Melton Family History Group Inc

June 2021-July 2021

Meeting Times: 6:30pm on the second Thursday of each month except for January

Venue: Melton Library – McKenzie Street, Melton

Membership Fee: $25 per year payable July each year prior to August A.G.M.

Correspondence: 17, Sutherland Ave, Melton Sth, Vic, 3338.

President: Judith Bilszta

Vice President   Janeen O'Connell

Secretary: Ian Bowey

Treasurer: Deborah Slattery

Email: sec.meltonfhg@outlook.com

Web site   www.meltonfamilyhistory.org

Committee Members: Sue Morton and Pauline Stotten

2021Monthly Meetings at Melton Library in McKenzie Street.

10th June	Cancelled
8th July	Bill Griffith
12th August	Malcolm Peacock
9th September	Ian Arnold
14th October	Terry Fogarty.

All dates and times are subject to change
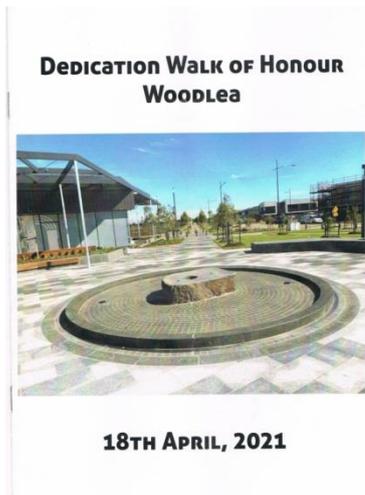
Update: Regular work:

Our regular Wednesday morning sessions have been fairly quiet. We have had only a handful of people requesting assistance from volunteers. Some weeks were busier than others.

- -

An e-mail from the Victorian Consumer Affairs has been received to the effect we are now working on Associations' Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012

- -

New computers have been installed throughout Melton Library. We have now four computers instead of the original six in the family history area. This is to ensure a distance of one and a half metres is kept between users. None of the new computers has a CD drive installed. Library staff have purchased a portable CD drive, allowing us access to our collection of CDs.

- -

A sausage sizzle has provisionally been booked with Bunnings for Sunday the 17th of October this year. We need as many volunteers as possible for this date.

- -

John Naidu was our guest speaker for our April meeting. John gave an informative talk on his time in the Australian Army, as well as his role in the Woodlea Walk of Remembrance. A number of questions were put to John after his talk. All the answers were highly interesting.

Members at the meeting were invited by John to attend the official opening ceremony of the eternal flame at Woodlea Town Centre. The ceremony was well attended by ex- service men and women.
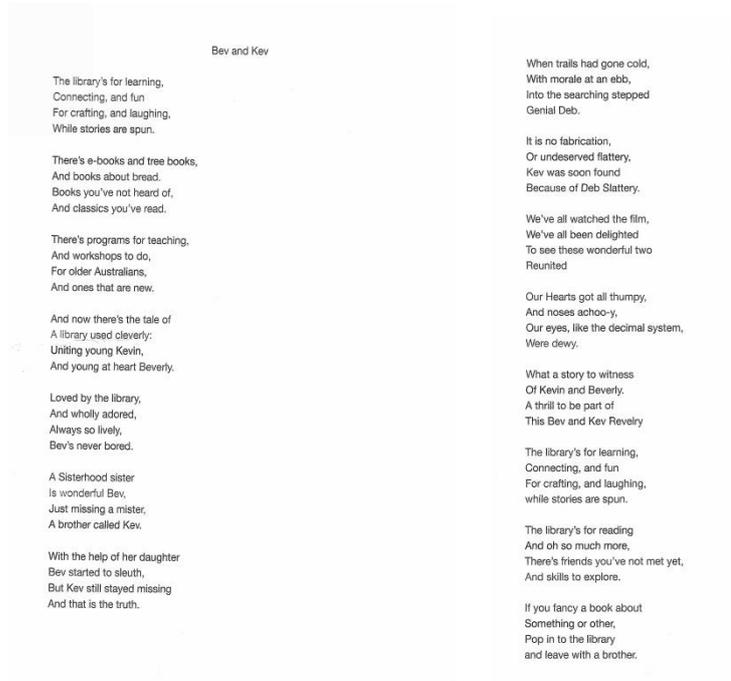

Eternal Flame.

John Naidu and colleague

The Eternal Flame after wreaths had been laid.

A special presentation of 'Finding Family- the story of Bev and Kev was held in the Melton Library on the 24th of May. Introductions were made by our own Janeen O'Connell and Melton Library management. A short film with the highlights of Bev's endeavor to locate her long lost brother Kev was shown. Deb Slattery went beyond the call of duty in locating Kev.

Part of the presentation involved the comedienne Cal Wilson, who is an ambassador for Libraries Change Lives. Cal gave us all many laughs with her stand-up comedy routine. Cal completed her routine with a brilliant poem about the search for Kev, and the involvement of the Melton Library and Deb Slattery.

Bev and Kev

The library's for learning,
Connecting, and fun
For crafting, and laughing,
While stories are spun.

There's e-books and tree books,
And books about bread.
Books you've not heard of,
And classics you've read.

There's programs for teaching,
And workshops to do,
For older Australians,
And ones that are new.

And now there's the tale of
A library used cleverly:
Uniting young Kevin,
And young at heart Beverly.

Loved by the library,
And wholly adored,
Always so lively,
Bev's never bored.

A Sisterhood sister
Is wonderful Bev,
Just missing a mister,
A brother called Kev.

With the help of her daughter
Bev started to sleuth,
But Kev still stayed missing
And that is the truth.

When trails had gone cold,
With morale at an ebb,
Into the searching stepped
Genial Deb.

It is no fabrication,
Or undeserved flattery,
Kev was soon found
Because of Deb Slattery.

We've all watched the film,
We've all been delighted
To see these wonderful two
Reunited

Our Hearts got all thumpy,
And noses achoo-y,
Our eyes, like the decimal system,
Were dewy.

What a story to witness
Of Kevin and Beverly.
A thrill to be part of
This Bev and Kev Revelry

The library's for learning,
Connecting, and fun
For crafting, and laughing,
while stories are spun.

The library's for reading
And oh so much more,
There's friends you've not met yet,
And skills to explore.

If you fancy a book about
Something or other,
Pop in to the library
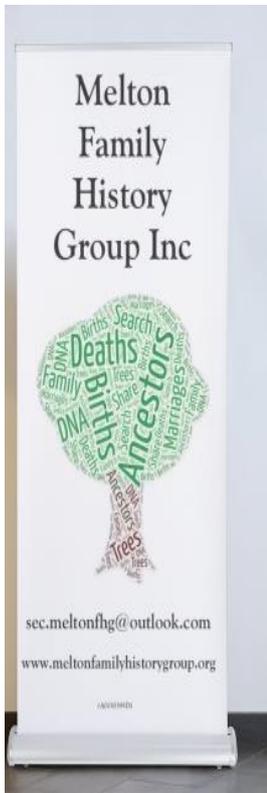and leave with a brother.

Cal Wilson

Janeen O'Connell

Bev ,Kev and Pauline

Janeen O'Connell, Deb Slattery and Ian Bowey have been busy designing a new banner. As well as not being in the best of condition, the old banner was showing a lot of out-of-date information. The new banner was purchased from Vistaprint.

Melton
Family
History
Group Inc

sec.meltonfhg@outlook.com

www.meltonfamilyhistorygroup.org

DRY STONE WALL
Faulkners Road, Mt Cottrell.
Shire of Melton.

The rapid development of sub division in rural areas of the Shire of Melton is placing important areas of historical significance in danger. Much of the agricultural and pastoral background is being lost as the remaining farm land is being rezoned into small acre properties.

The subject under examination for inclusion on the Register of Historic Buildings is of particular importance in the history of the State.

Anthony Cottrell, of the Port Phillip Association, engaged Charles Franks and shepherds to watch over his flocks following their arrival from Tasmania in 1835. Although it is recorded that wooden hurdles were used at night, flocks on the Keilor Plain and in particular on Mount Cottrell ground, ranged freely. Correspondence from Simon Staughton dated 1843, (a squatter on the west bank of Toolern/ Werribee River) records reliance upon shepherds, whilst Pinkerton at "Yaloke" on the Werribee, directly south west of Mount Cottrell, is recorded, in 1848, as using hurdles.
These arrangements altered when the gold rush began and station hands became both difficult to employ and expensive to hire.

Pastoralists in the area were enraged by the introduction of the Pound Act. George Scarborough of Mount Cottrell operated the Braybrook Pound from 1851 and in 1857 the Melton Pound was established. Charges imposed for straying stock encouraged owners, lease holders and in particular local squatters to enclose firstly house yards, stock yards and following district surveys, entire properties. The proclamation of the Scab Act 1870 followed by an outbreak of pluro pneumonia hastened enclosures.

Although a study of the Parish maps for Kororoit, Tarneit and Pywheitjorrk reveal the identities of   purchasers of the Special Country Lots offered for sale 1853 onwards, much of the area in the vicinity of Mount Cottrell was leased or rented by farmers seeking fast returns in crops or dairy products. A small number bred entire horses or ponies to supplement their returns. These farmers included a significant number of Primitive Methodist and Baptist settlers who

2.

quickly developed a thriving community with a chapel and school as the focal point. Some, on land fronting the Werribee River, established gardens. Since this type of farming demanded enclosure on a treeless plain the material to hand, volcanic rock, was used. Stone masons and stone wallers were gainfully employed in erecting hundreds of miles of dry stone walls. It is recorded that by 1870 the Mt Mistake Estate of the Moylan brothers situated 7 miles north of Mount Cottrell was enclosed by (and subdivided) 23 miles of wall.

Sale notices appearing in the Bacchus Marsh – Melton Express from 1866 include details of fencing. Properties east of the Toolern Creek ie the Keilor Plain, were almost entirely walled. The newspaper, from its opening edition in 1866, carried periodical advertisements requesting stone wallers for x number of miles of walling. Until 1890 these advertisements – " apply Monmouthshire Hotel, Diggers Rest"; "Rockbank Inn"; "Rockbank Estate", appear at regular intervals, together with warnings that trespassers pulling down walls will receive summary justice. Staughton land on Mount Cottrell suffered throughout 1873.

Contemporary newspapers of the 1860 – 1870 period indicate dry stone walling on the Keilor Plain was making its mark.

The Plains were subject to floods, fire and drought and although buildings and stock, together with human life, suffered the extremes the walls remained virtually intact until World War 1, when with the sale and subsequent division of the Rockbank Estate followed by the Mt Derrimut Estate and in 1912, the Mount Cottrell Estate, much of the walling was subjected to breaching to permit the entry of machinery compounding damage which occurred when the rail line was laid down during the 1875 – 1885 period. Subsequently large sections of wall towards the eastern boundary of the (present) Shire fell into disrepair and was during the 1930's replaced by post and wire.

The section of wall, the subject of the proposed registration, is the longest extant section of wall remaining in the district being more than ½ mile in length, in good to excellent repair and is indeed an outstanding example of the dry stone waller's craft. Being on the downward slope of Mount Cottrell, with no drainage problems, the foundation is intact. Faulkners Road is a dry weather road in that section which may account for a very good condition of much of the capping stone.

3.

Unfortunately, the section immediately fronting Kintbury homestead has, it appears, been totally removed but recently. An elaborate modern cream brick entry is being erected together with several hundred yards of wooden rail fencing. A new post and wire fence has been erected 7 to 9 feet inside the wall. Should trees be planted within this space the wall would be endangered.

Among the stone wallers known to have worked in the Mount Cottrell district prior to 1872 are Dick "the mason" Mitchell and Arcoll/Arkell whose deaths were subject to magisterial enquiry. For these and for purely asthetic reasons – the wall grows from the surroundings – I support all efforts to retain this essential element in our historical and cultural development.

REFERENCES:

    Bacchus Marsh – Melton Express 1866 – 1893.

    Weekly Times 1866 – (1921 – 1927)

    The Australasian 1877 – 1878

    John Chandler "40 Years In The Wilderness"

    R. H. S. V. Manuscript Collection (Henry Moore's Letter Books)

Judith A. Bilszta
9th September, 1990.

The above article of Dry Stone Walls is by courtesy of Judith Bilszta.

Excerpts from Trove

This is the fifth and final in a series of articles about framing reprinted from the *Bacchus Marsh Express*, transposed from the *Australasian*.

Owners of properties described:

Mr. M. I. Browne

References to:

Mr. G. Taylor (Tas.), Mr. C. Dowling - sheep breeders

Mr. Dawbin, Mr. M'Dougall, Messrs. Cobb & Co. - cattle breeders

"Farming In The Melton District", *The Bacchus Marsh Express,* 3 January 1877, p. 4, @ http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article88350285.

FARMING IN THE MELTON DISTRICT.

[From the Australasian Travelling Reporter.]

THE Green Hills Estate, belonging to Mr. M. I. Browne, is one of the most extensive properties in the district, its boundaries including about 10,000 acres, the greater bulk of the land being open plains. The homestead is situated about six miles from the town of Melton, being the same distance from the Diggers' Rest railway, station, the estate extending in a westerly direction to within seven miles of Bacchus Marsh. It has been occupied by the present owner for about seven years, the whole of the land being devoted to grazing purposes. Both cattle and sheep are kept on the station, and a considerable amount of attention is being paid to the breeding of both classes of stock. There are about 8,000 sheep, mostly merinos, which are found to answer better than the long-woolled [sic] classes on this property. A trial was made with Lincolns some few years back, and there are now a few animals of that class remaining, but it is intended for the future to breed nothing but pure merinos. At the last stud sheep sales in Melbourne some superior ewes were purchased, which were bred by Mr. G. Taylor, of Tasmania, and also several first-class rams – one, from the flock of Mr. C. Dowling, costing 50 guineas. Some of these sheep are of a superior class, and several prizes were taken by them in Melbourne. The cattle number about 300 head, a mixed herd, but Mr. Browne intends to work into a pure shorthorn strain, and has for several years been using well-bred bulls of that breed. A commencement was made with a bull bred by Mr. Dawbin, which has left some very good stock behind him. The one at present with the herd is a well-bred animal called Kildonan, which was purchased from Mr. M'Dougall, of Keilor. A number of superior cows were also obtained about three years ago from the herd of Messrs. Cobb & Co., and their progeny are mostly of a high class. The estate is subdivided into several conveniently-sized paddocks, and it is Mr. Browne's intention to improve the pasture by sowing the whole of the land down with English grasses during the next year or two. About 15 acres are generally under cultivation with hay and green crops for home use, the remainder of the land being under pasture. The homestead is a very comfortable one, and conveniently arranged, the various out-buildings being of a substantial description. Attached to the residence is a nice garden, containing about an acre and a half, which is well stocked with a good variety of fruit trees.

The above article is by courtesy of Robyn Hunter. Many thanks to Robyn for her excellent series of early farming in the Melton district.