

Greensborough Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter

Edition 40, December 2020

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



President's Report

There is a saying that “strength comes through or from adversity” and the past 9 months have surely tasked us in many ways but we are a pretty resilient lot and each handled it in our own particular way.

Being creatures of habit to suddenly have our lifestyle changed dramatically caused us to find ways to fill our time and so jobs that we had put off doing for some reason suddenly became a priority or phoning a friend you hadn't spoken to for a while bringing a bit of gossip maybe and laughter to brighten the day.

Suddenly the words zoom, skype and facetime entered our consciousness leading us to seek new ways of contacting loved ones where we could see and talk to one another though not the same as seeing in the flesh and being able to hug.

We are so lucky to live in Australia where we have the resources to combat a pandemic whereas other countries are floundering to cope.

Authorities have learnt a lot in the past 9 months in handling the virus and though the future is unpredictable we are in a better position now to contain it.

It has been disappointing that we have not been able to have our regular meetings, however we can look forward to starting afresh in the New Year when our first monthly meeting will be a belated 10 year celebration.

By then your Committee will have drawn up the necessary meeting protocols required of the Society subject of course to the Government's health requirements of the day.

And so it is that time of year again when we say goodbye to one year and herald in the next, in the hope that 2021 can have some semblance to what we once considered our normal way of life.

May you all have a safe and joyful Christmas and I look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Noel



Committee 2020-2021

President Noel Withers 94354513

Vice President Peter Van Eeken
pve101@yahoo.com.au

Secretary Norm Colvin 94352903

Treasurer John Gibson 94350097

Committee Members: Dianne Fox Sue Brenkovich Chris Foster
Anne Paul Sue Ballantyne

Contact the Greensborough Historical Society

Web Site: www.greensboroughhistorical.org.au

Email: info@greensboroughhistorical.org.au

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

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

Meeting dates and times for 2021

Dates are attached on the last page of this Newsletter

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

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

The Resource Centre will be open on selected weekends for research into your family or the local area, or join us for a chat and a cuppa.

Please check our website for updates on activities for 2021

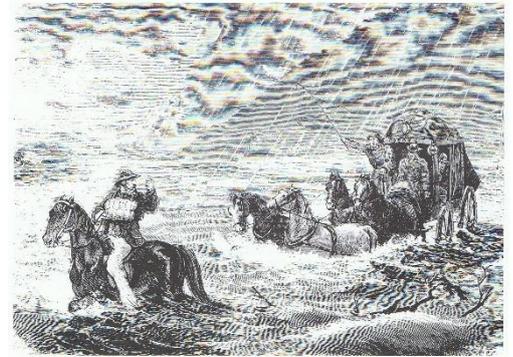
www.greensboroughhistorical.org.au

Earlier this year, our Thursday Crew volunteers worked on a project co-ordinated by Vice President Peter van Eeken, to collect information and write short articles about various aspects of life in Greensborough and surrounding areas, focusing on people, places and events. Here we continue to share these articles with you.

The Development of Communications in Greensborough by Peter Van Eeken

On the 18 April 1837, Edward, James and Arthur Willis established their sheep run 'Wanstead' on the banks of the Plenty River, behind what is today's Lower Plenty Hotel. They spent a full week settling in. It was not until Tuesday 23 April that Edward went to town. The only form of communication in those early days was by personal visit on horseback. In his diary, James records that he was able to reach Melbourne in 3 hours or so, when pressed. The nearest major settlement to Melbourne, in those days, was Hobart from which communication could only be had by letter and ship.

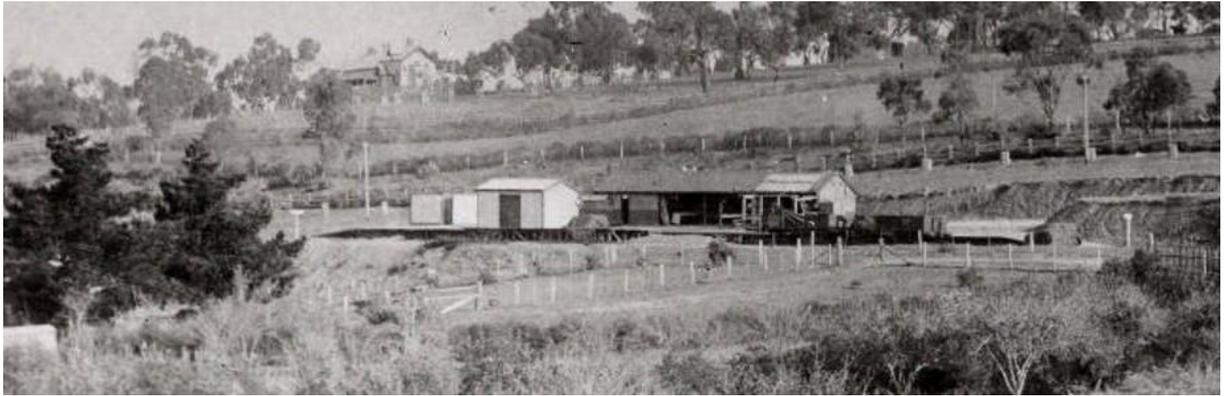
In the early 1840s Mr. Edward Green (who purchased 'Greensborough' in 1841) established the regular mail service between Sydney and Melbourne. "Mr. Green's arrangements were such that the Mail reached Melbourne on the Saturday morning at half past seven o'clock, being half an hour before the time. True, then the contract was in the hands of one who knew his business, and spared neither trouble nor expense on the road, extra hands and extra horses had but to be mentioned, and they were in readiness." *Sydney Australian Thursday 17 October 1844, page 3*



In 1839 John Pascoe Fawkner established "*The Port Phillip Patriot and Melbourne Advertiser*". In 1846 the *Argus Newspaper* was established and in 1854 it was followed by the *Age Newspaper*. In 1854 James Chapman established a Post Office in Greensborough on the corner of Main and Para Roads that was serviced with a daily coach from Melbourne, and by two coaches in 1855 that ran daily between Heidelberg and Melbourne.

In 1888 the first use of the telegraph is recorded in Greensborough: 'It appears this township, "forty-year-old" Greensborough, has awoke at last. Who would have thought it? Poor old Greensborough, who has been asleep these forty years, should be making such rapid strides; land, £100 per acre, less than five years ago could have been bought for less than £20; and now there are two mails a day, and telegraphic communication was opened on the 2nd ult., via Heidelberg, with promising success, Miss Duncan, daughter of W. Duncan, Esq., J.P., claims the honour of sending the first message. No doubt in less than five years Greensborough, so beautifully situated, will become a second Toorak.' *Evelyn Observer, and South and East Bourke Record 3 August 1888, page 3*

By 1902 the regular train service to Melbourne was established and Greensborough resident Geoff Butterworth said “his grandfather William would often take the train, in the early days, up and down to Heidelberg, twice a day, in order to help keep the patronage up on a limited service (otherwise it would have been reduced).”



Greensborough Railway Station circa 1923

In 1912 the first coastal wireless station opened in Melbourne followed by radio stations 3AR and 3LO which went to air on 26 January and 13 October 1924. By this time too, both the train and the automobile were in serious competition to the horse.

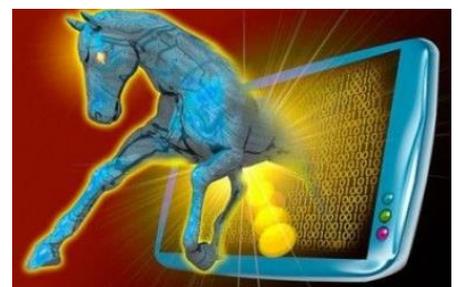
The telephone arrived circa 1925: “A Telephone Exchange: The annual meeting of the Greensborough Progress Society was held on Monday evening, the president (Cr. Santon) in the chair. There was a large attendance of members, as well as other businesspeople of the district, and representatives of the Eltham Progress Association.

Correspondence was received from the Deputy Postmaster General about departmental matters and Mr. Honiball of the telephone department was present to explain the ways and means of supplying an up to date telephone service for Greensborough, within a two-mile radius of the local post-office.” *Hurstbridge Advertiser 6 March 1925, page 3.*

By 1928 ‘underground telephone cables were being laid for the purpose of linking up Lower Plenty, Montmorency, and Eltham with the Greensborough telephone exchange, which has nearly 100 subscribers.’ *Melbourne Argus 6 December 1928, page 16.*

The introduction of television came in 1956 with the Olympic Games being held in Melbourne and in the 1970s the introduction of programmable calculators was followed by personal computers that became available in 1978. Australia joined the global internet on 23 June 1989 – via a connection made by the University of Melbourne – it was mostly used by computer scientists but three decades later 86% of Australian households were connected.

The first mobile phone system began in Melbourne in August 1981 with the first call made between Telecom executives. But the system was limited to a \$5000 car phone that weighed 14 kilograms. In 2019, 89.9% of Australians (18.5 million) owned a mobile phone and in 2020 the NBN optical computer cabling is due for complete installation.



The horse opened up European people’s communication to Greensborough, but in 2020 it is the optical fibre that is opening us up to the world and beyond.

Marble Hall (original article by Noel Withers, revised by Sue Ballantyne)

The Marble Hotel, Greensborough was located at the corner of Main Street and Para Road (currently the site of Taco Bills).

The first licensed hotel in Greensborough and one of the earliest brick buildings, Marble Hall was built by James Chapman in the early 1850s as a hotel/lodging house to cater for wood carters and those trying their luck at the gold fields but served many functions over the years including post office, general store, public hall, butchers, bakers, surgery, private dwelling and baby health care centre.

It got its name due to its white washed exterior and the building was said to be haunted by an Indian hawkler who was murdered on the site and is believed to be buried in the Greensborough cemetery.

At times patrons to the hotel unable to ford the river and with time on their hands would be the cause of many a disturbance and made it a place to be avoided by residents of the town.

Susan Chapman stated in 1856, "I was in my husband's licensed house in Greensborough when the defendant came in and had some half and half, he wanted a bottle of rum on credit and on my refusal he used very foul and abusive language, "You bugger I'll choke you," and went outside and took off his coat and went around to the back of the house and made a row there."

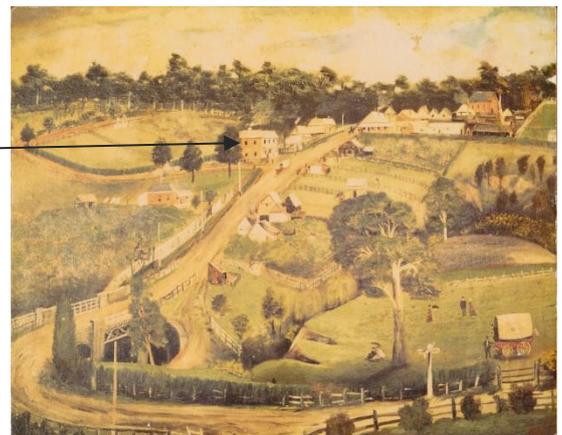


Marble Hall 1950s

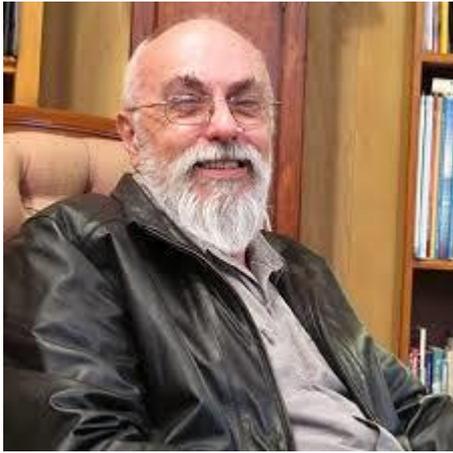
The building remained standing through till at least the 1950s, as recalled by Vera Lay, "My connection with Greensborough began in 1955 when I was offered employment as a stenographer with the legal firm of R.D.J. Bennet. Dick Bennet's office was upstairs in, what was previously known as Marble Hall, on the corner of Carter (now Para Road) and Main Streets Greensborough. At this time the building was owned by R.H. Dean who had an Estate Agency on the ground floor and his wife conducted an adjoining plant nursery. Another tenant was the dentist, Ian Hansen."

Marble Hall was a landmark in many early photographs of Main Street Greensborough.

Elliott's 1889 painting of Greensborough shows a prominent Marble Hall



David Hay: The last President of the Shire of Diamond Valley by Rosie Bray



David Hay and his wife Leigh came to live in Greensborough in 1972, after David was discharged from active service in the Vietnam War. David went on to study and received his PHD (first class honours) in chemistry in 1981. He worked at the CSIRO as an Honorary for the next 5 years.

In 1987, David became concerned to learn that the Shire of Diamond Valley was considering demolishing the public swimming pool. He wrote a protest letter to the *Diamond Valley News*. Within days, people from the local community contacted David, pressuring him call a public meeting. David did that, but he did not expect 50 people to turn up at his home. This incident was the catalyst for David Hay being nominated as a local councillor.

David was a Diamond Valley Councillor for 8 years - serving as Shire President twice (1993 and 1994). In that time, he was able to make improvements to the local area. Among these were the upgrading and building the rotunda in War Memorial Park, opening the Greensborough Bowling Club, making improvements to Kalparrin Gardens and retaining as much local open space as possible. These are our treasures today.

Tribute to Greensborough's newly opened war memorial

STATE President of the RSL, Bruce Ruxton, was a special guest at the recent opening of Greensborough's new war memorial to commemorate the thousands of men and women who fought for their country in the wars since World War One.

The new memorial, funded largely by Greensborough RSL, Diamond Valley Council and Watson RSL, takes the form of three large polished bluestone walls inscribed with tributes to those who either died, or survived, the later wars of this century.

The memorial, made in Port Fairy and transported to War Memorial Park in Greensborough's Henry Street, now stands behind the original cenotaph which commemorates the many soldiers who fought in the First World War.

A fence and archway leading to the memorials has been provided by the Shire of Diamond Valley, which has undertaken extensive landscaping and repair works to enhance the gardens.

The three steel framed edged walls, carefully engraved, recognise the efforts of men and women who defended Australia in combat in World War Two, Vietnam, Cambodia, Korea and New Guinea as well as those who died in the battlefields of Europe, Malaya, Singapore and Borneo.

The main address at the dedication service was made by Shire President Cr David Hay and was attended by a number of Diamond Valley Councillors, including Central Riding Councillor Ian Wallace who had started moves for the revitalisation of War Memorial Park during his term in office last year.

A huge crowd attended the ceremony, where State RSL President Bruce Ruxton read the Ode to the Fallen.

Members of the local RSL clubs are convinced the new memorial is the second best war memorial in Melbourne after the Shrine in the city.

A video, recording the ceremony, was made by one of the former members' wives.

Mr Ruxton has since sent a letter of congratulations to Greensborough RSL, saying the war memorial is one of the best in the State.

"We are very proud of our new war memorial," said former RSL committee member, Bob Outaway.

"We reckon it is definitely the best after the Shrine in Melbourne.

"It's been something we had wanted in Greensborough for some time and now we've got it we couldn't be more pleased."

Newspaper clipping, possibly Diamond Valley News, [date circa 1994]

David Hay always has a smile on his face when he recalls that in 1994, the Kennett State Government restructured local government. This reform meant that 210 councils and 1600 councillors were sacked to be replaced by 78 new councils. Diamond Valley was split into the City of Banyule and the Shire of Nillumbik----and David Hay was the last President of the Shire of Diamond Valley and the only one to be 'sacked'.

New Items in the Archives at Greensborough Historical Society

Earlier this year, a donation of over 75 historic items was made to the Society by Ann Dixon. There is a great variety of household items which will eventually be on display at the Resource Centre. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 closure has meant we have been unable to fully process the donation this year, and we look forward to sharing the items with you in 2021. Here are some examples: Can you name them?



Editor's note: All will be revealed at our first meeting in 2021.

Greensborough Historical Society Inc.

2021 Meeting Schedule (Subject to cancellations due to COVID-19 conditions)

Date	Day	Start Time	Meeting
20/01/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
09/02/21	Morning Tea	10.00 am	See Website for details
13/02/21	Saturday	1.00 pm	Open day HRC
17/02/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
27/02/21	Saturday	1.15 pm	Forum GHNH
17/03/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
26/03/21	Friday	1.15 pm	SGM – GHNH
11/04/21	Sunday	1.00pm	Open day HRC
13/04/21	Morning Tea	10.00 am	See Website for details
21/04/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
24/04/21	Saturday	1.15 pm	ANZAC Meeting – GHNH
19/05/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
28/05/21	Friday	1.15 pm	SGM – GHNH
08/06/21	Morning Tea	10.00 am	See Website for details
12/06/21	Saturday	1.00 pm	Open day HRC
16/06/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
26/06/21	Saturday	1.15 pm	Forum GHNH
14/07/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
30/07/21	Friday	1.15 pm	SGM – GHNH
08/08/21	Sunday	1.00 pm	Open day HRC
10/08/21	Morning Tea	10.00 am	See Website for details
18/08/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
28/08/21	Saturday	1.15 pm	Forum GHNH
15/09/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
24/09/21	Friday	1.15 pm	AGM – GHNH
09/10/21	Saturday	1.00 pm	Open day HRC
12/10/21	Morning Tea	10.00 am	See Website for details
20/10/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
30/10/21	Saturday	1.15 pm	Heritage meeting TBA
17/11/21	Wednesday	7.00 pm	Committee HRC
26/11/21	Friday	1.15 pm	SGM Christmas Meeting – GHNH
07/12/21	Morning Tea	10.00 am	See Website for details

HRC - Historical Resource Centre (34 Glenauburn Rd, Lower Plenty.)
 GHNH – Greenhills Neighbourhood House. (Community Drive, off St Helena Rd)
 SGM - Special General Meeting, AGM – Annual General Meeting.