty-seven of the twenty-nine lots offered sold at £36/1/6 per acre, well below the State average of £220/18/7 per acre. The cheap land attracted such pioneers as: George Ward Cole, the largest landowner in the district, William Hammill, a merchant, Henry Wedge, a wealthy landowner, Thomas McComb, Alexander Balcombe, a pastoralist, John Barker, a pastoralist, Captain Michael Fenton, probably a speculator, and James Davey, a pastoralist. Prior to this, the McCrae's had owned land at Mornington. Cole was a frequent visitor to the McCrae household and married Anne McCrae in 1842 (his second wife). It was George Cole who reputedly led the land rush in 1854 and Frankston's face was changed forever. Initially, many buyers and speculators were torn between a pastoral existence and coal mining. It was known that vast deposits of coal lay within easy reach of Melbourne but as with other Melbourne suburbs the coal mines never took off. The Latrobe Valley was to win that accolade.

The 1854 census shows that only 1273 people lived on the Mornington Peninsula and only 99 lived in the Parish of Frankston. It was not even listed as a town by 1865 in *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetter*. Only Tootgarook, Dromana, Osborne, Dandenong, Berwick, Cranbourne, and Pakenham were mentioned. Frankston was described as:

"a postal fishing village beautifully situated at the mouth of the Tangenong or Cannonook Creek."

It had a school, post office and a hotel, with the nearest telegraph being at Mornington. The origin of the name Frankston has remained one of the enduring enigmas of the area for many years and continues to provide food for thought. The legendary Frank Stone is not listed in the earliest census although he did live in the area. It is thought that Frankston was named after General Sir Thomas Harte Franks, who saw action in the second Sikh war 1848-49, where 15,000 British troops faced 30,000 Sikhs. Franks routed the enemy at the battle of Gujrat and passed into infamy. The Victorian Surveyor-General, Captain Andrew Clarke who served under Franks is thought to have named the area after his commander. It was a common practice in the last century. Many streets in Frankston were named after British commanders during the Crimean war i.e. Nolan Street, Raglan Street, Williams

Street and Kars Street. The Victorian public idolised the battle heroes as Britain struggled to maintain its grip on an increasingly restive empire.

The land boom of the 80s did not reach Frankston until 1888 however, six years after the line from Mordialloc was completed. A railway line was often used as a lever by speculators and developers who pointed out an areas' 'proximity' to Melbourne. The lack of a viable industry for Frankston marred early attempts to open up the area. Many suggestions were floated for a viable industry, the most famous being the cemetery in the 1880s. Melbourne was at that stage searching for a suitable site for the general cemetery. The issue dominated local politics until 1900 when Springvale was finally selected. The railway gave added impetus to the debate and there were many who saw the burial business as being a practical option for Frankston. The necropolis was to be based on Rookwood in Sydney, where coffins and mourners were deposited by train to the gravesite. The idea was eventually 'put to rest' when Springvale was selected.

Frankston's struggle to attract industry would continue for many years to come. In the latter part of the century however, Frankston became a soldier's town when the army barracks at nearby Langwarrin was built in 1887, followed shortly afterwards by the Flinders naval base. A more permanent camp was established at Balcombe, Mornington. Australia in the closing decades of the nineteenth century lived in fear of a Russian invasion. The Langwarrin camp proved to be a perfect training ground and army personnel remarked on its similarity to Aldershot in England. The town of Frankston was a popular stopping off point for soldiers over the next hundred years although locals at first accepted it begrudgingly, still holding out hopes that the cemetery proposal would take off. There were fears during the Great War when a venereal disease hospital was built in Frankston that an epidemic would break out. People lived in terror of VD and those who had suffered were often shunned. During the First World War, 170 soldiers staged a 'mass breakout' and spent the day drinking in Frankston hotels. One letter to the *Standard* towards the end of the war admonished the locals for their prejudicial treatment of the sufferers, claiming that the onset of venereal disease was a 'plot by the hated Hun.'

Frankston continued to develop as a resort town and in hindsight probably benefited from its failures to attract major industry. Frankston was relatively unscathed by the blight of pollution slowly spreading over the Port Phillip area, the only exception being the Kananook Creek which remained an eyesore for years. There were many plans to either clean or cover it. A section has now been declared a heritage area.

Frankston in the 90s remains a prime tourist area as evidenced by its proximity to the bay and easy access to the Mornington hinterland. It is without a doubt the gateway to the Mornington Peninsula and has significant natural resources such as: Bunarong park, Casaurina Reserve, Kananook Creek, Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve and the Seaford Wetlands.

Frankston's many events are too many to name but a comprehensive events diary can be found at <http://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/> along with a wealth of other information. Although separated from Melbourne, Frankston has remained and always will remain important to Melburnians for its seaside resort atmosphere and abundance of modern conveniences, and many of us retain precious memories of holidays and day trips to Frankston.

Written by Alastair Rosie

Sources: Frankston: Resort to City

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Shire of Frankston Homepage

<http://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/>

GLENROY AND PASCOE VALE: THE TOORAK OF THE NORTH

Situated to the north of Melbourne, Glenroy was named after the Glenroy Run held by Duncan Cameron from Glen Roy, Scotland. The Wurundjeri were the custodians of the area and would have wandered the shady forests and gullies on their habitual journeys. Life for the Wurundjeri however was not the idyllic adventure that we envisage today. It was a constant battle for survival with nature. Practices that were deemed barbaric by early Europeans such as abandoning the elderly and infanticide were the trademarks of a society that valued the survival of the tribal unit above all else. A clan couldn't afford to eat their way out of existence or hunt an area until there was nothing left.

Nevertheless, the early Europeans changed all that with ringbarked trees and millions of sheep. Suddenly areas that had supported vast herds of game were decimated by the arrival of European animals. Batman's arrival heralded the passing of an era and the beginning of a new age. His sheep grazed the Moonee Ponds and John Pascoe's Pascoeville followed soon after. The latter village fell victim to the first land sales in 1838 when 5,234 acres at nearby Moonee Ponds and Essendon went up for auction.

The Scots were undoubtedly the first serious white settlers in the Glenroy area, beginning with the Kennedy's from Inverness who had arrived in the 1840s. Their Glenroy Run covered much of what is now Glenroy. The old bluestone church at Campbellfield however is part of the old run held by Duncan Cameron. Cameron's Glenroy farm and the Kennedy leases were eventually sold in 1874 to the Glenroy Land Company who marketed it as the 'Toorak of the North.'

Meanwhile, John Pascoe Fawcner had acquired one of eleven subdivided lots in what is now Coburg and the former Pascoeville became Pascoe Vale. Moonee Ponds Creek, Gaffney Street, Northumberland Road, and the western arm of Boundary Road ringed it. It was established where the Moonee Ponds Creek bisects Pascoe Vale Road, just south of Fawcner's residence. The residents however tended to drift towards Moonee Ponds which was then the first stopover for gold prospectors on the way to the goldfields at Ballarat. This pattern of kinship with the Moonee Ponds of Essendon was to continue for many years until the arrival of the Tullamarine Freeway.

The railway was what made or broke many early suburbs and towns. Without the railway, land companies had little chance of selling subdivided land and consequently there are many towns and suburbs that survive in name only. Pascoe Vale got its railway station in 1885, built by subdividers, thirteen years after Glenroy got its station. Land sales were in full swing by the '80s in Glenroy although only forty houses occupied the area in 1891. Developers built double storey shops and paved the roads in readiness for the planned expansion. The economic downturn of the '90s however put paid to most development in the new colony. Only the Peninsula survived relatively unscathed, due to its large farming community and small labour base.

Schools and churches were in evidence by 1891 with Hadfield, named after a similar town in England springing up on the outskirts of Glenroy. The subdivision of Glenroy in 1872 carried over into Pascoe Vale ten years later where most people congregated around the village. Pascoe Vale was still considered country at this point, with the suburban line

ending at Essendon. The trains north of Essendon ran on a country timetable! It was not until the 1950s that the area between Pascoe Vale and Coburg North was subdivided and developed.

But Pascoe Vale was developing, with the locals building a Progress Hall, churches and a shopping centre. The tram lines eventually reached along Melville Road to Bell Street in 1927 although the population at that stage was a massive 348, Glenroy was even more sparsely populated in 1938, numbering 210.

The post war years however saw a massive increase in residents as thousands of 'displaced persons' poured into Australian ports. Faced with a shortage of housing, the government acted quickly and in 1950 the Housing Commission acquired over 2,000 hectares in Broadmeadows and Glenroy North for homes. Earlier, the Australian National Airways had already sponsored homes for its employees at Essendon Airport (Melbourne Airport). The War Service had already moved into the area, starting with Pascoe Vale, Coburg and Brunswick in the '20s where it had settled returned veterans. The move had mixed success, with many streets being named after famous WWI battlefields. In the '50s, they constructed prefabricated metal houses (Beauforts) for veterans. Pascoe Vale was officially severed from Moonee Ponds with the construction of the Tullamarine Freeway in 1969 and a century of tradition was lost.

Although ignored and shrugged off over the years, Glenroy and Pascoe Vale played a vital role in the history of Melbourne, especially during the post war years when the tidal wave of homeless persons reached Australian shores. Were it not for the vast open spaces of this 'Toorak of the North' the fate of many refugees would have been a tenuous one.

Written by Alastair Rosie

SOURCES:

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AAA Matilda Your Town

<http://www.aaa.com.au/world/australia/vic/vic.glenroy.shtml#details>

THE HILLS OF HEATHMONT

Perhaps a fitting title for this suburb, Heathmont was for many years an outpost of burgeoning Ringwood. Once the domain of orchardists and farmers, it retained much of its charm until the postwar years and subdivision. Although much of Heathmont's history has been covered under Ringwood, some things remain untold.

The name probably came from the heath-like vegetation that covered the hills and we know that a W.H Smith had 164 acres in the triangle of land bounded by Bedford and Canterbury Roads. It is also thought that the famed antinomy that put Ringwood on the map was found here.

Another of Heathmont's early settlers was Herman Pump from Ahrenhoe, north of Hamburg. In 1896, he took 40 acres of scrub on Canterbury Road and planted fruit. Nevertheless, man does not live by bread (or fruit) alone and while he and his Doncaster born wife, Louisa waited for the trees to mature they took labouring jobs and cut firewood. Herman Pump was the most influential resident in Heathmont and gave his name to Pump Street. He ran his fruit van to the markets in Melbourne three times a week for fifty years. An eleven-year-old girl recalls 1915 when:

"... At 10.30 pm off we go—Daddy, me and Ginger—with a load of Produce, including Parmesan Cheese made by our industrious mother. Jig jogging along the rough gravelled road, zig zagging the Ringwood and Mitcham hills."

The township did not come into being until 1925 when the Heathmont Railway League won the battle to have a railway station built at Heathmont. The station was opened the following year and Heathmont's future was assured.

The first shop was Miss Elizabeth Marden's lolly shop and general store, run from the front room of her house. When she returned to England, the Heathmont Progress Association asked for and got, a Post Office, which was located in the former Marden residence in 1929. There were no other businesses in the area until 1946.

Heathmont was to remain the domain of the orchardists for many years until the postwar building boom and particularly, after WW II. Still there are many backyards in Heathmont that have memories of the orchardists in the form of fruit trees. As a former resident of Heathmont some years ago, I recall the avocado tree in our backyard that continued to yield avocados in 1993.

In 1958, Mitcham Technical School was opened in Heathmont, later becoming Ringwood Technical School and nowadays Heathmont Secondary College. It became the first co-educational school in Melbourne, taking in students from Box Hill Girl's Technical School and Ferntree Gully Technical School. In its day it was a showpiece and attracted many overseas visitors. It sits opposite Aquinas College.

The parklands remain a big part of Heathmont however in spite of its suburban nature and on any weekend it is possible to see dozens of residents walking through parks and playing football, soccer and tennis. The Ringwood Golf Course is located in Heathmont just across the road from Cadbury's chocolate factory. Strip shopping has always been a mainstay of Heathmont nevertheless and in an age of giant shopping centres the little town

is a testament to stability in the midst of uncertainty and remains a pleasant alternative to the 'big smoke' of nearby Ringwood and Knox.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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Red Rooster Press: 1988

MELTON: THOROUGHBRED COUNTRY

The undulating hills of Melton have attracted people for thousands of years. The Woiworung were not the first settlers, as there is evidence at modern day Keilor of occupation during Pleistocene times. Further north around Lancefield, the megafauna (giant marsupials) survived until the late Pleistocene era. The Woiworung's territory was bounded by the Taungurong, Kurnai, Boonwurrung, Wathaurong and Djadjawurung tribes. It is now known that the Woiworung had marriage alliances with at least one of the neighbours, the Kulin and were engaged in sporadic warfare with the Kurnai to the east. Coranderrk in the east (Healesville) was destined to become their final home after the arrival of white settlers. The great trade route that extended into Central Victoria began in the gemstone quarries of Mt William to the north of the Woiworung, thus beginning the tradition of Melton as a 'gateway.'

With the coming of the white man all that was to change, although the last ngurungaeta, William Barak managed to preserve their heritage in paintings. His creations show women in brightly painted possum skins and their menfolk painted for corroborees, banging on possum skin drums.

The first survey was completed by W.W. Darke in 1837 and European settlement began the following year in 1838. The town was surveyed in 1852 and named after Melton Mowbray, a significant hunting area in Leicestershire. The town was moved because of flooding problems and has remained in its present location ever since. Melton prospered during the gold-rush days being a stopping off point for diggers en route to the gold fields of Ballarat. The district was proclaimed a shire in 1871 and by 1886 the railways stretched to Melbourne and Bacchus Marsh. In 1974, Melton was declared a satellite city of Melbourne and between 1975 - 84 boasted the highest annual growth rate in Melbourne.

Melton was named the 'Heart of Thoroughbred Country' in 1985 and boasts 8 major stud farms and over 20 trainers and breeders in the area. Where else would you find a festival called 'Sing With the Stallions?' The horse breeding tradition has been carried on since 1850 when William Cross Yuille set up a 640 acre run at Rockbank. Yuille helped set up the Australian Stud Book. Melton has been 'horse racing' country for 150 years and looks to continue in the vein with wealthy owners from Asia and Dubai standing their champions on Melton's studs. The opening up of many horse studs to the public and the establishment of more horse trails ensure that horse lovers and tourists seeking a breath of fresh air and wide open skies will continue to flock to Melton.

These days Melton is still a gateway for both rural and city dwellers. It is the gateway to Melbourne, Geelong, and Ballarat; the Macedon Ranges wine country and Spa Country. It is a city in its own right and offers the best of both worlds. A \$5 million superstore at Woodgrove is due to open on November 14th, providing residents with 'city style' shopping in the country. Nevertheless, Melton's heritage is not forgotten with plans to redevelop the Willows Historical Park and Toolern Creek Heritage Walk. The Willow's original homestead was built in 1850 and has been a major drawcard for the region.

Sporting facilities take pride of place in Melton which boasts Australia's first and Victoria's largest indoor wave pool. Plans are already afoot to develop the major outdoor sports venue, Macpherson Park. The Park already has soccer, baseball, tennis, cricket, football and equestrian facilities. The redevelopment will mean that families can indulge in their favourite sports at the same venue.

Major events include: the 1999 Melton Djerriwarrh festival, which goes under the banner of horsepower, celebrating northwestern Victoria's equine community. The **Riata Ranch Cowboy Girls** from California will be a highlight of this year's festival. This year, it signals the start of 'Equitana Asia Pacific,' a major equine vent being held in Melbourne for the first time. The festival opens November 3rd and runs until November 7th

Other attractions include the Gamekeeper's Secret - Country Inn, which received an award for the best Country Themed Restaurant in Victoria and the Windmill Gardens restaurant (reputed to be the largest windmill in the Southern Hemisphere).

The Shire has entered into partnership with Sunbury and District Winegrowers in order to help promote the entire region as a premier wine producing area of Victoria.

Melton already boasts wineries such as Witchmount and Galli Estate. Not to be forgotten is Warrenbrooke Faire, which provides a unique wining/dining with an 'equine' experience.

Melton has always been a gateway for peoples from time immemorial and looks to continue in that tradition for many years to come.

For those interested in further reading, *Melton: Plains of Promise*, by Joan Starr (1985) and *Mowbray cottage 1893-1993*, by John Reid are a good start.

Written by Alastair Rosie ©

I wish to acknowledge the help of Adam Boyle: Tourism & Recreation Planner for Melton for his prompt assistance in providing much of the information for this article.

MOONEE PONDS: LAND OF MANY LAKES

Moonee Ponds was named after Moonee Moonie, an aboriginal chieftain who died in 1845. An early settler, Duncan Blair described the area in glowing terms for the Essendon Gazette in 1912:.

"... but for the greater part it was remarkable for its gigantic trees, deep gullies and reed fringed waterholes. Mt Alexander Road was a rough track cut through a dense forest, the principal dwellers were the Doutta Galla tribe."

The Doutta Galla (Wurundjeri) had little idea of the significance of the arrival of John Batman in 1835 but the influx of the Vandemonians under John Batman was to alter their way of life forever. The last known corroboree in the area was held in 1879 when a wandering tribe visited the tranquil ponds.

Acting Surveyor Charles Grimes rowed up the Saltwater River in 1803 reaching modern day Braybrook before turning back. He was singularly unimpressed with the land however and left shortly afterwards.

The next visitor was John Batman who saw its potential immediately. He is known to have grazed sheep in the Moonee Ponds area as early as 1835 and his rival John Pascoe Fawkner established Pascoeville nearby.

Moonee Ponds offered everything a squatter could want, plentiful grazing land and waterholes; the land rush was on. Moonee Ponds became the Parish of Doutta Galla in the County of Bourke. Doutta Galla hugged the west bank of the Moonee Ponds Creek while the Parish of Jika Jika took up the eastern banks.

The first land went under the hammer in 1838 and Fawkner's Pascoeville was broken up in the rush to acquire land. William Brodie, Duncan Cameron, John Cubb, George Eagle, William Gardiner, Charles Howard and John James are among seventeen selectors who owned land in the district. Land for Moonee Valley racecourse was acquired in 1847 and was used as a grazing run until the opening of the now famous trotting track in 1882.

The early settlers were an industrious breed forming the Moonee Ponds Farmers Society; their first ploughing match was held in 1848. In 1853 the track between the Moonee Ponds hotel and Keilor Road was opened.

Nevertheless, it was the gold rush that made Moonee Ponds a major population centre (along with dozens of other wayside stops that would doubtless have died a natural death). Moonee Ponds proved to be a convenient stopover on the way to the goldfields. Present day Queens Park was a temporary first stop for hopeful gold prospectors Duncan Blair painted a different picture of Moonee Ponds:.

"I passed through Flemington and Moonee Ponds about a dozen times altogether, going to, and coming from the diggings, and was always camped at this spot. Many is the time I have wished for a days shooting in the vicinity for there was plenty of sport - waterfowl and possum especially being plentiful near the lagoon - but I was always too busy and could not spare the time to indulge my fancies in this direction."

Moonee Ponds was the first port of call for Burke and Wills as they set out on their ill-fated journey to the Gulf of Carpentaria. Burke reportedly returned to Melbourne that night to say goodbye to Julia Matthews, an opera singer of whom he was unashamedly passionate about.

Essendon residents according to Mr G. Davison, showed a particular interest in preserving the river in contrast to their neighbours in Footscray:

“In the 1880's, Essendon showed a determination to hold aloof from the rest of the Western suburbs. The local Council energetically resisted industrial development in the form of cattle saleyards and brickworks. It aimed to prevent the further despoliation of the Maribyrnong by noxious industries and to create, in its upper reaches, a playground for rowers, fisherman and swimmers. The successive attempts to beautify the river are an interesting episode in Melbourne's environmental history”.

The 1880s however saw much of the area carved up as settlers came in ever increasing numbers to the shores of Port Phillip Bay. The breathtaking vistas of the You Yangs, Dandenongs, Port Phillip Bay and the spires of Melbourne were too much to resist, and Moonee Ponds and the surrounding area lost some of its natural charm to the building boom. The contract to build the Moonee Ponds Town Hall was let out in November 1889 and completed in February of the following year. Over 120 years old, the only surviving piece of architecture is the clocktower. A rebuilding/restoration program is underway with plans afoot to reopen the grand old lady.

The 20th century saw an influx of Italian and Greek migrants to the district which was opposed by Essendon residents who wanted to preserve their neighbourhood. Thankfully racist passions died as the century wore on and today Moonee Ponds is a fashionable area with a world wide profile thanks to Dame Edna Everage a.k.a. Barry Humphries.

A busy enclave of Melbourne, Moonee Ponds is sensitive to its history and today visitors can enjoy a wander along Bellair Street where a series of mosaic murals depict the history of the Flemington/Kensington districts. Queens Park is also open to the public and the Caretaker's Cottage Tearooms has more mosaics on show. The park is also home to a children's maze and play sculptures set amid gloriously landscaped gardens.

From stopover to suburb, Moonee Ponds has experienced the pain and struggle of growth and survived with its cultural heritage intact.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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1979

Extract from a talk given by Mr G. Davison at the 10th anniversary meeting of the
Essendon Historical Society

<http://www.mooneevalley.vic.gov.au/>

MOORABBIN: BREAD BASKET TO MELBOURNE

For many thousands of years, the lush scrubland plains of Mooroooboon were the domain of the Bunurong and Yarra tribes. Mooroooboon is thought to mean 'resting place' although another meaning is thought to be 'mother's milk.' It was almost certainly a resting-place for the local tribes in the area. The combination of scrublands and coastal swamps supported a wide variety of wildlife and aquatic life. Various middens could be seen scattered along the coastline where tribal groups had feasted and left the remainders to fertilise the ground.

All that was to change however with the arrival of the first whites who were invariably squatters. They came either from Van Dieman's Land or via the overland route from New South Wales. The squatters were, with the benefit of hindsight merely following an age-old pattern of resettlement that has been occurring for thousands of years across the planet. But the effect on the aboriginal population was disastrous. The Woiworung and Bunurong tribes only numbered 350 in total and with the thousands of whites descending upon the Great South Land, their days were numbered.

The earliest residents were reputed to have been the King brothers, John and Richard. They were joined by a score of others including MacArthur and the ill-fated Martin brothers. Moorabbin was a squatting run until the arrival in 1841 of Henry Dendy, a British aristocrat from Brighton, Sussex. Henry saw himself as a properly landed gentleman and attempted to reproduce the elegance of English country life to Brighton Manor. Moorabbin was to serve as one of Dendy's outposts for quite a number of years after he had driven the squatters out. The manor was completed in 1842 according to an early survey map but another source W.B Andrews claimed only the back part was finished by then. Dendy was in many ways, an anachronism supplanted from the fertile fields of English aristocracy to a colonial outpost stumbling under the convict lash. It is likely that he meant well but his domination of Moorabbin was short lived. He was a victim of the depression of the 40s and his estate passed into the hands of his agent, J.B Were who later sold it.

Dendy's dreams of a vast country estate ended in the 1850s when the area was broken up by subdivision in the 1850s. The first government body in Moorabbin came in 1862 with the establishment of the Moorabbin Roads Board. Moorabbin at this time encompassed Hampton, Sandringham, Beaumaris and Mentone. The first mayor was William Mair 1862-66.

Moorabbin at this time was primarily a Market Garden area similar to Altona in the west. It was divided into three Ridings, East, South, and West Riding. In 1885 however, Sandringham, Hampton, Black Rock and Beaumaris were included in West Riding. This sparked a bitter thirty-two year war between the residents of Sandringham and the Moorabbin Council.

The seeds of discontent were sewn in 1878 with the abolition of the Road Tolls, forcing Councils to pay for the upkeep of major thoroughfares. The ratepayers of Sandringham objected to paying for roads, which were being ruined by market gardeners. The flames of rebellion exploded when West Riding put in a claim for £600 for the repair of Point Nepean Road to North and East Ridings. When the request was refused they formed the severance society and pressured both local and State governments for years. They were aided by Harold Sparks who worked for notorious land developer Charles Henry James. James no

doubt had subdivision on his mind as did his opponent in the battle, Moorabbin Councillor Thomas Bent. Bent, who was to become Railways Minister, was perhaps one of the most skilful politicians of his day. He successfully played his supporters and opponents against one another for many years until 1917 when the secession was finally argued successfully. Bent went on to become Premier in 1936.

Mentone and Mordialloc seceded in 1920 to become shires in their own right, Moorabbin Shire in 1920 only had 1,770 ratepayers. It continued to grow however and hosted the first aerial Derby in 1920 at Epsom racecourse in Mordialloc. The airport was built in 1949 giving Melbourne two commercial airports. Many factories sprang up in Moorabbin, with its sandy soil proving ideal for sinking foundations. The 'sand belt' continued to grow from the 50s onwards. The St Kilda football club moved their home ground to Moorabbin in 1965.

Moorabbin is home to Coca-Cola bottlers, Phillip Morris, Nissan and a score of other multinational concerns. In 1994, half of Moorabbin was merged with Kingston Shire, with the other half being absorbed into Glen Eira. Moorabbin is home to many leisure and sporting groups and boasts a huge Wave Pool in Keys Road. The combined pool, gymnasium and outdoor recreation activities have proved immensely popular as have the network of bicycle paths that Kingston Council is committed to developing. A comprehensive events diary can be found on the Glen Eira homepages at <http://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/events.htm>

Further clubs can be found at <http://www.kingston.vic.gov.au/contents.htm> and <http://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/recreatn.htm>

For those interested in local history there is a valuable resource directory at: <http://localhistory.kingston.vic.gov.au/>

Although the Market Gardens have long since gone, the Moorabbin City still plays a vital part in sustaining the Victorian economy and will for many years to come.

Written by Alastair Rosie
Thursday, July 26, 2001

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<http://localhistory.kingston.vic.gov.au/>

MORDIALLOC: BAYSIDE PARADISE

Mordialloc or Moodi Yallo, is situated at the mouth of the Mordialloc Creek. Moodi Yallo has various meanings; High Water, Near Little Sea and Small Tidal Stream. They are basic variations of the same theme, and describe the area adequately. The area was initially inhabited by the Bunurong tribe whose territory ranged from present day Williamstown to Wilson's promontory including Phillip Island and French Island. North of Mordialloc was Carrum Carrum, (Carrum Swamp) which was part of an Inland Sea until 5-7000 years ago; Chelsea Heights were the Isles of Wannarkladdin. The swamplands provided drainage for the Dandenong, Eumemmering and other creeks.

The first white man to cross the Mordialloc Creek was the escaped convict William Buckley and four of his companions. They had escaped the short-lived convict settlement at Sullivan's Bay (Sorrento) in 1803. There is no record as to if they were eventually recaptured.

A young Jew, Michael Solomon was known to have squatted at Moodie Yallo (Keysborough) in 1837 before a Mister Newton had a stock run in the area in 1839, about the time Assistant Protector of the Aborigines, William Thomas passed through the area with his charges. Newton's run was taken over by Major James Fraser and Daniel McKinnon in 1840. He was followed by Joseph Stewart in 1843 who took the run between the Mordialloc and Kananook Creeks. Stewart's run was taken in 1852 by James MacMahon who built the Long Beach hotel, near the present day Riviera Hotel. Another squatter was Alexander MacDonald and his brother. Alexander took out a liquor licence in 1841, building the Traveller's Rest in 1855 on the site of the present day Mordialloc Hotel.

By 1865, the village of Mordialloc was well established with the completion of the road between Frankston and Point Schnapper (Mornington) in 1863; accomplished by local volunteer labour.

In the 1880s, Mordialloc was known as a horse racing area when Alfred Bradshaw opened a privately run racecourse at Braeside. A second racecourse was built by James Jenkins in Mordialloc; Epsom racecourse. In its day, it was considered a showpiece with magnificent views of the mountains. Jenkins provided adequate accommodation for both patrons and workers. It was to remain a part of the Victorian racing industry (VRC) for many years until the '30s. It was retained as a training track until 1997 but is now scheduled for redevelopment.

The beach and its associated foreshore are undoubtedly one of the main attractions in Mordialloc. Avid cyclists can take advantage of the 10 kilometre Long Beach track which extends from Mordialloc foreshore to the Patterson River at Carrum. Other cycling tracks in the Kingston Shire pass natural resources such as: Edithvale Wetlands, Bicentennial Park and numerous golf courses. Local horse riding clubs enable locals and tourists to gain a taste of the 'old days' when that was the only mode of transport available. There are numerous sporting and leisure facilities within easy reach of the city centre and there is always the beauty of the Mornington Peninsula to tempt the more adventurous.

From Squatter's Paradise to the bustling city that it is today, Mordialloc has not lost any of its charm, nestled on the banks of the Moodi Yallo Creek.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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<http://www.kingston.vic.gov.au/>

MOUNT MARTHA: THE MOUNTAIN BY THE SEA

The Mornington Peninsula sweeps southward towards the heads at Portsea, forming a natural barrier against the icy Antarctic winds. The hilly slopes of Mount Martha, Mount Eliza and Arthur's Seat lead to the undulating Moorooduc's Plains and the swampy mangroves to the south. Situated due south of Frankston is beautiful Mount Martha. The Bunurong were the original custodians of the land but even they were spread far apart on the peninsula, a fact that has caused historians to wonder, as the seaside provided an abundance of food. Part of the answer may of course lie in the severity of Melbourne's winters as recent immigrants to the Gold Coast can testify!

The earliest white habitation was the ill-fated prison at Sullivan's Bay (Sorrento) in 1803. The wild white man, William Buckley who escaped with four of his companions would undoubtedly have been familiar with the slopes of Mount Martha. Buckley lived for over thirty years with the aboriginal tribes before passing into infamy.

The next white eyes to have scanned the heights belonged to Captain William Hobson who may have named it after his mother, however the *Argus* reported in 1857 that Captain Lonsdale's diary recorded that Mount Martha was named after Mrs Lonsdale. There was also a ship called *Martha* that ferried stores to Melbourne however it is generally accepted that Mount Martha was named after an actual person.

Early Mount Martha was a pastoralist run divided between the Balcombes, Websters, and the McCraes of Arthur's Seat. An 1849 surveyor's map however shows a large section of coastline marked as Jamieson's Special Survey. By 1855 it was a well established county.

Robert Jamieson had arrived in 1839 and immediately took possession of a large tract of land south of what is now Mount Martha. He was at that time the only settler on the coastal side of Arthur's Seat. In a letter to Governor La Trobe, he stated. "Between my run and Melbourne, a distance of about seventy miles, there was but one settler, Mr Edward Hobson located at Kangerong at the base of Arthur's Seat."

Other settlers arrived shortly afterwards, Maurice Meyrick at Boneo (1840) and Henry Alfred who established the Coolart run at the back of Mount Eliza. In 1841, under orders from the colonial government, the government surveyor George Smythe surveyed from the mouth of the Tanjenong Creek (Dandenong) to Arthur's Seat.

Jamieson's survey was later let out to Henry Dunn who gave his name to Dunn's Creek. By 1850 however, much of the land between Mount Martha and Mount Eliza was under pastoral licence to Alexander Balcombe and the Hunter Brothers. Their reign was to end however in 1854 with the breaking up of large estates in the rush to subdivide. The township of Osbourne was laid out at Mount Martha but the town never went ahead. Osbourne has been renamed Osborne and is now a suburb of Mount Martha. Balcombe's estate remains more or less intact at Briar's Historic Park; the homestead is open to the public.

The Mornington Peninsula survived relatively unscathed when the country plunged into the economic recession of the 1890s due to the small labour market in the area. It had already become known as a popular location for guesthouses and was fast becoming Melbourne's summer playground.

The opening of the short lived Frankston to Mornington railway aided the influx of visitors and settlers to the area; the line was eventually closed but sections have been reopened as a tourist attraction.

The failure of the railway line to Mornington saw the evolution in 1922 of Dyson's Peninsula Motors. Dyson's along with Lance Whittaker's Portsea Passenger Service have become the dominant players in the area, covering two million kilometres every year. Peninsula Bus Lines was purchased by the Grenada Group in 1976 and continues to operate from its Seaford depot. The Peninsula in the 20th century opened up thanks to the army camps and the naval

base at HMAS Cerberus. It has become known however for its relaxed lifestyle offering the best of both worlds from the spectacular coastline to the sweeping vistas of the hinterland and nearby Briar's Historic Park, Mount Martha Public Park, the Joseph Harris Scout Park and the Mount Martha Golf Course.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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<http://www.nepeanet.org.au/mpsc/index.html>

NIDDRIE: SLEEPY HOLLOW IN THE WEST

Situated in the west between Essendon and Keilor, Niddrie was for many years a sleepy little hollow.

The earliest inhabitants were of course the Woiworong (Wurundjeri) who roamed as far as the Werribee River in the west to the Dandenong Ranges in the east. To the south their territory nudged the Mordialloc Creek (Moodie Yallo) and extended as far north as the Great Dividing Range. There were many subtribes of the Woiworong: the Kurungjangballuk, Marin-balluk, Gurung-willam-balluk, Wurundjeri-willam, Wurundjeriballuk, and Baluk-Willam. The information I have been able to obtain to date, seems to indicate however that the area was inhabited by the Marin-balluk.

Likewise, the first white settler was most probably Thomas Napier who bought 249 acres in 1851, a mere fourteen years after the official founding of Melbourne. Henry Stevenson who built his property 'Niddrie,' between 1869 and 1871 joined him; the homestead was named after Niddrie, a suburb of Edinburgh. The only relic remaining is the single cypress tree near the onramp of the Calder and Tullamarine Freeways. Essendon airport now stands where the grand old homestead of Niddrie used to be.

Keilor Road was the main thoroughfare between Melbourne and the goldfields at Ballarat and many travellers would have gazed upon its bluestone walls as they passed by seeking fame and fortune. An unsuccessful Polish prospector Kol Nidre settled there in the 1850s and there are some who think that Niddrie is an expanded version of 'Nidre.' Nevertheless, the most likely source of the name would be Niddrie, Edinburgh. Stevenson died in 1891, a mere twenty years after his home was complete and the home remained in the family name until 1901 when it was purchased by Frank Morgan.

In 1921, Morgan subdivided the estate and sold off twenty acres which now forms part of Airport West and Essendon Airport. The going price for land then in Niddrie was a princely £65!

Niddrie was to fall victim to the whims of progress in 1935 when the government acquired part of Morgan's earlier subdivision for Essendon Airport, once Melbourne's main airport. Morgan acquiesced by further subdividing his existing property to make way for an electric tramway.

Up until then, according to Mr. Ralph Dixon, a Niddrie pioneer, Niddrie was still pioneering country. Dixon moved there in 1912 when there were only a half dozen houses in the immediate vicinity. Ralph Dixon recalls that a pork butcher named Hoffman owned Buckley Park which spread from Keilor Road to Buckley Street. Dixon set up his pig farm in the area after laying '2,600 feet of pipe from the nearest mains in Hedderwick Street.' The Woods owned a dairy farm nearby in Sapphire Street and the Sinclairs lived in Ogilvie Street. The Anderson family also had a dairy farm. The other resident was an accountant by the name of Yates who lived in what is now Spencer Street.

Morgan's property in the meantime had passed into the hands of prominent neurosurgeon Dr. Frank Morgan who subdivided more land in the 1950s for the Niddrie shopping precinct. His land was compulsorily acquired by the Commonwealth government after his death in the early 60s for the Tullamarine Freeway. Jack Neagle arrived in 1953 to open his Gents' Hairdresser and Tobacconist when there were few shops in the area. As Niddrie's oldest trader he recalls that there were still large paddocks nearby. In an

interview with *The Advocate* in 1992 he remembered having to cut down a paddock fence to pour the foundations for his shop. The remaining blocks sold soon after and Niddrie was well on the way to becoming a suburb.

Four years previously in 1946, a basalt quarry had been opened. The quarry was eventually closed in 1976 leaving what is essentially a huge hole in the earth. There have been numerous proposals to develop the site and it has been a source of controversy for many years due to inadequate fencing and seepage. When Whelan the Wrecker proposed to turn the quarry into landfill, there was an immediate outcry. Thanks to the determination of Niddrie residents the State government intervened and stopped the proposed redevelopment. A detailed history and list of proposals can be found at <http://www.alphalink.com.au/~fasc/index.htm>

Niddrie was finally proclaimed a city in 1994 and has progressed ever since with further redevelopment of the shops along Keilor Road, which now includes many street side cafés and restaurants.

Although a late starter in the race to populate, Niddrie has retained much of the charm that attracted those early pioneers and continues to instill its own brand of hospitality today.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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April 20 1999

A special thanks to Michael Smith and Karen of the Niddrie Library for their help in compiling this article.

Hume/Moonee Valley Regional Library Corporation

<http://www.liblink.geac.com.au:8020/>

PRESTON

Named after Preston in Sussex, Preston sits to the north of Melbourne bounded by the Merri and Darebin Creeks, with Edgar Creek ambling southwesterly through the shire. It's earliest inhabitants were a division of the Woiworong, the Kurnaje-Bereeing tribe.

The Woiworong were members of the greater Kulin speaking peoples who roamed much of central Victoria. The open woodlands were a popular hunting ground and the vast deposits of quartzite suggest that the locals traded in stone implements. Aboriginal trade routes were well defined although they seemed haphazard to ignorant Europeans. It was possible for Indonesian fishermen to trade implements with Aborigines in Arnhem Land that would make their way all the way down to Victoria and southwestern Australia. Many stone tools and stone working tools have been found at nearby Bundoora Park.

The idyllic lifestyle ended with the arrival of John Batman who signed a 'treaty' with eight Aboriginal chieftains. The treaty was signed on shaky legal ground and was declared illegal by both the government in England and the Governor at Sydney. Nevertheless, Batman purchased his 200,000 hectares of Dutigalla (Doutta Galla) which included the area now known as Preston.

Many of the earliest landowners were mere speculators, some of whom never saw their acquisitions, having bought land in England, using agents at Port Phillip. They saw the price of land would rise and sought to cash in on the expected land rush, most were to become wealthy men and women. In the wake of the land rush, Governor Bourke in Sydney sent Robert Hoddle to survey the land, one of the areas being Jika Jika, where Batman owned land.

Thomas Farrell arrived in 1841 and managed General Charles Howard's farm at Jika Jika. The block ran through High Street with its northern and southern boundaries being Tyler and Wood Streets respectively. Another settler was Samuel Jeffrey who arrived from County Tyrone in 1846. A hard working Irish farmer, he, like so many of his countrymen wanted to escape the English imposed poverty of his country. He named the area Irishtown. He was bitterly disappointed when the authorities renamed it Preston. His show of resistance was evident in the words Irishtown painted on his drays and his postal address.

Another family was the Woods, who owned Wood's store on the corner of High Street and Wood Street. Wood was part of a religious denomination called Particular Baptists (Ebenezer Church). The Woods were one of six families who emigrated to Australia in the hopes of starting a new life and spreading their brand of religion. The planned community never came to pass; Wood was to become an influential member of the community however and was responsible for naming it Preston. Thomas Wood ran the first post office in Preston and the general store.

By the 1860s Preston was a settled farming district and would remain that way for many years. All land south of Murray Road was farmland consisting mainly of lots of between 4 and 16 hectares. North of Murray Road the countryside was open woodland of red gum. The area was the favourite haunt of sportsmen who hunted native birds and hares. Preston's first school, Gowerville State School (now Preston South) was established in the 1864 on the corner of Raglan and Albert Streets.

By the 1870s Preston had the beginnings of urban life with shops, a policeman and local government. The Epping Roads Board merged with the Merriang, Whittlesea, Morang and

Woodstock Roads Boards to form Darebin Shire in 1870 covering an area of 320 square kilometres. This led to disputes however along with extra travel for councillors and the shire was divided into six ridings: Northcote, Preston, Gowerville, Morang, Epping and Woodstock in 1871.

Preston was renowned for its bacon curing factories, tanneries and brickworks so much so, that locals dubbed it, Bricktown, Porktown and Tantown, Porkopolis were also used. Preston started supplying bacon to Melburnians in 1862 at a time when all bacon and pork came from England. The pipeline from Yan Yean to Melbourne passed through Preston and this factor gave rise to the pork and tannery trade, both of which require vast amounts of water. Preston's Silurian deposits of clay proved ideal for the brickworks and provided much of the early bluestone for Melbourne's buildings.

The 1880s saw Melbourne become one of Australia's most populous cities and Preston was ready to supply the demand for land. Land companies were formed and during the peak period (1888) land could change hands as much as five times in one day. Preston's selling point lay in the fact that it was on higher ground, which was deemed healthier in those days. The land companies were unscrupulous by nature, each claiming that their blocks were closest to three railway stations. The location of the stations could vary depending on which map you were looking at. The railway did not arrive until 1889, two years after the tramway. The tramlines ran to Dundas Street and necessitated a long walk for many residents. The railway came about as a result of the Octopus Act of 1884 (Railway Construction Act) so called because railway lines looked like an octopus. The first route was christened the GWR (Good Way Round) because it ran from Bell Street, to Thornbury, Croxton, Middle Northcote, North Fitzroy, North Carlton, Royal Park, Flemington Bridge, Macaulay Road, North Melbourne and Spencer Street. It was not until 1904 that a more direct service via Clifton Hill, Collingwood, North Melbourne, and Spencer Street was opened.

The 1890s saw the great bust and the end of Marvelous Melbourne. The effects of the depression on Preston can be seen in the population figures, which fell from 3,568 in 1891 to 2,893 in 1893. The brickworks closed down and real estate companies found that their investments were worthless.

Preston's recovery from the depression was almost complete by 1907 however and it could boast of having piped water and drainage. The MMBW brought sewerage to Preston by 1915, with 681 out of 871 houses sewered. Electricity came on May 25, 1914. Preston Council was one of the few to argue the case for conscription during the Great War although its arguments fell upon deaf ears. Of the 381 Preston men who volunteered, 90 were killed.

The building boom of the 1920s saw more land in Preston fall under the hammer as migrants swarmed to Australia in their thousands. In 1929, the year of the Great Depression, Preston had 28,000 people and 598 shops. Preston was considered a wealthy outer suburb and poorer residents still shopped in Collingwood and Fitzroy. A new industry came to Preston in 1925 with the electric tramway workshops, which were established after the opening of the line in 1920. Electric trains would follow in 1921 and Preston was part of suburbia.

Preston's contribution to the Second World War was considerable. With the entrance of Japan into the war, trenches were built and brown outs introduced. The Tramways

Workshops made heavy equipment, Braithwaite's Tannery made sole leather for boots and other factories supplied material for US troops.

Preston led the way in the 1960s when the first indoor shopping mall was built at Northland. Opening day at Northland saw shirts fall to \$1, ensuring the complex was filled to overflowing despite the cold drizzle outside. The complex was the largest and most modern in the Southern Hemisphere. The following year Preston entered the academic world with the opening of La Trobe University. The college had been three years in the planning, having been approved by Parliament in 1964. La Trobe initially taught Biological Science, Physical Science, Social Science and Humanities, Agriculture was added later along with Education, Behavioural Science and Economics.

Preston in the twenty first century is a vibrant metropolis in its own right although it retains its farming tradition with Bundoora Park, where residents can enjoy a taste of what the countryside used to look like.

From farming backwater to busy retail and industrial centre, it has been a long journey for Preston and the city promises much for the future.

Written by Alastair Rosie ©2000

SOURCES:

Carroll Brian, Rule Ian Preston: An Illustrated History
Magenta Press Glen Waverly, Victoria 1995

THE MIGHTY BULLANTS

The Preston football club or the 'mighty bullants' formed in 1885 as part of the Victorian Junior Football League. They made their mark in 1900-1902 when they won the premiership. The name bullants did not come into usage until the 1930s when radio commentator likened the smaller players to bullants. The club adopted the name and the rest is history.

Bullant was perhaps a fitting title nevertheless, as Preston had to fight long and hard to enter the VFA competition, which only allowed ten teams. They made their debut in 1903, when Richmond defeated them 5.14.43 to 3.7.25. They were well received however and continued to play. Unfortunately, 1903 was not the year for the bullants and they finished seventh on the ladder, ahead of Port Melbourne, Prahran and Essendon.

The recent amalgamation of football teams is not a new phenomenon and in 1913 the VFA demanded that Preston merge with Northcote and use Croxton Park as their home ground. Some players did make the switch but true to their bullant determination, many returned to the welcoming fields of the VJFA. It was not until Hawthorn and North Melbourne moved to the rival VFL that the VFA invited them back into the league.

Preston's first match back with the VFA was a turnaround victory against Geelong on Preston's home ground. They won the Second Division premiership in 1963 and 1965. First Division honours fell to them 1968, 1969, 1983 and 1984.

Preston's most famous player was Roy Cazaly who moved to Preston from South Melbourne. He was a playing coach with the club in 1931 and in the tried and true tradition of football riches was on £8 a week, twice the basic wage. He returned to Tasmania when Preston refused to raise his salary: some things still haven't changed.

Written by Alastair Rosie ©2000

SOURCES:

Carroll Brian, Rule Ian Preston: An Illustrated History
Magenta Press, Glen Waverly, Victoria 1985

RICHMOND: EAT 'EM ALIVE!

Once the domain of the Woiworing, the place we now know as Richmond has become known as a working class town with strong Irish traditions.

Robert Hoddle began the task of subdivision in 1839, with the famed surgeon, Farquhar McCrae taking land at Richmond Hill, along with Joseph Docker, whose land stretched between Punt Road and Church Street. He did not sell up until the 1860s, by which time, Farquhar had already subdivided his land. St Stephen's Church was built on land donated by Docker.

Yarraberg, was established north of Bridge Road and east of Burnley Street in 1853. Ten years earlier, in 1843, travellers to Hawthorn crossed over the Yarra by punt at Bridge Road, until the bridge was finally built. By the 50s however, the stretch of Bridge Road between Punt and Church Streets was already known for its strip shopping, with Swan Street undergoing development. George Coppin, an early entrepreneur, bought Cremorne and established Cremorne Gardens, which was to become the site for a lunatic asylum. The area was later taken by the Rosella jam and sauce factory.

Factories have long been a part of Richmond's culture, with Bryant and May, Bosisto's Eucalyptus, and Hardings Crumpets, along with dozens of others, providing employment for the largely working class population. Many factories were nothing more than sweatshops, owned by Dickensian managers who saw the working class as little more than fodder for the great industrial machine. There were some exceptions however, such as Bryant and May, Bosisto's and Hardings who provided recreation areas, sports facilities, and Christmas parties for their employees.

With its strong Catholic Irish background, Richmond's politics were riddled with controversy, strongly reminiscent of Chicago's underworld. Jackie O'Connell, the 'Little General' being renowned for finding jobs for his many 'relatives.' And while this certainly preserved the working class flavour of Richmond, it also preserved the corruption of city officials and held Richmond back from the developments of the 1950s, 60s and 70s, O'Connell not dying until 1972. An enquiry into vote rigging in 1981 exposed the shady influence of the ALP in local politics and the mindless corruption that sufficed for normality.

Richmond's most famous landmark, Dimmeys was built in 1907 and although no longer trading as Dimmeys due to a business failure in the 1990s, it has retained its name and the famous copper ball, and who could deny its cultural value?

Richmond's proudest venture however has been the Richmond Football Club with its 'eat 'em alive' battle cry. It joined the VFL in 1908 and by 1997 had won ten premierships. The Tigers have definitely influenced the suburb, which nestles alongside Collingwood and Hawthorn.

Tram services arrived in Bridge Road and Victoria Street in 1885, 86. Four primary schools were opened between 1874-78 with two more schools following in the next ten years.

Richmond was also home to Australia's first free to air television station GTV 9, in 1955, built on the site of the old Heinz food factory. By that stage, (1941) the slum abolition movement had completed its first project, building on land leased from John Wren. The Clinker built houses were built on streets named after Richmond councilors.

During the 1960s, the high rise apartments were built in North Richmond and although planned as 'cities in the sky,' they are now known as a hotbed of poverty and crime. The influx of Vietnamese migrants during the late 70s, early 80s saw Victoria Street take on the name of 'Little Saigon,' and it is hard to find an English name amongst the many Vietnamese shops.

Increasing property values have seen Richmond transformed from a predominantly working class suburb to a young upwardly mobile community with Richmond Hill taking pride of place. Now the home of the fashion conscious, Richmond is known for its many 'seconds' shops where budget shoppers can buy quality clothing at wholesale prices. For its many problems and resistance to change, Richmond has well and truly earned the name of 'Struggletown.' Its proximity to the CBD ensures that in an increasingly urbanised population, it will continue to grow and prosper.

Written by Alastair Rosie

SOURCES:

The author would like to acknowledge the following sites in this history of Melbourne

The AAA hometown page

<http://www.aaa.com.au/world/australia/vic/>

The Steady Influence of the Irish Catholic Stamping Ground

<http://www.sprint.net.au/~rpscoe/migration/richmond/irish.html>

RINGWOOD: LAND OF THE STRINGYBARK FOREST

Once inhabited by the Wurundjeri-balluk tribe, the hills around Ringwood were relatively undisturbed until recent times. The Wurundjeri believed that their mythical ancestors cut the many channels in the area. Mo-yarra was apparently the first to attempt the task but the water rushed in after him. It was Bar-wool who cut a channel through the valley until he reached Baw Baw, where he turned north, only to be stopped by Donna Buang and his brothers. He then turned west through the hills of Warr-an-dyte where he met Yan-yan who was cutting a path for the Plenty River. The two became united in their efforts and the waters of Moorool and Morang became Moo-rool-bark, 'the place where the wide waters are.'

The story goes on to tell of the founding of the Heidelberg-Templestowe flats and Port Phillip Bay. Apparently the land of the Woiworong was cleared of water but Port Phillip was flooded.

Although just a story to us, it illustrates the keen eye for detail that the earliest inhabitants to this country possessed. The story essentially tells of the rising of the mountains, the natural drainage of the waters and the formation of Port Phillip Bay. A casual observation will reveal the long conical hills in the area, mostly sandstone running northeast to southwest. The geological name for it is the Mitcham axis and takes in Burt's Hill, Croydon Hills and Loughnan's Hill.

The earliest settler is thought to have been Arundel Wrighte, a friend of John Batman. He explored the Koonung Creek in 1837, establishing a run at bushy creek, called Beaudersert, we know it as Nunawading. His neighbour, Lewis Robertson, had land at Bulleen, which ended, at Mullum Mullum Creek. The only other settler in the area was John Gardiner and his cousin William Fletcher who had 16,500 acres in Yering and Warrandyte in 1837 as well as parts of Mooroolbark. Another settler was James Anderson after whom Anderson's Creek is named, with land at Pound Bend (Warrandyte).

The district was inhabited by timber fellers and paling splitters, as were much of the outlying areas of metropolitan Melbourne. It was to remain that way until the '50s. Between 1843 and 1852, the area was surveyed and it is thought to be Henry Foot, who named Ringwood after his birthplace in Hampshire, England. The Log Cabin Hotel was built where Maroondah Highway is now. It is now called the Coach and Horses and was originally on the other side of the highway, opposite to its present position. Samuel Isaacs, purchased 405 acres south of Maroondah Highway between New Street and Heatherdale Road; he was joined by Moton Moss and Nelson Polak.

The district was no stranger to white settlers by this time. Gold had been discovered in 1856 and there was a rush of prospectors to the area but all that Ringwood had to offer was antimony, discovered in 1869. Nevertheless, antimony mining was to prove the more prosperous of the two and a mine was established at Ringwood. It was to remain productive through a series of companies until 1892. Antimony was used in the manufacture of medicines and pewter as well as metal for bearings and vulcanizing for rubber. Antimony when combined with lead, was also used in type-metal for printing.

In 1864, Ringwood came under the Berwick Roads Board but reverted to the Upper Yarra District soon afterwards. The first school opened in 1874 and was followed soon after by the orchardists who managed to extract a living from land that was considered unsuitable for farming. In 1884, a brick and tile making factory was established, bringing further employment to the district.

The railway however was what made Ringwood along with many other towns in the nineteenth century. Ringwood was especially lucky in that it became the main rail junction for the Lilydale and Upper Ferntree Gully lines. The line to Lilydale was completed on December 1, 1882. It was not until 1889 however, when the line to Upper Ferntree Gully was completed, that the contract for a proper railway station was approved.

Ringwood during the early part of the 20th century saw many changes, such as reticulated water, electric railways and further subdivision of the land as more orchards and villas were broken up and sold off. The year 1928 saw the dedication of Ringwood's most famous monument, the Clocktower. It has been moved from its original position but is still standing strong. A later addition of a WW II howitzer along with beautifully manicured gardens and an ice cream shop have made it a favourite resting place for many residents.

The postwar years saw further subdivision as migrants and returned soldiers pushed the fringes of Melbourne further into the bush. The last of the orchards were sold off in the '50s.

But perhaps the most important development came about in 1924, when Ringwood was declared a borough. *The Mail* proclaimed it 'the consummation of the civic aspirations of the people.' Ringwood was not declared a city however, until 1960. In the '60s, with so many residents in the nearby area, the council eventually saw fit to build a shopping centre, which was greeted with dismay by some residents as the land was literally seized, thankfully there are few complaints today. Eastland has since been extensively remodelled and refurbished and now incorporates the city library.

In the '80s, two new shopping centres at Target Square and Ringwood Market opened but strip shopping has survived the onslaught of the big guns and the shops blend in well with a nightclub, pool hall and the ice rink. The ice rink, once Pat Burley's, was for many years, a magnet for youth. Bands such as AC/DC played there in the '70s before the rink was closed. It was recently opened and has proved that 'ice is here to stay.' Ringwood today is nothing like the Stringybark forest of yesterday, although there are many parks around and the Mullum Mullum Creek has been preserved from further exploitation by the controversial Ringwood Bypass.

From land that was once overlooked to a vibrant community that services a huge network of suburbs, Ringwood is without a doubt, the hub of the outer east.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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RINGWOOD LAKE

Ringwood Lake sits in what was once Sandy Gully at the eastern edge of the city near Daisy's Hotel. The land was purchased by Lilydale Shire Council in 1923, the then owner being Mrs Dawes. Shortly afterwards the MMBW began work on a 48" water main along Mount Dandenong Road and Maroondah Highway. They offered Mr Lucas, the Borough Engineer, 5,000 cubic metres of filling. The council adopted the suggestion of an artificial lake and Ringwood Lake was born. The lake was dug out in one busy Saturday afternoon using teams of horse and local volunteers.

Ringwood Lake has become a popular spot for families and couples, complete with an old-fashioned steam engine, and robust play equipment, fishing facilities and bush walks. Many community groups meet at the lake and at Christmas time residents can enjoy Carols by the lake.

Written by Alastair Rosie

HISTORIC SUNBURY

The Sunbury area was once known as Koorakooracup; home for thousands of years to the Wurundjeri-willam: a Woiworung clan. The Wurundjeri-willam settled around what is known as Gellibrand Hill Park. The Woiworung, being traditional hunter/gatherers, led a nomadic existence. Their range stretched from the Werribee River to the Dandenongs in the east and from Mordialloc Creek in the south to the start of the Great Dividing Range at Seymour. Scarred trees at Gellibrand Hill can still be seen where they stripped back for canoes

In 1836, George Evans arrived on the Enterprise. He began building Victoria's first homestead at Emu Bottom. He was followed that same year by William and Samuel Jackson. The Jackson's named the area Sunbury after Sunbury on Thames, Middlesex. Sunbury village was surveyed in 1851 and the Sunbury Inn was established on Jackson's Creek.

The railway finally reached the township in 1859 and the following year it was deemed that Sunbury was a place where courts of petty sessions could be convened. The courthouse was built in 1884 at a cost of £507/9/6, prior to this, the Shire of Bulla had been proclaimed in 1866. However, Sunbury's water supply was not connected until 1906, electricity was to follow in 1909.

In the early 70s, Sunbury became known as Australia's answer to Woodstock with the Sunbury rock festival, those who were there were treated to the likes of Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, Brian Cadd and many well known overseas bands. Sunbury is also the birthplace of the 'Ashes,' cricket's most coveted trophy. The infamous obituary appeared in the Sporting Times in 1882, after England's first defeat by an Australian team. The Hon. Ivo Bligh took an English team to Australia in an attempt to restore English pride, and was presented with the ashes of a bail by Lady Clarke after a social game of cricket at Rupertswood mansion. Bligh was later given a velvet bag in 1883 in which to keep his precious ashes.

These days Sunbury has become known as one of Victoria's fastest growing wine areas. Restaurateur Tom Lazar planted vines in the early 70s and was soon followed by the Baynton family. They were carrying on a tradition dating from the 1860s when Sunbury was home to eight wineries. Today there are numerous wineries in the Sunbury/Macedon ranges district producing dignified table wines for the discriminating palate. Craiglee has won numerous awards for its Shiraz. The Macedon Ranges being higher produce fine sparkling wines known as 'Macedon.'

Sunbury has a thriving thoroughbred industry with five stud farms in the immediate area. Neighbouring Melton was declared the 'Heart of Thoroughbred Country' in 1985 and the area is eagerly sought after by wealthy Asians and Arabs who use the stud farms for their prize winning animals. The industry is worth millions worldwide and is a major source of income for the district.

The town has much to offer in the way of entertainment with a variety of restaurants and wineries to choose from, many wineries have restaurants attached to them. One of the most famous is Emu Bottom which caters for functions and is open for lunch on Sundays. Special theme nights are a feature of Victoria's oldest homestead. International flavours such as Thai, Indian and Italian are also available. For the more adventurous there is always

the freedom of the open air with nearby Sunbury airport offering joy flights and charter planes for hire. There is an excellent flying school in the area for amateur pilots. Those who wish to keep both feet on the ground or in this case, in the saddle, there is horse riding at nearby Sunbury Riding Centre. Visitors can enjoy riding through rugged unspoilt country. Tuition is available for all ages and levels. The centre also teaches horse care and grooming.

Interested in the history of Sunbury? There are four heritage walks in the immediate township. The walks take in the historic Catholic Presbytery, Mount Carmel church, the Ball Court Hotel, the Old Wine Saloon, George Evans Museum, Aitken's Gap gaol, Old Courthouse, Rupertswood Lodge, Goona Warra Winery, The Nook and a host of other attractions. Maps can be obtained from the Visitor's Centre.

Sunbury is home to a number of popular festivals such as: Kiwanis Australia Day Breakfast, (January) Dilkara Festival of the Arts, (February) Sunbury Community Fair, (March) Sunbury Arts Society Exhibition, (May) Sunbury Wine Region Festival, (August) Sunbury Agricultural Show, (October) Rupertswood Horse Trials, Herald Sun Bike Tour, (October) Sunbury Canine Show and the Sunbury Flower Show (November). Visitors to the nearby Macedon Ranges can also enjoy the ninth annual Budburst Festival, where the new releases are brought out for a discerning public. It is traditionally held the last weekend of October.

From wining and dining through to horse riding and flying or just relaxing, Sunbury is without a doubt a showpiece town with room to grow and plenty of time to do it.

Written by Alastair Rosie

SUNSHINE: WEST OF THE MARIBYRNONG

The Maribyrnong River snakes towards the bay, carving out a river plain that floods periodically. Towards its headwaters where it empties itself into the bay, it becomes a saltwater river. It was this feature that inspired the early settlers to discard the aboriginal name and call it Saltwater River. The aboriginal name was eventually modified for the European vocal chords and Mirring- gnai-birr-nong (I can hear a ringtail possum) became Maribyrnong. The Marin Balluk (a part of the mighty Woiworung nation) roamed the area, which was a thick carpet of she-oaks, tee-tree and river gums. The river plain provided rich grazing and before the coming of the white man, supplied the Marin Balluk with all their needs.

In a sense, the history of Sunshine is a history of Maribyrnong as Sunshine, Maidstone and Braybrook were essentially suburbs which grew up around the increasingly industrialised heartland of Maribyrnong. The earliest survey was completed by Charles Grimes in 1803. Hume and Hovell passed through Sunshine and Keilor in 1824 which were then grassy plains and are believed to have camped near the intersection of Taylors and Sydenham Roads. Later, John Batman camped near the junction of the Deep Creek and the Maribyrnong in 1835 before heading to Sunbury.

The earliest settlers in the area, were William and Catherine Prendergast, Irish immigrants who arrived in 1841. By the late '40s, they were working for Joseph Raleigh, a wealthy merchantman and grazier. Raleigh's company provided much of the early building materials for what is now suburban Melbourne. He also constructed a huge boiling down works in Maribyrnong. The exported tallow was used in the manufacture of candles. It was only the gold rush of the '60s, which brought an end to this profitable venture.

Nearby Keilor became the first stopping off point for fortune hunters who used Raleigh's punt to cross the river until a bridge was finally built. An iron works was established in 1854, two years after Raleigh's death from influenza. This was later followed by a meat cannery, which exported tinned meat to England (1867). A company village was set up around these factories. In 1856, a school was finally established in the area. During the '60s and '70s, the district was renowned for its racehorses, the Maribyrnong Estate was a famous stud farm and produced some of the finest horses the world had ever seen. In 1864, *Lantern*, won the coveted Melbourne Cup but was killed soon after in an accident.

The land rush of the 80s saw much of the old estates carved up and sold in lots, although much of the area west of the river was still a major drawcard for tourists and locals. Nevertheless, this would change with federation and the new gunpowder works, which were followed by the new cordite factory at Maribyrnong. Increasing industrialisation has seen the original area transformed. Environmental awareness was never far from the surface however. As early as 1922, the Maribyrnong River Anti- Pollution committee was lobbying the State Government to control the spread of fumes from Braybrook.

The extension of the Mount Alexander railway line through Sunshine and Sydenham opened up the western plains for settlement. Sunshine was originally known as the Braybrook Road District and was proclaimed the Shire of Braybrook in 1871. It was renamed Sunshine in 1907. It was about this time that Sunshine began to develop as an industrial area with the removal of the Harvester Works from Ballarat to Braybrook Junction in 1906. One of the early pioneers of Sunshine was Hugh Victor McKay, who

helped provide housing for Harvester's workers, along with water, power and roads when he moved Harvester. The following year, McKay quarreled with his workers over pay conditions and Justice Higgins handed down a judgment that established a basic family wage for Australian workers.

The history of Sunshine, Maribyrnong and its surrounds has always been one of struggle as successive State governments either ignored their needs or only gave in to their demands for basic rights after a bitter fight. The area played a vital role during both world wars, supplying small arms and explosives for the Allied war machine.

Sunshine now part of the City of Brimbank, is set for a period of rapid expansion with the nearby estates at Taylors Lakes filling fast. It is the fourth fastest growing municipality in metropolitan Melbourne and the third largest municipality in Melbourne. In spite of this however, there are 184 Aboriginal significant sites in the area, which have, been documented. Provisions are in place to prevent further erosion of these sites. There are numerous parks and gardens within the immediate Sunshine area, along with other natural attractions within a short distance such as: the Organ Pipes National Park, Brimbank Park, Horseshoe Bend Farm, the Derrimut Grasslands and the Maribyrnong River. I have not included a list of festivals, which would probably amount to another page, however, an extensive and up to date calendar can be found on the

Brimbank Council's home pages at: <http://www.brim.vic.gov.au/>

From humble beginnings and constant hardships to successful boomtown of the twenty first century, Sunshine has survived the worst that nature and man can throw at it and looks likely to continue in that vein.

Written by Alastair Rosie
Monday, November 01, 1999

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THE VALES OF VERMONT

Vermont was originally home to the Wurundjeri, who roamed much of what is now Melbourne's northern and eastern suburbs. The undulating countryside was formed during the Middle Silurian Period over 400 million years ago. The late Pleistocene to Quaternary Periods saw the formation of the watercourses.

The first white landowner was Arundel Wrighte, a Londoner who had immigrated to Tasmania. He settled not in Vermont but Box Hill on the banks of Bushy Creek (Box Hill North). The sheep farmer was soon joined by others such as: Thomas Toogood who introduced dairy farming to the area, Eyton, James Farmer, James McAlpine and the Bennett brothers, George and William. In 1840, the Colonial office approved the sale of land for £1 an acre. It was known as 'Special Survey' and was designed to encourage immigrants to the Great Southern land. The discovery of gold at Warrandyte in 1861, combined with the current Grant Act, which allowed purchases of land up to ten miles from a goldfield saw a rush of immigrants to the area. Vermont was among the last to be surveyed; land was initially sold in 100-acre allotments. William Morton and Nelson Polack were among the first to take advantage of the lush countryside. Dr. L.L. Vale was the most prominent landowner in the area and for many years, Vermont was known as L.L. Vale. The good doctor established an experimental farm in the area. A survey map from the 1860s shows the largest blocks in Vermont.

Ballyshannassy (Burwood) was the only official township until Box Hill was proclaimed in 1861. A planned township in modern day Vermont South, Norwich Township, was proposed that same year by Thomas Graham, a land speculator. Situated west of the Dandenong Creek, it was to have vineyards and a rectilinear layout. He had hopes that the planned railway extension to Lillydale would pass through his town but it was Box Hill that became the next station. Norwich town passed into history as a failed attempt, all that remains of the original town is Morack and Terrara Roads. Other towns such as: Springfield, New Brunswick and Studley were also planned for the local areas but they too were unsuccessful.

Vermont saw many land booms over the years and remained untouched by all of them. It was only in the 70s and 80s that large blocks were carved up. Many well-known architects had already built large houses on the blocks. It still retains a somewhat rural feel to it now with adequate parklands and golf courses. The orchards are long since gone. Vermont Winery no longer has vines but serves as an outlet for other vineyards throughout Victoria.

In keeping with rural traditions, Vermont has two golf courses, which are utilised by a number of golf clubs in the area. The Nunawading and District Motocross club has its headquarters near the Waste Transfer Station. Norwich town has been 'reincarnated' as Vermont South shopping centre. Now part of the City of Whitehorse, Vermont and Vermont South remain a place where local residents can escape to parklands, far from the city ratrace. From golf to bicycling and walking, there is still an air of unspoilt beauty to the va les of Vermont.

Written by Alastair Rosie

WERRIBEE: PEOPLE OF THE PLAINS

How I love a sunburnt country, a land of sweeping plains.

These immortal words could well have been penned about the sweeping Werribee Plains. The countryside to the west of Melbourne typified for many in the fledgling years of the Port Phillip Colony the romanticism of Banjo Patterson and C..J. Dennis.

Prior to the arrival of the colonists from Van Diemens Land the plains were home to the coastal dwelling Bunurong and their western neighbours the Wathaurung. The Werribee River, with its similarity to a spinal chord influenced their language and Werribee came into recorded history, Werribee meaning backbone or spine.

Matthew Flinders climbed the You Yangs in 1802 and gazed out over the sunburned plains. Perhaps he too saw what the pastoralists were to see, lush grazing grounds for the sheep, which were pouring into the colonies. The plains however were far too dry until the Chirnsides brothers sank their first two bores.

Nevertheless, the district attracted a wave of immigrants from nearby Van Diemens Land. The Vandemonians settled on the western plains from 1836 to 1838. Governor Bourke in Sydney was outraged by this flagrant disobedience. John Batman had already 'purchased' the area from local aborigines in 1835. The purchase even then was regarded as illegal and the squatters were ordered to move. They refused and Bourke was forced to grant leases to the squatters.

The life of a squatter was far from the idyllic notions we have today. A squatter was essentially what the name implied, an individual (s) who squatted on a piece of unexplored land until such time as the government surveyors recognised their 'rightful inheritance.' It was similar to the cattle barons of the American West. Seeking to escape tyrannical landlords in Europe, the squatters became in the end what they most despised, a lordly class in their own right. Squatters eked out an existence from the land, taking little notice of the environment or its rightful owners. Skirmishes between squatters and local aborigines were frequent and often bloody. The shepherds hired to take care of sheep were treated little better than sheep themselves, most were ex convicts.

The first settlers were the Wedges and the Chirnsides brothers. Tom Wedge was already in the area when Thomas Chirnside arrived in 1846 after taking the overland route through the Grampians. He took land at Werribee which had already been named by Wedge, later taking on Wedge's property after the former's home and family were washed away in a disastrous flood.

With the removal of Tom Wedge, the Chirnsides became the dominant family in the region. While there were other pastoralists in the area, none could match the Chirnsides, who by 1875 had over 85,000 acres under sheep. Their tenure was to be shaken in 1859 when a group of local farmers at Little River formed the commonages movement which reasserted the rights of all farmers and graziers to use the land as they saw fit. The movement grew with all the strength of a bushfire, spreading all over the countryside; the reign of the squatters in their grass castles was coming to a close.

The township was laid out in 1849 and named by Elliot Armstrong who had served in general Sir H. Wyndham's 11th Dragoons. Wyndham's claim to fame arose from the story that he had chased one of Napoleon's nephews for miles at the battle of Waterloo.

Armstrong named the area and the township Wyndham in a fit of romanticism. Alas, Wyndham never visited the area and it is doubtful he was even aware that his name had been given to the Werribee Plains. The name was to prove a bone of contention for many years with residents referring to the place as Werribee. The name Werribee was eventually retained in 1885.

With the death of the last Chirnside brother, Andrew in 1890, his two sons, Percy and George broke up part of the estate for tenant farmers. Their actions were not entirely altruistic; they were trying to evade the Unimproved Land Tax imposed on the squatters. Further portions were later sold to the government for the Sewerage Farm.

From the 1890s onwards, Werribee played a vital part in the survival of Melbourne, which had become known as 'Smelbourne.' The Yarra River was in effect a vast open sewer and the early residents of Smelbourne lived in constant fears of a typhoid epidemic. The founding fathers of Melbourne acquired land at Werribee, the other choice being Mordialloc. Werribee turned out to be the cheapest site available and the farm came into being. Its effects were not visible for many years however as people had to be educated about basic hygiene. But its effect on Werribee was noticed immediately. The Metropolitan Farm as it was later known, brought much needed employment into the area at a time of financial instability. Tenant farmers were granted leases around The Farm and a Research Farm was also opened up.

The years 1912 to '39 saw dozens of poultry, lucerne and dairy farms along with orchards and Market Gardens. The Werribee district was also used to billet soldiers during the two World Wars. The addition of the RAAF bases at Point Cook and Laverton brought further employment to the area and put it firmly on the map.

Werribee's role in waste management continues to this day and plays a vital and important role in the removal of sewerage from Melbourne and its suburbs. Recently, Werribee has become the site for one of Victoria's three major zoos, with the opening of the African Safari Park at Werribee Mansion. The zoo assists in the preservation of Africa's diminishing wildlife, the Werribee Plains being ideally suited to African wildlife. The Chirnside's mansion is now Werribee Mansion and is open to the public, providing a unique view of life in the nineteenth century. The National Equestrian Centre is also in Werribee and hosts many international horse events. Recently, champion golfer Greg Norman chose Werribee as the site for his Sanctuary Lakes project. He also designed the golf course, which has attracted further development in the form of a luxury resort, many beautiful homes and a shopping complex. Werribee's wetlands are second to none, attracting visitors from all over the world. Birds migrate here from as far as Siberia, the wetlands remain one of Werribee's most prized assets. The Market Gardens of Werribee South provide food for Asia as well as a pleasant country drive for Melburnians.

For a list of events log onto <http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au>

From Squatter's kingdom to African kingdom, Werribee has come a long way in the last one hundred and fifty years and looks set to continue in that vein.

Written by Alastair Rosie

WILLIAMSTOWN: FISHERMAN'S PARADISE

Nestled on the western shores of Port Phillip Bay, Williamstown or William's Town is the oldest settlement on the Bay. It was named by the Governor of New South Wales Sir Richard Bourke in honour of King William IV in 1837. The first settler was Captain William Lonsdale who arrived in his capacity of Police Magistrate on October 10 1837; the first records of the new settlement began on that day.

Prior to the arrival of the white man, the area of Williamstown was inhabited by the Bunurong nation, whose territory bordered that of the southernmost branches of the Woiworung nation, (the Kurung - jang - balluk clan). The Bunurong roamed from Williamstown to Wilson's Promontory in the east, encompassing what is now the Peninsula, Phillip Island and French Island. The area of Williamstown was known for its mud flats, mangrove swamps and dense bushland. Point Gellibrand was initially selected as the first settlement before Batman chose the site where Melbourne is now located for his 'village.'

It was the very nature of the landscape that conspired against attempts to make William's Town the new capital of the south. However, the rush of migrants to the new settlement landed at William's Town first before proceeding up the river to Melbourne. Much of the bluestone required for the early buildings came from Williamstown and it later became famous for its dry dock facilities and shipbuilding activities. Nevertheless, Williamstown remained a rural backwater for many years. A retired East India employee J.S. Spotswood acquired 119 acres at Edom (Spotswood) for his dairy farming enterprise. In the 1850s, David Syme and Captain James Deane set up the Melbourne Steamship Company, complete with floating docks.

A constant source of worry for the local residents however, was the presence of convict hulks in the bay, just off Williamstown. These rusting hulks, the home for innumerable convicts who provided cheap labour for the various building projects, were a constant reminder of the colony's convict roots. Williamstown's hit the front pages of the papers in 1857 when the Inspector General of Prisons in Victoria, John Price was murdered by convicts sickened by years of savagery. He was later to pass into infamy in Marcus Clarke's immortal; *For the Term of His Natural Life*. Price had been the Governor on another notorious gulag, Norfolk Island, and his sadistic nature was without equal in Australia's brutal history. The incident caused immediate panic amid fears of a convict uprising. The 40th Regiment was dispatched along with scores of police to secure the rotting hulks until law and order could be restored. The countermeasures were unnecessary however, the convicts had exacted their revenge on the inhumane Price. He died within twenty- four hours of massive brain injuries. Eight out of the fifteen convicts involved were hung within four days of the murder. The 'incident' passed into infamy and many years later it became a badge of honour for former convicts, now residents to have been there on that 'fateful day.' Twenty years after Price's death the last of the convict hulks, the *Sacramento* was demolished.

Williamstown was declared a municipality in 1851 with the first council standing for election in '56. The railway was to follow three years later in 1859 and in 1864, the town boundaries were extended to include Newport and Spottiswoode (Spotswood). By the time of Federation in 1901, Williamstown had a thriving industrial base consisting of: railway

and freezing workshops, gas and glassworks, wool mills, petroleum repacking and sewerage works.

Williamstown in the '90s, is part of the greater Hobsons Bay Shire which takes in Laverton, Altona, Altona Meadows, Altona North, Brooklyn, Bangholme, South Kingsville, Williamstown, Williamstown North, Newport and Spotswood. Williamstown in keeping with its tradition for being the first stopping off point for migrants boasts a rich variety of ethnic cultures which adds to its cultural diversity. A popular place for restaurateurs, who take advantage of its proximity to the bay, it is also an area that lends itself to natural beauty. A number of significant natural resources can be found at Kororoit Creek, Cherry Lake, Newport Lakes, Altona Coastal Park, Truganina Swamp, Laverton Creek, Skeleton Creek and Stony Creek Backwash.

From its conception until the present day, Williamstown and the Hobsons Bay area has always been a vital part of the 'village' of Melbourne.

Written by Alastair Rosie

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City of Hobsons Bay Homepages

<http://www.hobsons.vic.gov.au/>