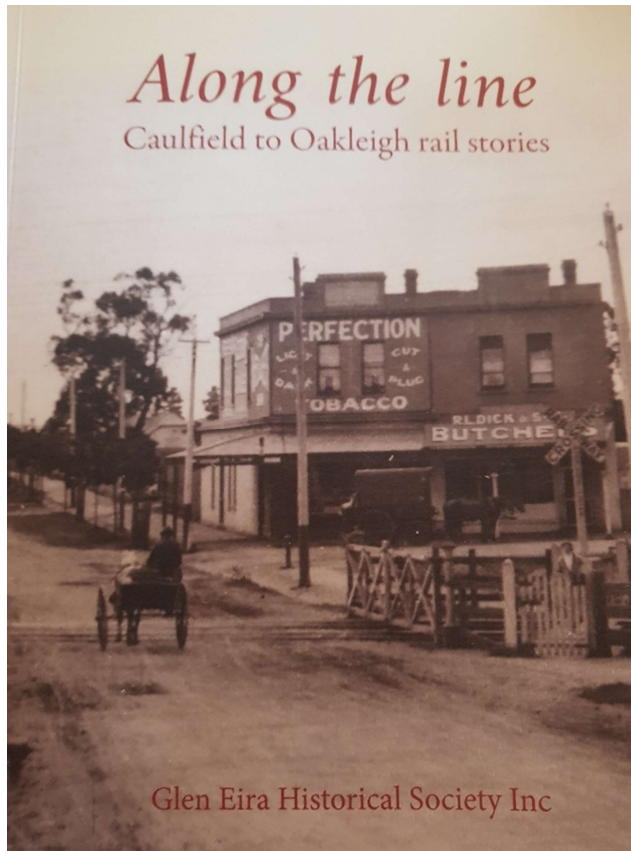




Glen Eira Historical Society

Book launch Sat 4 May 2019:

Along the line – Caulfield to Oakleigh rail stories



of the book. Her idea for the book arose at a time of great change for the community with the removal of the old stations at Carnegie, Murrumbeena and Hughesdale and their replacement with new stations on an elevated line. Here was an opportunity to capture people's stories and memories of trains and train travel.

Steve Dimopoulos MP for Oakleigh then spoke of the value of community, his love of history and the need to keep it alive. He commended the book, congratulating GEHS, the writers and storytellers.

GEHS President Barbara Hoad outlined the history of the Glen Eira Historical Society from its beginnings in 1972 to the present day, and spoke about the concept for the book. Initially a collection of stories and memories of trains and train travel and part homage to the stations of Carnegie, Murrumbeena and Hughesdale which were demolished to make way for Skyrail but in addition a history of the railway stations and surrounding suburbs.

Barbara also spoke about obtaining the story of Betty Clark (Gamble) the only living survivor of the 1926 Caulfield train disaster.

Authors Richard and Peta Darke spoke about Carnegie station, four generations of Richard's family having lived in the suburb. They

More than 150 people turned out on a cold, wet and windy day to attend the community book launch of *Along the line – Caulfield to Oakleigh rail stories*. We gathered under the elevated rail line at Murrumbeena station at 2pm just as the sun broke through.

Carol Stals opened proceedings, by acknowledging Metro Trains for its sponsorship

We acknowledge that the Boon Wurrung People are the traditional custodians of the area covered by the City of Glen Eira.



**Proudly supported by
Glen Eira Community Arts Grants and
Bendigo Bank Murrumbeena**



GEHS Rail book launch: *Along the line*



Left: Steve Dimopoulos MP and Barbara Hoad.

mentioned the station master shot in 1934 and the royal train passing through in 1954.

Carol spoke of Murrumbene station and the army of little boys who met there (and other stations) every morning before sunrise to sort and collect papers for delivery and the train driver who slept in a tent beside his train at Oakleigh to be ready for duty. She said that through researching the book she has come to love the Victorian Railways and organisations such as the Way and Works department.

Joy Mawbey, author of the Hughesdale chapter said that Hughesdale, opened in 1925, was intended to serve the staff and students at the Victorian State Schools' Nursery and its additional important role in distributing seedlings to schools across the state. There was also a well-founded belief that if one built a station residential development would follow.

The story tellers and contributors were acknowledged and presented with a copy of the book. Books were also presented to Mayor Jamie Hyams and Glen Eira Council CEO Rebecca McKenzie to be placed in local libraries, to Springvale Historical Society and to Dandenong and Springvale libraries. A delicious afternoon tea was

served, sourced from surrounding cafes by Metro Trains.

Barbara Hoad, President, Glen Eira Historical Society



Above: Carol Stals introducing the book.



Above: Steve Dimopoulos MP, Peta Darke, Richard Darke and Joy Mawbey.



Above: Sue Foley, Manager of Bendigo Bank Murrumbene and guest at the launch.
All launch photos courtesy of Janine Mayhew.

Victorian State Schools' Nursery

(formerly located adjacent to Hughesdale Station)



Above: Teachers learning about horticulture VSSN (1930s). Photo courtesy Dr Deborah Towns.

A decade after the idea of including practical agriculture in the State School curricula was first mooted, Mr Frank Tate, Director of Education, called a meeting of interested teachers in 1910.

“His call was prompted by the work of Cyril Isaac. At the meeting,...it was decided to form a State Schools' Horticultural Improvement Society (SSHIS). Cyril Isaac was elected secretary at the general meeting in January 1911”. (People and Plants: A history of gardening in Victoria, Mary Ellis pub ME 2003). Thus began a unique educational experiment for its time and for many years after.

The establishment of the nursery began later that year and within a year it had 200,000 seedlings available for distribution. It was officially opened in April 1915. The Leader newspaper reported it thus:

STATE SCHOOL GARDENS OPENING OF THE NURSERY FOR PLANTS

The official opening of the Victorian State Schools' Horticultural Society's nursery, situated off Poath road midway between

Oakleigh and Murrumbeena, took place last week in the presence of a large gathering of school teachers, members of various school committees, and their wives and lady friends. The Nursery that covers two acres, looked trim and neat and was full of blooms of various flowers.

Mr C.E. Isaac (Secretary of SSHS) spoke about the Society's work in assisting teachers to establish school gardens and imparting a love of gardening to their charges. 1000 schools were affiliated (half the schools in the State). Children at selected schools gathered seeds from special plants and forwarded them to the Nursery for distribution. In 1914, 20,000 free packets were distributed and a further 12,000 between January and April in 1915. These included wattles and other native trees.

In 1916, John Brundrett was appointed as propagator, it was a position he held until his death in 1946. In 1924, a school building from Carnegie State School was relocated to the Nursery to be used as a workshop and 2 assistants were appointed.

By 1927, the Society had changed its name to Victorian State Schools' Horticultural Society (VSSHs) and the then President James Bromilow instituted a forestry partnership scheme in which smaller schools were supported by larger schools to establish school pine plantations thus providing a source of income as well as environmental education. Articles on Victorian plants, written by the committee, were published

Victorian State Schools' Nursery

in the School Paper. Coloured illustrations of native plants resulted in 5000 specimens being sent to the Herbarium for identification in 1935.



Gardens before Grammar

Above: Staff and students at the young farmers' school, State School Nursery, 1936. Caption accompanying Photograph, *The Herald*, Wednesday Evening, September 16th 1936.

"The best things in education are not taught but caught", said the Director of Education (Mr McRae) to teachers at the School of Horticulture now in progress at the State Schools' Nursery, Hughesdale. Mr McRae added that he would not worry very much if they were good teachers of subjunctive mood and fractions if they could make their pupils more enthusiastic lovers of gardens.

During the 1930's, training in farming and horticulture were given to teachers to enable them to form Young Farmers' Clubs in their schools.

In *Vision and Realisation* p460 (Education Department of Victoria published 1973) 4214 - State Schools' Nursery was described, as a 'somewhat unusual school'. Initially, boys from Grades 6-8, from neighbouring schools in Carnegie, Malvern, Murrumbeena and Oakleigh, attended for one half day a week to receive instruction in the theory and

practice of horticulture. They made their own way to the Nursery by train, bike or by foot.

In 1936, boys from Years 7 and 8 attended on Friday afternoons as part of a special two year course in nursery work. By 1938, 40 boys had found employment in local nurseries. After the 1939 bushfires, 600 manna gums were grown to replace the depleted areas on Phillip Island and 40 boys camped at Phillip Island to assist with the planting.

In 1935, the curricula was broadened to include woodwork, tinwork, wirework, soldering, tool sharpening, designing and painting as applied to horticulture.

Post war immigration and the 'baby boom' created a demand for new schools to service the increased school population and an increased demand for trees, shrubs, seedlings and indoor plants. In 1948, a large glasshouse was built, subsidised by the Education department and a double classroom was added in 1957.

It continued at the Hughesdale site until 1966. Teaching staff included Paul Crowe, Jane Edmanson and a horticultural consultant Kevin Heinze.

Their dream "to relocate the Nursery to a spacious site where there would be scope for development of landscaped gardens, parklands, wild areas, modern glasshouses, classrooms and facilities for home gardeners" (*People and Plants* p82) was realised in 1979 with the launch of a Schools Nursery Complex in Glen Waverley.

Victorian State Schools' Nursery

In April 1916, the first 2 week horticultural course for teachers was held. Instruction included plant propagation, garden design and maintenance, indoor plant and window decoration, trees and shrubs suitable for school grounds and allied topics. Participants visited trips to public gardens, Botanic Gardens and Burnley. A theory examination was introduced in 1921. Achieving the Certificate of Competence, a recognised qualification, assisted teachers in their prospects for promotion.

In 1937, an advanced course was added to teacher qualifications. 70 teachers attended the course each year. In the 1970's the certificates were discontinued. They were no longer a required qualification for teachers "and the practical application for the subject was lost to the teaching profession." (*People and Plants* p82).

Joy Mawbey



Above: Victorian State Schools' Nursery students with teacher. Photos courtesy of State Library of Victoria.

History of Public Gardens



The Council, from early in the 20th century, saw the establishment of local parks as an essential part of town planning and beneficial to the residents. It established public neighbourhood gardens for informal, non competitive activities in response to the popularity and high usage of gardens.

The popularity of railway reserve parks, such as the one adjacent to Elsternwick railway station, opened in 1905, was indicative of the community's need.

It quickly became apparent that the Elsternwick Railway Reserve was too small to accommodate the large crowds which gathered there at weekends and more local gardens and small parks were planned.

The first to be developed were Hopetoun and Greenmeadows Gardens.

Hopetoun Gardens

On July 31st, it will be 110 years since Hopetoun Gardens were officially opened. *The Age* reported on Monday, August 2nd 1909 that "a very large gathering assembled on Saturday afternoon at the new recreation reserve off Glen Huntly Road, Elsternwick...to witness its formal

Hopetoun Gardens

dedication for public use. The reserve is a spacious flat area, which has been ornamentally fenced, and includes besides artificially laid out gardens planted with over 100 young trees and numerous shrubs and flowers, a tennis court reserve and a spacious bowling green and a pavilion.” The need for Hopetoun Gardens became paramount because Railway Reserve (now



Above: Railway Reserve, note the original location of the bandstand now at Hopetoun Gardens.

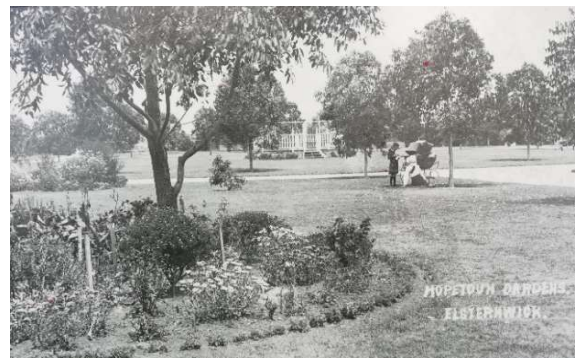
Elsternwick Plaza), adjacent to Elsternwick Railway Station had become too small for the crowds who attended weekend band concerts. It is situated on about two hectares which had been a market garden farmed by the Ilberry family.

The bandstand at Railway Reserve was paid for by public subscription and was moved to Hopetoun Gardens to cater for weekend music concertgoers.

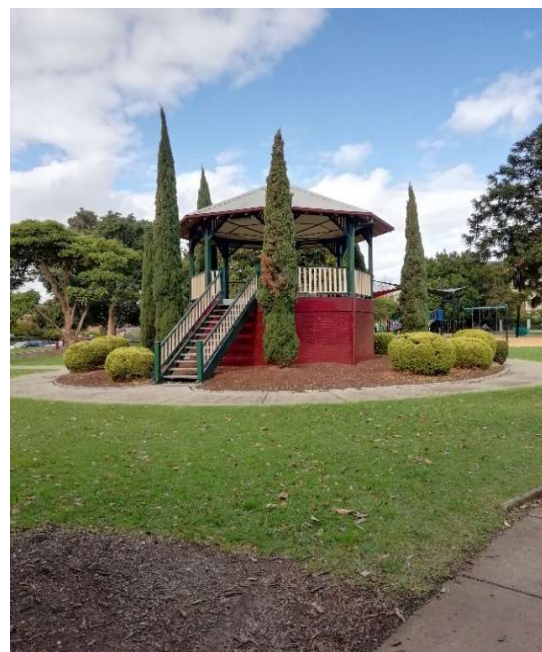
The bandstand was an integral part of the formal garden design and plantings that is still recognisable. The garden was designed by Thomas Pockett, who was Head Gardener for the Malvern Council. He had previously designed Caulfield Park.

The entrance on Glen Huntly Road was initially framed by two cannons. The bandstand is now obscured by the growth of a Cape Bushwillow, Tree No. 9 on the GECC Interpretative Tree Walk.

Significant trees in the garden design have been given identifying plaques as part of the 2015 refurbishment.



Above: Postcard Hopetoun Gardens, Elsternwick, circa 1910. The bandstand can be seen in the background. Image courtesy State Library of Victoria.



Above: Hopetoun Gardens bandstand today.

Hopetoun Gardens Cannons

The cannons were given to Caulfield Council in 1910. They were 2 of 25 ordered by the Victorian Government and had been mounted at Fort Gellibrand (Williamstown) to deter an anticipated Russian invasion. By 1908, the threat had passed and the cannons were dated technology.

The cannons were made in Woolwich, England. They are 80lb rifle loading guns with 6.3 inch muzzles. We have Gun No. 18 that has fired 293 rounds and No. 24 that has fired 284 rounds.



Above: Hopetoun Gardens, circa 1906. Photo courtesy of State Library of Victoria.



Above: Present day entrance to Hopetoun Gardens including cannons.

Greenmeadows Gardens



Above: Greenmeadows Gardens circa 1930s. Photo courtesy of Sand, Swamp and Heath.

The Greenmeadows Estate occupied by the Lempriere family from as early as 1863 was one of Caulfield's mansion estates. Its grand villa fronted onto Meadow Street with extensive lawns and a rear cow paddock. Greenmeadows Gardens were regarded as Caulfield's most beautiful.

In 1913, Caulfield City Council bought the paddock. The watering hole was filled, the ploughed fields levelled, flowers planted and winding paths led to a beautiful central floral display for a recreation reserve.

Today the park offers picnic tables, benches and a children's playground. (Sand, Swamp and Heath).



Above: Greenmeadows Gardens today.

Public Gardens continued

In the interwar years, the recreational needs of children were recognised. In Caulfield it was largely due to the work of Councillor William Wharington (1914 – 1926) who linked the need for playgrounds to both town planning and welfare.

“Wharington encouraged the Caulfield Council’s interest in, and commitment to, town planning. He contributed to the development of the Council’s building and allotment regulations and by-laws, and implemented his ideas on children’s playgrounds”. (*Sand, Swamp and Heath* p90).



Left:
Hopetoun
Gardens
today.

The History of the Caulfield Garden Club

A meeting in December 1944, of residents interested in holding a flower show in the autumn of 1945, resulted shortly afterwards in the formation of the Gardenvale and District Horticultural Society (G.H.S). I have been told there was also a Caulfield Garden Club in existence after the war, but I know nothing of their activities or when the club folded.

G.H.S. held both spring and autumn flower shows, in addition to monthly meetings at the Methodist School Hall in Jupiter Street, Caulfield South until the early 1990’s. Reorganisation within the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches created many changes and our meeting hall became part of the South Caulfield Community Centre. We relocated to St John’s Uniting Church, Elsternwick where we still meet today.

In the early 1980’s the club was facing closure. Thankfully, the club was able to keep going with a new name, new committee and a constitution drawn up under the banner of Caulfield Garden Club. (Incorporation was added to our title in early 2000’s).

As our local community is constantly changing, the club has responded to these changes over the years. The number of flower shows declined from two to one each year and since 2011 no public flower shows have been held. We now cater for a group of mainly senior members. Night meetings are not held during winter months, but outings feature throughout the year to keep us all in touch. We visit nurseries and places of interest that have proven to be popular. Plant sales, often in conjunction with St John’s fete, create a public face for the club and raise much needed revenue.

We are very proud that the club has celebrated 70 plus years so far.

Helen Reis
Immediate Past President – Caulfield Garden Club
Inc (A member since 1974)

Speaker Series – Scottish Migration to Australia

Speaker 1. March meeting - Dr James Donaldson is the author of *Farewell to the Heather: An account of the government assisted emigrants from the highlands and islands of Scotland to New South Wales 1837-1840*.

Jim outlined briefly the history of 18th century Scotland. He mentioned the union with England, the disbanding of the Scottish army, the division of property into crofts, the population explosion, the decline of the coastal kelp industry, high unemployment, and competition with the Irish for labouring jobs and the turmoil in England caused by the French Revolution.

England was Protestant surrounded by Catholic countries that included Scotland. The British Government was fearful that the Scots would emulate the French and the revolution would spread across the Channel. Scotland had very few resources, people were starving and living conditions were abysmal. People lived in long low houses without a chimney and shared with their cattle. Their stench (or “fragrance”) was unimaginable.

By 1836 the population of Scotland was 80,000 of whom 70,000 were destitute. The Edinburgh and Glasgow Destitution Committee gained financial help from Presbyterian clergy in England and with the help of John Dunmore (JD) Laing approached the British Government to arrange migration to Australia. In all 16 ships were sent, without informing the Governor of NSW who had requested from the British Government tradesmen under 35. The Scots were ploughmen or labourers and many falsified their papers. Conditions on the ships were more crowded than convict transports. There

was scant medical help and the death rate amongst women and children was extremely high. Typhoid fever was rampant.

JD Laing persuaded the Governor to keep the Scots together and as a group they played a significant role in pioneering the hinterland of Eastern Australia. It was a hard and lonely life especially for the women who helped their husbands, employed to work as shepherds and labourers for large landowners. They received a wage and also rations for the whole family.

Records from the time show that a child was born, on average, every 2 years. The maternal and infant mortality rates were high. Many children got lost in the bush and perished, although, a major reason for migration was to provide a better future for their children. Their Scottish legacy is still apparent today.

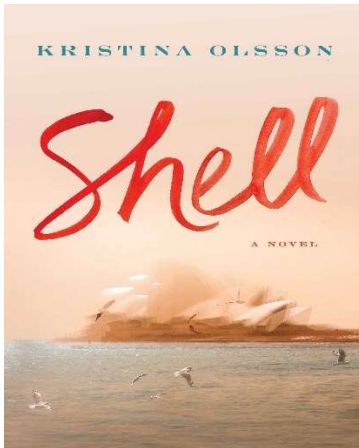


Left: REV. DR JOHN DUNMORE LANG (25 AUGUST 1799 – 8 AUGUST 1878). Photo courtesy of Wikipedia.

Arriving in New South Wales in 1823 as a young Presbyterian minister in search of a pulpit, John Dunmore Lang quickly immersed

himself in all aspects of the emerging colony. Fifty years later his funeral befitted a founding father not only of the Presbyterian Church in Australia but of the nation itself. Lang established the Scots Church as well as his own secondary school, the Australian College, ran three newspapers and served as a politician from 1843 – 1869. One of his many missions was to recruit clerics and respectable tradesmen and small farmers from the British Isles—anywhere but Papist Ireland.

Book Review: Shell



Shell by Kristina Olsson. Scribner, Sydney, 2018. This work of fiction, based on facts, covers a range of issues and themes.

For my review, I wish to dwell on the reaction of Australians to the building. The now iconic site had a difficult beginning. Too advanced for the average local, it acquired a variety of derogative names. Australians were certainly celebrating their “cultural cringe”. Constant negative press coverage fuelled these opinions. At the centre of the storm, was Jorn Utzon, the architect. The vocal majority did not share his vision and the outcome was not edifying. The story is told from several viewpoints: Pearl the journalist and Axel a Swedish glassmaker working on the site.

It was a period of great social and cultural change. The political scene was becoming passionate: women wanted more involvement in decision-making, foreigners were viewed with mild suspicion and the nation was divided over conscription and a pending war in Vietnam. Work on the contentious Opera House moved slowly. The reactionary attitude toward contemporary architecture was aired daily. Today the image of the Opera House’s soaring sails are used to say “Sydney, Australia”. I enjoyed this book and learned a considerable amount about the background. The characters were well developed and believable. It has a strong sense of time and place.

A brief timeline of the Opera House:

January 29, 1957: Jorn Utzon announced the winner of the design competition.
 1959 – 1966: Construction.
 November 1960: Paul Robeson sang on site for the workers.
 1966: Utzon resigned. A panel of 3 local architects saw the building to completion.
 October 20, 1973: The opening.
 1999: Utzon re-engaged to work on plans.
 2004: The Utzon room named.
 2007: Listed as a World Heritage site.

At GEHS we are working to identify and retain mid-century buildings and contemporary architecture. Unfortunately much has already disappeared from our local streets, where it was once so prolific. Frequently designed by highly respected architects, such as Ernest Fooks, Kurt Popper, Herbert Tischer and Mordechai Benshemesh who brought a taste for more open plan living, natural light and welcomed the outdoors inside. An honest approach in the use of beautifully crafted, natural materials such as brick and wood were exposed both internally and externally.

Each decade and era of building should be respected and fine examples protected to add to our streetscapes. We should encourage buildings that are designed:

- to utilize passive energy design and minimise the need for excessive heating and cooling.
- are more modest sized houses with better orientation on the block, allowing a balance of garden and building.
- to incorporate the planting of trees and bushes, real grass to keep soil and houses cooler and thus assist the built and living environment.

Review and Reflections by Carol Stals

Historical Cuttings from GEHS archives

**SANQUHAR - AN OLD CAULFIELD
LANDMARK TO BE CUT UP FOR HOMES**
The Argus 13 June 1956

"Sanquhar", 230 Kooyong road, a property of 6 1/2 acres with frontages to Kooyong and Glen Eira roads to be sold and will provide 34 home sites. The property has been owned by the Bell family, of Robert Harper Bell and Co. Ltd. A feature of the property is the large number of cypress trees, which all cost £2,000 to remove.

THE ALLISON LAYOUT
THE HERALD 30 March 1928

Artistically laid out and neatly kept, a garden gives an index to the character of the occupants. It makes a house a home.

Allison, Brewer Ltd., Bentleigh, is a garden contractor who will lay out a new garden or modernise an old one. He supplies trees, shrubs, roses, perennials.

ROSES IN JUNE
Prahran Telegraph June 1918

In the Pleasant Places of Caulfield

Thousand upon thousands of rose plants are thriving in the five acres of Mr W. Pearce's National Rose Nursery on the long stretch of the pleasant Glenhuntly road, next to Bambra road. It is nineteen years since Mr Pearce established the nursery, and every foot of the ground is well cultivated and stocked. Five acres of roses, standard, and half standard, bush roses in large variety, and climbers, vigorous, and healthy looking can be

found there So far as the professional and amateur gardener is concerned, and the latter may spend a pleasant and useful hour by taking a trip out to the nursery. Tramcars from Point Ormond and the Elsternwick railway station will take him as far as Hawthorn road, and the nursery is but a few minutes walk beyond, or he may wait at the Hawthorn road for a Glenhuntly tram, which will take him to the gate.

SUBURBAN FIRES
The Kew Mercury 30 January 1915

The office of the National Rose Nursery on Glenhuntly road, Elsternwick, was severely damaged by fire yesterday morning, and the contents, consisting of books and orders for supplies of plants and seeds, were completely destroyed. The outbreak was noticed by the workmen in the nursery, who used garden hoses until the Elsternwick and Caulfield brigades arrived. Mr Pearce, the proprietor, estimates his loss at £300/0/-.



Historical Cuttings from GEHS archives

MARKET GARDENERS TILLED THE SOIL

Exclusive to the *Kew Mercury* 1890

Camden Town, in past years, has been transformed from an open district of market gardens and heathlands. Rabbits, hares, snakes, birds of all kinds, deserted orchards, wild flowers, including red, white and pink heath, bracken fern and wild ti-tree shrubs held possession in many places where now the builders have transformed the whole outlook. In Glenhuntly road opposite the 773 state school, was a large open paddock, lined with pine trees the roots of which, above ground, spread all over the footpath. This was the favourite spot for the annual Camden Town sports.

*Named Hawthorn road, probably because the west side from North road to Glenhuntly road was a hedge of Hawthorn trees, which made a wonderful show in the autumn, when covered with red berries (*Crataegus monogyne* - Early settlers brought them from Britain).*

Collated by Claire Barton



Above: Greenmeadows Gardens today.

Upcoming Events

Wed 24 July: Annual General Meeting, Caulfield Cup Room, Glen Eira Town Hall, 7.30pm. Speaker: Deborah Tout-Smith. Topic: Museum Victoria's collection of clothing and textiles, and items relating to Glen Eira.

September newsletter theme: Stately homes in Glen Eira.

If you have anything you'd like to contribute to the newsletter, either on the theme or something different, please let us know. All contributions are welcome.

We thank David Southwick MP for kindly donating the printing of this Newsletter

Glen Eira Historical Society Inc.
A00741700U published this newsletter.

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Website: www.gehs.org.au

The Society is open on Tuesdays and Fridays between 9

The Glen Eira Historical Society Newsletter Committee members are Joy Mawbey, Janine Mayhew, Adriana Konidaris, Peta Van Horick and Claire Barton.