



Glen Eira Historical Society Newsletter

Number 9, March 2016

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Editorial Education in Glen Eira

This issue features memories of education in Glen Eira. Our varied educational experiences make us all experts on the subject. School days the happiest days of your life? Certainly not for everybody.

Caulfield was an affluent area so suitable schools developed. Small private schools, often called Dame Schools, were run in private homes and gave elementary basics to young children particularly girls.

Larger private schools appeared with Caulfield Grammar an important early contributor. Many churches also formed their own schools.

For the less advantaged, a Common School was established in Caulfield in 1864 by a board of men from within the community. Population increase meant more demand for schools and Caulfield 773 and Carnegie State Schools were later established in 1877 and 1888 to cater for the numbers. Educational needs also reflected the cultural and religious beliefs of families.

Public and private schools have come and gone, times have changed, and a variety of schools has been incorporated into the area. Glen Eira has excellent schools in both sectors.

The current increase in young families is causing an urgent necessity for more high schools.

**Carol Stals and
Geoffrey Paterson**

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

Where and what is it?



Where is this tower located?

Issue 8 solution

Wybar's Building at 345 Balaclava Road is an early commercial development. See <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/> for more details.

Then and Now Murrumbeena High Site

Murrumbeena High School opened in 1958 and closed in 1996. The 1964 view below contrasts with today's housing. Top photo from *Cogito 1964: the magazine of Murrumbeena High School*. Photographer unknown.



GEHS Future Dates

Details will be sent to members, are available on our website at www.gehs.org.au or contact the Society.

Wednesday 25 May 2016

General Meeting at 7.30pm

See page 5 for more details

Wednesday 1 June 2016

Newsletter Issue 10 deadline

Cultural heritage of Glen Eira

GEHS Past Events

Sunday 8 November 2015

World War 1 History Bus Tour



Photo Lois Comeadow

Wednesday 25 November 2015

General Meeting

The history of private school education in Victoria

See meeting notes on page 2

Tuesday 8 December 2015

Volunteer lunch



Saturday 2 January 2016

Barbecue with Box Cottage

Friday 29 January 2016

First day open for 2016

Sunday 20 March 2016

Party in the Park at Allnutt Park

Wednesday 23 March 2016

General Meeting

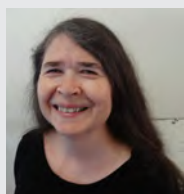
Return to Labassa Project

Vicki Shuttleworth

GEHS Display 15–19 February 2016

Community Pharmacy. Elsternwick

President's Column



How fortunate we are, by and large, to find familiar patterns in the way we live our

lives in our part of the world. At the same time, this Newsletter shows how the common experience of going to school can be markedly different person to person. Our contributors have again shared some wonderful stories and research about Glen Eira's rich educational life!

Since starting back on 29 January, our volunteers have moved quickly into completing projects (our local Newspaper holdings are all but ready to be added to our webpage), kicking off the next stage in others (storage of our artefacts) and starting new ones (transcribing of existing tapes of talks/oral histories). Of course, cataloguing our Collection continues to motor along too.

The first of our member (and friends) activities this year was at the Classic Cinema: *45 Years*. We plan to run a number of these in 2016 with appealing films at the start of their run.

We hope you continue to enjoy your involvement with the Glen Eira Historical Society and that you may encourage others to come along to our rooms and/or activities and perhaps join up themselves!

Anne Kilpatrick
GEHS President

Glen Eira Historical Society Inc A0041700U published this Newsletter.

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The office is open Tuesday and Friday between 9 and 12 or by appointment.

The Newsletter will be published in March, July and November 2016. The next deadline is 1 June 2016.

We welcome your contribution.

GEHS meetings and events

The History of Private School Education in Victoria

Wednesday 25 November 2015
Talk by Dr Vicki Peel



Dr Peel's talk and presentation started with a film clip from *The Getting of Wisdom*,

set in a Melbourne girls' private school in the late 1880s, showing the snobbishness and unkind attitudes of the students.

Private schools emulated the British *public school* model in approach and architecture, were based on such schools as Eton, Harrow and Winchester, were created by endowment, and built to impress. These schools and their founding dates are: 1855 – Scotch College and Geelong Grammar; 1858 – Melbourne Church of England Girls' Grammar, Geelong College, and Melbourne Grammar; 1866 – Wesley College; 1872 – Presbyterian Ladies' College, and 1881 – Methodist Ladies' College.

Denominational and Common schools were originally run by churches and received government funding.

1872: The 1872 Education Act enabled free, compulsory and secular education to be introduced and funded by the state. All students attended to the age of 13. All secondary education was provided by the private sector.

The 1891 MLC Speech Night report stated that it was 'training for future generations'. Girls needed training and their mothers should also be trained. This was a new view on female education.

1891: The Private Schools Association was established to formalise sporting activities. Oberwyl Girls School in St Kilda, conducted first by Madame Pfund and then Madame Mouchette, was a veritable feast of culture and refinement. Many schools

were in large mansions, which reinforced the domestic culture aspect for girls. These included *Tintern* and *Aldworth*.

Accomplishments curriculum featured *womanly skills* and manners. They didn't want to make it appear that the school was a moneymaking enterprise.

Governesses migrated to Australia to improve their social standing. They could also work in private schools.

1892–1893: Coeducational schools were introduced.

1894: University High School founded.

1908: Associated Public Schools Association was founded although the founder schools had competed against one another since the late 1850s.

Bidding for students for the many private schools was cut throat. Rumours abounded schools were closing to enable other schools to pick up their students. Staff constantly visited and worked the social circle to create an awareness of their school and that it was not closing.

Boarding was commercially very valuable. There was some separation in attitude between boarders and day students (day scraggs) as boarders brought more money. *Parlour boarders* were also encouraged where girls stayed until they were 18 to 20 and often saw themselves as equal or better than the staff.

In *Family Schools* small groups of students lived with the family running the school. Many early schools were run as brother and sister, or mother and daughter businesses.

In 1905, the Continuation School in Spring street was the first state high school which became Melbourne High School in 1912.

This talk provided an interesting insight into our early schools particularly in viewing the educational and social divide.

Report by Carol Stals

Recalling our state schools

This first section explores selected government schools in Glen Eira.

We have used the term *State School* to describe these schools. Articles on non-government education providers start on page 8.

Victorian Readers by Ailsa Hunt



My early school memories are of the Victorian Readers used in the 1930s and 1940s for grades 1 to 8.

The first grade book began with *I can hop, I can run, I can jump*. These lines were repeated over and over, adding a new word every now and then. At the back of the reader there was a spelling list and a list of how to pronounce and use joined letters – for example, **ou**, **au**, and **ie**.

By the second book, we were able to read fairly well, and I remember being quite frightened reading such stories as *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* or *The Hobyahs* who came creep, creep, creeping.

From the second book onwards, teacher notes in the back of the reader provided information on the author and other interesting facts on the story lines. Many stories would be considered politically incorrect today.

A favourite was the true story of the three Duff-Cooper children who were *Lost in the Bush* in 1864 near Hamilton and were found alive nine days later by Aboriginal trackers and a search party. Another memory is of *Simpson and his Donkey*.

The readers also introduced us to some of our best known poets: Wordsworth's *Daffodils*, *The Wreck of the Hesperus* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Banjo Paterson's *Clancy of the Overflow* and *My Country* by Dorothea Mackellar. We recited those lines over and over.

Over the years, I have referred back many times to those little books when looking for an author or perhaps the second verse of a poem, and I thank them for giving me the ability to read and appreciate the writings of others.

Glen Huntly State School No 3703 by Maggie Armstrong

In the early days of settlement, children from the Glen Huntly area used to walk along bush tracks (now called Lord Reserve) to attend Carnegie State School No 2897. However, a deputation was led to establish a school in Glen Huntly so one was set up in the Congregational Church Sunday School hall in Grange Road. It was referred to as an annex of the Carnegie school.

Glen Huntly State School No 3703, as an independent school, was officially opened on 14 March 1914 on the site located on the corner of Garden Avenue and Grange Road. The *little school*, as it became known, consisted of only three classrooms and as enrolments increased, it quickly became severely overcrowded. The idea of building a second storey on top was abandoned so it was decided that additional land on the opposite side of Grange Road would be purchased.

In August 1921, a three storey building with nine classrooms was completed.

Every Monday morning, there was a formal school assembly where the flag was raised and the national anthem was sung (*God Save the Queen* in those days) and we marched around the school yard with the assistance of the drum/percussion band of which I was a member. Even in the early '70s, the boys and girls were still playing in separate areas in the playground – we didn't dare go into the others' area.

I enjoyed my time at Glen Huntly and special memories include watching the July 1969 moon landing when all students were taken class by class into the front foyer to watch the event on TV.

In 1971, the pedestrian overpass over Grange Road was completed making it safer for all of us to cross. In 1974, Grades 5/6 spent a week camping in Taggerty. My teacher that year was former St Kilda football club player Bob Murray who also played in St Kilda's 1966 premiership team.

Sadly in 1981, a terrible fire destroyed much of the Senior school's administration area, staffroom and third floor classroom. The fire also destroyed honour boards, class rolls and photographs.



Photo courtesy of Maggie Armstrong.

Carnegie State School No 2897 by Richard Darke

I commenced my primary school life in 1956 in prep class (bubs grade). I remember nursery rhyme pictures on the walls. Each pupil had their own small blackboard and chalk, then butcher paper and large blue pencils to learn to write. The class slept on the mat each afternoon. Two rooms were divided by folding doors: the two prep classes combined sometimes for singing and storytime.

Grade 1: Our teacher Mrs Southam was Welsh and very kind and motherly. She taught us to sing and recite poems in Welsh. She always had a fire lit in the open fireplace in winter. The sloyd or woodwork room next door kept our fire supplied with wood offcuts and kindling. I can still smell our wet shoes drying in front of the fire. Most kids walked to school rain, hail or shine. It was in Grade 1 that we learned the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic.



Photo courtesy Richard Darke.
Carnegie State School Grade 1a 1957.

Grade 2: Mrs Couper was a very stern teacher. She must have come out of retirement during World War 2 and stayed on as did many other teachers during the 1950s. She used to sit kids in a corner on a stool with a dunce's cap made of paper on their head if they did not know their sums or spelling.

In the 1950s many of my classmates were migrants from overseas, mainly from Europe after World War 2. My friend George was German or Austrian and wore lederhosen. Vicki was

from a Slavic country and wore her national dress. We had kids from Holland, Czechoslovakia, Poland, England, France and China.

Grade 3: Mr Brown was a very nice teacher, young and enthusiastic. I had a very good year and I really started to learn and become interested in all subjects. We no longer had open wood fires, as new, modern gas heaters had been installed. Mr Brown was in the habit of sitting against the heater while teaching. One day he jumped up smartly with a yell, smoke issuing from behind him. The back of his trousers had a large, brown scorch mark. We all thought this a great joke. We had school milk every day. It was cold in winter, sometimes frozen on frosty mornings. Summer was worse. The milk sat in the hot morning sun. I can still see some kids throwing up after downing their 1/3 pint bottle. Some games we played in the playground were Charlie over the water, poison ball, tunnel ball, tiggy and chasey. The girls had hoops and swap cards, and the boys played marbles, played in the dirt with their Matchbox and Dinky cars, or dug for Christmas beetles. We all looked for emperor gum moth chrysalises in peppercorn and gum trees, then watched the big, green caterpillars turn into big, beautifully-marked moths.

Grade 4: Mrs Thompson was a very dedicated teacher who dressed very smartly in very high stiletto heels, tight skirts and very tight jumpers or twinsets – very Diana Dors-like! I remember we always seemed to be having to do social studies projects. I remember sending away to the Actil company for information on cotton growing and manufacturing of cotton products.

It was while I was in grade 4 that a news item was heard on the radio one morning before I left for school that Mr Downard of Downards Removal Company had been burgled and he had been

shot, not fatally, by the intruder. Mr Downard lived directly behind the school in Koornang Road and the thief made his getaway through the schoolyard, disposing of his gun and bullets as he escaped. Everyone at school that morning was talking about the robbery. Some kids had found some bullets and taken them to the Headmaster's office. My friend Cookie and I started hunting the grounds for the gun and, believe it or not, we spotted it under a bush quite close to the office. We ran to tell the Headmaster who had bullets lined up across the front of his desk. We were told not to touch the gun and we were interviewed by the police. I was very disappointed because I didn't have to go to court to give evidence. I thought it would be a day off school. Anyway, it was a very exciting day at school for young children.

Grade 5: Mr Woods was a bit of fun. I remember he spent a lot of time sitting at the piano in our room playing and singing *My grandfather's clock* . . . We all had to sing it as loudly as possible. He didn't care if we were disturbing other classes as long as we were having fun.

Something else I remember was school injections when a nurse roughly dabbed your arm then wham! A huge needle was stabbed into you by a sadistic doctor in a white coat and mask – very scary!

Grade 6: Miss O'Donoghue was an older lady and a very thorough and disciplined teacher. She was very organised and always gave you more homework than one could ever finish. However, I learnt more in sixth grade than in any other year. I also seemed to be a monitor for everything that year – blackboard monitor: clean the board at the end of the day and beat the dusters, ink monitor: mix up the large bottle of blue ink powder and water each morning then fill the inkwells in each desk. I was also a wood monitor. Some teachers still preferred to have a wood fire lit in their room even

though there were gas heaters installed. This meant you had to go to the woodshed at the back of the schoolyard near the toilets and bike sheds, split some logs and kindling and deliver it to the room. The teacher always set and lit the fire, considered too dangerous for children to do even though I had been doing this at home for years for my mother.

I was also a lunch monitor, collecting lunches from the tuckshop/milk bar across the road from the school. On some days, the mothers' club made lunches at the school, or you brought a cut lunch from home to eat in the shelter sheds. Boys and girls each had their own shelter shed. I was never a great academic at primary school, but they were fun days, especially if we went on outings to other schools or to the Melbourne Town Hall for exhibitions, e.g. Honey Week, or for a concert. We always had an assembly in the quadrangle each morning, saluted the flag, sang *God Save the Queen*, and recited the oath of allegiance.

And so ended my primary school years at Carnegie State School. My father attended the same school and was in the school band playing the cornet. My mother attended for one of her school years and my two brothers and sister also attended this school.

When each year finished we all shouted at the top of our voices *no more pencils, no more books, no more teachers' dirty looks!*

**Next General Meeting
Wednesday 25 May 2016
at 7.30pm in the Boyd Room
Carnegie Library**

Rosalind Mearns (Community Advocate, National Trust Victoria) will speak about the successful heritage campaign in the 1960s for, and subsequent restoration challenges of, Rippon Lea House and Gardens – a story for our times with the heightened tensions between development and preservation.

Caulfield Technical School by Carol Stals



Caulfield Technical School students 1922. PROV, VPRS 14514/P0001/8 Reproduced with permission of the Keeper of Public Record, Public Record Office Victoria, Australia.

World War 1 had ended and the need to provide new skills for a huge number of returned servicemen was the main basis for the Caulfield Technical School opening in 1922. This site is on the corner of Railway Avenue, now named Sir John Monash Drive, and Princes Highway.

The first classes provided the essential skills in blacksmithing, carpentry and wheelwright.

Caulfield Tech, as it was affectionately known, was the backbone of education and work skills for several generations of men and boys and it was a campus that grew.

Our newest member recalls being a student there in the early 1960s. His technical drawing and core curriculum classes were held in Murrumbeena Road in the old cinema hall, in a building next door (all now the Spurway Centre), and in the Church down the road, as the main school site was used for the trade subjects requiring specialty workshops.

Sir William Dargie, once a Glen Eira resident, taught art there. Many other staff members became well known.

The original building in classic education style is still remarkably intact. This, plus the glass

building with the rounded corner on Princes Highway, have heritage importance.

Over the years the courses changed, as did the name of the institution. Females were later admitted as students.

Originally named Caulfield Technical School, then Caulfield Technical College, it grew into the huge Caulfield campus

of Monash University, taking over the whole area, including some streets. From small beginnings, it is now a multicultural education force in our midst.

My Caulfield North School Days by Audrey Nelson

I enrolled in 1939 at Caulfield North Central, which meant it went up to Grade 7 and 8 or Form 1 and 2. The two main buildings are still there – the Junior School which went up to 3rd Grade and the main building for Grades 4 to 8. We had shelter sheds between the two buildings with boys to the east and girls the west side. On Mondays, we would assemble in the main building's forecourt, raise the flag and say a promise *I love my country . . .*

During the war we would go up to Caulfield Park which had trenches dug for safety. On Friday we went to the sea water Brighton Baths where I got my Junior Certificate.

When in the Senior School, a group of us played Roy Rogers or cowboys and indians amongst the gum trees that were our home.

In seventh or eighth grade, we would take dance lessons in a shelter shed down on the north edge of the ground. A Miss Binglet took classes where we learnt to waltz etc.

Mr Driscoll was our Principal for many years. Later when I was in Grade 7, Mr Honan took over as principal and also taught us Latin and French.

When I was in Senior School (I can't remember if we had it in junior), all except Jewish students attended religious instruction. We worked on exercise books with pens and pencils and we sat at desks which had an ink well hence we used pens with nibs. Tests were held in June and exams at year's end.

We used to go to a school in Elwood for sewing with students from Caulfield Primary. Other subjects were English, Algebra, Arithmetic, Geometry, History, Geography and English.

Murrumbeena High by a former teacher



Murrumbeena High School originally occupied a large parcel of land on the corner

of Murrumbeena and North Roads across from Duncan McKinnon Reserve. It had a relatively short history, opening in 1958 and closing in the 1990s under the Kennett Government's program of State school closures.

While it never had the academic cachet of McKinnon Secondary College with its distinguished music program, it was notable in the 1970s and early 80s for its forays into innovative curriculum development and community involvement.

That was the time when the Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association was fighting to improve the standards of teaching qualifications and classroom conditions. As might be expected, the then staff was divided into those who favoured a traditional approach and those who favoured a more progressive approach to education.

As the school had a high ratio of students whose family had a migrant background, the school

adopted a policy of trying to involve those families by organising, for example, Greek Social Nights to try to foster cultural understanding between the communities.

It also ran after school and evening activities such as Greek Dancing, Greek Cooking, and Creative Dance to which many staff contributed their time.

The School was innovative in many other ways including vertical streaming, descriptive reporting, team teaching, offering unconventional subjects such as Archaeology, allowing students to do Community Service at Creches and Old People's Homes and abolishing school uniform for Year 12 students.

The Arts played an important part in school life at a time when Maths, Science and English were the elite subjects. A feature of the school year was the School Production which enabled students of different levels and backgrounds to mix socially and develop skills in areas such as lighting, singing, and dancing.

As well, there was a strong Drama program. Murrumbeena was one of the pioneers in introducing this subject into the State Curriculum and in setting up a specialised Drama Room. It also incorporated a cooperative exchange with the then South Oakleigh Special School.

When the old Art Block burnt down in 1974, a state of the art new block centred around a courtyard was built with Art staff input and this became a centre for many activities. This, along with the School Hall, built with the support of the very active Mothers' Club and Parents' Association, was demolished when the land was sold for development.

Badge provided
by R Darke and
pennant by
M Armstrong.



Top right photograph shows Caulfield South Primary School probably in the 1940s. PROV, Caulfield South Primary School VPRS 14514/P0001/8. Reproduced with permission of the Keeper of Public Records, Public Record Office Victoria, Australia.

Caulfield South State School – 1 by Betty Neyland



Betty Neyland attended Caulfield South and writes about her school memories.

I started school in 1935 and walked to school with my older sister, Doreen. We lived at 59 Snowden Avenue so crossed busy roads including the tram track in Glen Huntly Road. This would not happen today!

I loved school except for two things. First, the toilets were at the end of the play yard in a dark red brick frightening building. So scary! It was so embarrassing if you wet your pants. This happened once and the teacher pulled down my pants and smacked me in front of the class. The second was reading in front of the class. This scared me!

The school was two storey and in Grade One I was chosen as the school princess. I stood with a grade 6 girl on the balcony in a white long homemade dress and waved to the whole school assembled on the grass below. I have no idea why I was chosen or the reason for the celebration. Perhaps it was because my name was Elizabeth, who knows.

I do remember the Monday morning assembly with boys masting the Australian flag and all with our hand on our hearts saying "I love God and my country, I will honour the King and cheerfully obey my parents, teacher and the law".

My grandchildren later attended Caulfield South prior to 1996. The school was so big with portables, indoor toilet and a new hall.

Caulfield South State School – 2

Lois Lowsby, née Caddy, attended Caulfield South from 1930. Lois has kindly provided a selection of her school reports and certificates.

REPORT FORM

Caulfield South State School, No. 4315

Half Yearly Examination, Held June 1937

Name Lois Caddy Grade IV

No. of half days School was open _____ No. of half days absent _____

Subject	Marks Gained		Subject	Marks Gained	
	June	December		June	December
Reading	10	9½	Mental Arith.	10	10
Recitation	8	8½	Geography	5	8½
Spelling	9	10	Science, or N.S.	8	8½
Writing	7½	8½	History (Stories)	8	8
Composition	10	10	Drawing	7½	8
Grammar	10	9	Handwork & Occupations	10	10
Written Arith.	8	10	Place in Grade	4th	5th

Remarks regarding progress and conduct: Conduct excellent

Lois Caddy Good work Teacher

Head Teacher _____ Parents Signature _____

Caulfield South School
No. 4315

**CERTIFICATE
HONOURS**

Name Lois Caddy

Grade IV Girls

Average Percentage of Marks at all Exts. 94½

Due of Grade

Ch Ryan Head Teacher

December, 1937

The Argus, 28 July 1937, page 13.



With no pupils to teach because of the closing of the school, owing to the outbreak of infantile paralysis, teachers at the South Caulfield State School are busy preparing lists of the names and addresses of scholars for the Health Department.

From State Library of Victoria Collection

1937: The Year polio closed Glen Eira schools by Geoffrey Paterson

Victoria has periodically experienced infantile paralysis (IP) but the 1937–1938 outbreak, which resulted in 2,096 cases, is particularly relevant to Glen Eira¹. The first cases were detected in Caulfield and Ormond before afflicting other parts of Victoria. The outbreak caused major disruption to, and closure of, Glen Eira schools.

The first report of the local IP cases in the metropolitan media was *The Argus* on 1 July 1937².

Updated reports to the two Councils later in July painted a similar story. The Medical Officer of Health report to Moorabbin Council on 5 July 1937 reads:

Four cases of Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis) have been reported. Confined to three families. All cases have been investigated and all precautions taken. So far no source of the infection can be traced. A detailed report has been forwarded to Dr. Merrillees of the Health Department. No cases have been reported since the 28th June. All these cases attended the Ormond State School. One case in Caulfield was reported. Patient attended St Kevin's School in Ormond. The Head Teachers have been visited and instructed. I do not think that there is any cause for alarm as the situation is well in hand³.

A report to Caulfield Council a fortnight later reported four cases in that municipality⁴.

The increase in the number of cases led to the declaration of a Designated Area extending from Dandenong Road to Patterson River. Most Glen Eira schools were inside this area and were progressively closed, starting with Ormond and Bentleigh East on 15 July (or 15.7), followed by Bentleigh West (20.7), Carnegie (21.7), Caulfield 773, Caulfield South, Caulfield Technical, Glenhuntly, Murrumbeena and Ormond East (26.7), and Caulfield North (2.12). Grades 3 and above in these schools had returned by 4 October and a weekly assignment of work was supplied to Grades

1 and 2, and to those grades not in attendance. IP recurrence caused Grade 5 at Caulfield 773 and Caulfield South to be reclosed on 29 October and 8 November respectively⁵.

It is estimated that 29,000 children were excluded from school in the Designated Area⁶ and lessons were distributed to the absent students (see photo below left).

How did this affect these children? We present here reminiscences of two students who attended local schools.

Lois Densham attended Caulfield South State School with her older sister Betty Neyland during the IP outbreak⁷. Lois writes:

All the Caulfield schools were closed for 6 months in 1938 because of the polio scare. The girl over the back fence died. Betty (my sister) and Ian (a cousin down in Elsternwick) had lemonade because they had a touch of polio and we stayed inside in the backyard behind the high side gate on the drive.

We went down in Uncle's car to a house in Barwon Heads to be safe from polio. I broke my arm. Uncle Gordon drove all the adults to Geelong Base after dark and I had my arm set. They drove me back in daylight next morning because we were from Caulfield and I couldn't stay in hospital. The polio scare still.

Brian Tidy attended Ormond East (now McKinnon) State School during the school closures. He remembers friends dying from IP and that lessons were regularly posted by mail. Children were sent to the country and interstate to avoid infection.

The Education Department decided to delay by one week the start of the 1938 school year.

References

¹ *Victorian Year Book* 1973, page 535.

² *The Argus*, 1 July 1937, page 4.

³ City of Moorabbin minutes 5 July 1937, page 388. PROV VPRS 14595 P0001/00009.

⁴ City of Caulfield Health Committee Report 20 July 1937, PROV VPRS 10975/ P0001/10.

⁵ Topic Files (Education History Unit) Polio epidemic PROV VPRS 15379/ P0001/15.

⁶ Education Department Special Case File 60, PROV VPRS 892/P0001/74.

⁷ See page 6 of this Newsletter.

Recalling our private schools

The articles on pages 8 to 11 outline selected private organisations and individuals who provided education to families in Glen Eira.

Mansion Schools By Peta van Horick

You may be familiar with the schools located in old mansions within Glen Eira, such as Melbourne Grammar School at Grimwade House (formerly *Harleston*), and Shelford Girls' Grammar School, at *Helenslea*. What may not be known is that Shelford School began in 1898 in a small cottage in Glen Eira Road.

Through our archives, we know of at least two other independent, women-led schools that operated out of mansions in Glen Eira, originating during the 1890s Depression, a time when many large houses were rented or sold.

The first, at *Glenmoore*, 1 St George's Road, Elsternwick, was rented by Annie Cowie between 1891 and 1902.

The other was Cromarty School for Girls, operated by the Day sisters between 1897 and 1923. Originally *Chiselhurst*, the house is now part of the buildings of St Joseph's Primary School, 28 Sandham Street, Elsternwick.



Cromarty Old Girls' Association tablet commemorating the Misses Day, located at St John's Uniting Church Elsternwick.

Sadly, we don't have many records about these *mansion schools* and their students. It would be unsurprising to find other examples of small schools located out of the larger houses owned by the early gentry.

If you have any information about such a school we'd love to hear from you!

My education in Glen Eira by Claire Barton

I began my primary school life in a genteel woman's home, *Holmbush* at 28 Balaclava Road, run by the sisters Agnes Stewart and Annie Catherine Mair. The home has long ago been demolished and is now the site of the Masada Hospital Complex. The little school had no more than eight children; at most, it would be classed as a dame school now. I wore a mid blue cotton uniform and a navy blue beret with an enamel "H" sewn onto it.

We had the usual wooden twin seated desks, with ink wells inserted. I do remember using a slate to write on, but also at some stage progressing to ink and pens. We had our penny papers that we put into our brown cardboard file, held via the cotton string in the spine of the folder. We sat and did endless lines of script writing, of letters *e*, *c* and *f* all in beautiful rounded script, supposedly! I remember a large blackboard over the fireplace, with a bison drawn on it and a poster of the time, an oilcloth type of fabric, with animals of the world printed on it.

Miss Mair, Agnes I think, always seemed ancient. A tall woman with white hair, with the ends tightly rolled up. She always seemed to wear a long dun coloured woollen skirt and matching jacket, maybe a high necked shirt and brooch underneath. Dull brown thick stockings and clumpy brogue shoes.

I cannot remember much about class subject matter, but do remember being taught drawn thread work on an Irish linen tea towel, basic beadwork on a square of our own hemmed muslin, adding the beads to each corner to

hold down over your milk jug, and then a knitted tea cosy, double sided in mauve and pink, in a block knitting pattern, intact and unused to this day.

There was only one classroom, and it would probably have been a lounge room, having the fireplace, prior to a classroom. There was a very cool and dark room next to the classroom where we hung our school bags and hats. I think there was a toilet there as well. Opposite this room was a three-sided room structure, that had a calico blind that could be wound up, facing a lawn. This is where we did our gymnastic/ballet classes. I can't imagine how Miss Mair taught us, she seem very angular. Our School Christmas breakup concert was held in here.

For sport, we played a genteel ladies game, croquet, yes at 5 or 6 years of age. The only problem was that we were not always good at getting the balls through the hoops, and under the house there was a cellar, which is where the balls went. Miss Mair had to get the cellar drained and balls removed regularly. We all had a small plot of land that we tended as well. As my father was a pastrycook, he used to make meat pies, and Miss Mair used to heat mine for me for my lunch. When anyone was teased – a boy called Michael was for wetting his shorts – the student was allowed to sit in the Mair ladies enclosed verandah, between their section of the house and the classroom. There was a back door on the property, which opened onto Mr Bickham's tennis courts, but I don't think we were ever allowed through. I left *Holmbush*, to attend MLC Elsternwick, a much larger school, starting at grade 3, a bit of a shock.

Ancestry tells us that the Misses Mair were classed as teacher and home duties. In 1912, the family were living in Parkville, with the two males in the family, Edward Hugh, a dentist, and

John Breircliffe, an accountant. In 1924, the two sisters lived in *Thornton House* in Hotham Street, Agnes home duties, and Catherine, bookkeeping. At some stage, Agnes taught from *Glenfern* on the corner of Inkerman and Hotham Streets, before moving in 1937 to 28 Balaclava Road with her sister until 1942. In 1954 only Agnes seems to have been at No 28.

My Education at Shelford by Andrea Casey

Shelford CEGGS in the 1950s was a small school, about 500 from kindergarten to Year 12 (Matriculation as it was then). The headmistress was Miss Violet Baddams from 1956 to 1962, the years I was a student there. Classes were small, about 25.

The winter uniform was beret and gloves, a tunic with box pleats, shirt and tie, jumper and blazer in slate blue-grey, grey socks or stockings and black shoes. The summer uniform consisted of a straw boater hat, gloves, fawn and blue checked dress, grey socks and black shoes. The gym tunic was blue with box pleats.

Discipline was meted out by awarding demerit points; these had to be reported during the weekly House Assembly by the girl standing up before everyone. The shame experienced was deterrent enough. There were four Houses: Langley (green), Lloyd (purple), Thomas (blue) and Blundell (red) named after significant figures in the school's history.

In Year 12, an experiment was conducted where Shelford girls doing science subjects walked to Caulfield Grammar to do Chemistry (six girls) and Physics (five girls) and boys came to Shelford to do Biology. All girls did well (one gained the top mark but wasn't allowed to receive the Science prize; she later married the boy who was awarded it) and the boys all failed. The experiment wasn't repeated.

Miss Baddams passionately believed in education for girls, refusing an offer of marriage because it would have meant giving up teaching. I well remember the day she swept into the Year 12 classroom (consisting of about 12 girls) and handed out University application forms. We all had to fill them in. Hairdressing or secretarial work were not an option for Shelford girls on her watch.

Jewish day schools by David Southwick MP

One of the most notable and distinctive features of the Melbourne Jewish community is the quality of Jewish day schools, many of which have been established in Glen Eira, educating nearly seventy per cent of our state's Jewish school age children.

The Jewish community has always placed a strong emphasis on education with many post-World War II immigrants to Australia wanting to give their children the education that was never available in their country of origin.

Glen Eira is home to many of Victoria's Jewish day school campuses; places of learning that in addition to providing the best academic education, also play a leading role in helping their students develop a strong Jewish-Australian identity.

I am reminded of the importance of this by a family member who,

after emigrating from Hungary after World War II, did not know he was a Jew during his time attending a local primary school. After later learning of his family background he attended Mount Scopus Memorial College, the first Jewish day school in Melbourne. Mount Scopus was established in 1948 to meet the educational needs of those seeking refuge in Australia following the tragic events of the Holocaust.

My wife Hayley, our two children Tyler and Paige, and I, all attended Mount Scopus College. The school's Fink Karp Ivany Campus is located in Caulfield.

In the years since Mount Scopus opened, ten other Jewish day schools have been established in Melbourne, many of these are located in our City: the Adass Israel School, Yeshivah College, Beth Rivkah Ladies College, Leibler Yavneh College and Sholem Aleichem College. Since the end of World War II, generations have attended local Jewish schools. Our history is important, as we must never forget our roots and the sometimes, long journeys of our family members over the years.

Next Newsletter Issue

The theme will be *Cultural heritage in Glen Eira*. Articles, photographs and memorabilia on the arts including architecture, religious institutions, multicultural heritage, clubs and societies, libraries, music and more are welcome.

Deadline is 1 June 2016.



Photograph courtesy of Andrea Casey. Thomas House at Shelford 1958. The building on the right is *Helenslea*. The tower formed part of the now demolished ballroom wing that was attached to the mansion.

Waverley Presbyterian School, Caulfield by Barbara Hoad

In 1920, the Presbyterian Ladies' College (PLC) in East Melbourne was bursting with 530 pupils. A decision was made to establish feeder or branch schools in the suburbs to lessen the load on the main school. One such school was Waverley* Presbyterian School in Caulfield which opened in 1931 with 23 pupils up to the age of 12. Other branch schools were *Coonarra* and *Stratherne* in Hawthorn, Malvern Preparatory School and Mentone High School (later Mentone Girls' Grammar).

Waverley consisted of two classrooms behind St Giles Presbyterian Church on the corner of Bambra and Neerim Roads in Caulfield. The church was used for morning assembly and scripture lessons by Rev Ashby Swan. In addition to the usual subjects there was Music and Singing, Art and Craft and sports days at Caulfield Park. The sports houses of Ivanhoe and Lochinvar affirmed the Scottish traditions. There was a lunchtime stamp club, tennis at nearby courts after school and a visiting teacher for gymnastics.

At the school's sixth annual speech night in 1936 Mr William Gray, Principal of PLC, East Melbourne congratulated the school for its achievements. He effused that "Children taught in the atmosphere of a Christian Church by Christian teachers are gaining something that is

beautiful, more durable than money . . ."

Teachers at branch schools were mostly PLC old collegians such as the first headmistress, Miss Bessie Sweetland, who taught at Waverley for 10 years. She was succeeded by Dulcie Cameron. Interestingly both women left teaching to join the YWCA War Services.

In 1938, Waverley and the other PLC branch schools came under the control of the Presbyterian Church. Waverley operated under church control until 1961 when Miss Clare Manning took over and opened Waverley Private School.

Miss Manning ran Waverley until 1979 when, due to a decrease in the number of primary aged students, the school was forced to close. It then became St Giles Presbyterian Church Pre-School under Deidre Cooper who had been Miss Manning's assistant. It continued as a pre-school until the early 1980s.

*The Waverley novels were written by Sir Walter Scott in the early 1800s and Waverley is the main station in Edinburgh – so it was a fitting name for a Presbyterian school.

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My Glen Eira Schools by Jan Armstrong

My first association with schools was in 1961 when I started at the **Seventh Day Adventist School** in Poath Road Hughesdale.

My mum selected this school because it was close to home. I was only going to attend there for a few years. In my prep year there were only two students within a rural type setting, a total of 22 students from prep to grade 6, all in the same classroom. I loved my teachers and stayed there for my entire primary years. I was flower girl at my first teacher's wedding. The school had an enrolment of 72 students in my final year with three rooms being used for instruction.

My secondary school was **Methodist Ladies' College in Elsternwick**. Coming from a rural school environment and being the only girl in most grade levels . . . I struggled to cope. I knew no-one and found the size of the school difficult to adjust to. Time was beneficial and I made some wonderful friends who I still catchup with for lunch once a year. MLC in Elsternwick later became known as Cato College in 1973. The year earlier I received a Cato award for being the best all rounded student in my class. I have many fond memories especially in Art classes.

My last teaching post was at **Valkstone Primary** in East Bentleigh where I taught Visual Arts to the entire school. The student population grew from about 330 students to 535 in ten years. Two external mosaic and ceramic murals can be seen on two outside walls. Numerous alterations have been made to classrooms and playground areas. A large fence has been erected for safety reasons during the school day and to limit vandalism on the weekends. The size of the playground areas has lessened as the population continues to grow. This school is a feeder school to the much sought after McKinnon Secondary College.



Photograph courtesy of the PLC Archive.
Students outside Waverley School on the corner of Neerim and Bambra Roads, Caulfield.

Registered School 1200 Glengarriff Elsternwick with Valda Clarke

Valda Clarke of Elsternwick was a student at *Glengarriff* Registered School No 1200 which was located in the Congregational Church hall in King Street Elsternwick. Co-Editor Geoff recently talked to Valda about memories of her first school. Beforehand, he consulted the *Glengarriff* file at the Public Record Office Victoria and discovered that Proprietor Miss Henrietta Deasey applied in 28 January 1924 to register a Primary and Sub-Primary school with an initial enrolment of 20 students. Subjects to be taught were Divinity, English Grammar and Literature, Nature Study, Arithmetic, Geography, History, Drawing, Brushwork, Needlework, and Class Singing. The standard included a kindergarten class and "scholars will be taught up to the standard of the 5th Grade, Education Department". The file also contains Miss Deasey's 29 January 1930 letter stating the school will not reopen¹.

Valda started at *Glengarriff* at age 6 and walked to the school across Glen Huntly Road with the girl who lived opposite. The school was held in one large room in a wooden building with a huge board and there were around 15 to 20 girls and several boys. Valda found Miss Deasey to be a nice teacher. There was a large lawn to play on. Valda enjoyed school including making friends with other students. Valda subsequently attended Elwood Central School, MLC Elsternwick and MLC Hawthorn.

¹ Public Record Office Victoria, School No 1200 Glengarriff King Street Elsternwick File VPRS 10300/P0000/23.



Photo Margaret Dunbar

St Anthony's Glenhuntly by John O'Callaghan

In 1910, the Parish of East Malvern-Glenhuntly was formed with Father Patrick Cremin as Parish Priest. He lost no time purchasing land on the corner of Grange and Neerim Roads, and arranged for the opening of St Anthony's Church School on 21 January 1912. The brick building consisted of four classrooms that could be opened to make a hall suitable for Church purposes. A temporary chancel and sacristy were also built. The school was staffed by the Presentation Sisters who for years travelled from Windsor each day. The first teachers were Sister Benignus McSweeney and Sister Michael Cagney. Following the opening up of the area in the decade after World War One, several Church Schools were erected by Fr. Cremin: St. Kevin's Ormond in 1924 and St Patrick's Murrumbena and Holy Eucharist Murrumbena North in 1929. By 1926 the initial enrolment at St Anthony's of 29 students had expanded to 350. Alterations to accommodate the increased numbers included a second storey with four classrooms and two cloakrooms. Over the years numerous other refurbishments and additions have been made to meet the changing needs of the community as well as the advances in technology. In 1976 the administration of the school was passed to a lay Principal with the Sisters providing support and services in the school until 1985. As a student in the 1940s, I have many happy memories of my time at St Anthony's. I am particularly grateful to the Sisters and lay teachers who laid such a firm foundation for both my secular and religious education and am pleased to see that this dedication to the education of their pupils continues today.

Note

The above is based in part on the book *St Anthony's Glenhuntly: celebrating 100 years*, which is held in the GEHS archive and is available for further study.

High School No 57 Elsternwick by Colin Kirkham

My mother-in-law, Muriel Morcombe, attended school in Elsternwick in the 1910s from age five years to at least age ten.

In her later years she described it as a small school in Glen Huntly Road, and the teachers names were Misses Birrell.



Among the prizes she received is a book containing this certificate dated December 1918 which describes the school as *High School No 57 Elsternwick*. D.W. Birrell is named on the certificate as Principal. The Misses Birrells were his two daughters Elizabeth and Margaret.



The school photo above, taken in 1914, shows the students along with one adult male and two adult females – presumably these adults are the Birrells. Muriel said the school was located on the south side of Glen Huntly Road between Shoobra and Downshire Roads. Its address was *Clonmore*, 216 Glen Huntly Road which is correct for this location based on street numbering at the time. Properties in Glen Huntly Road were renumbered in the 1960s and No 216 became No 480 which is now part of a group of shops.

Photo and certificate supplied by the author.

Book review



Pam Baragwanath and Ken James.
*These walls speak volumes. A history of
 Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria.*
Ken James, Camberwell, 2015.
ISBN 9780992308780

This large, beautifully presented volume just asks to be dipped into but you need a strong table. There are 704 pages packed with information and photos.

Mechanics' Institutes (MI) were local, independent, self-funded, self-help initiatives. They were the first voluntary systems of libraries, education and community buildings in Victoria.

Entries are in alphabetical order and include a short list of information and dates about each building. A photo is usually included. At this stage, I would also have liked a small map, marking the region, as the municipalities seldom meant much to me. Knowing the place was near a desert, coast, hills and forests would give the entry an entirely different sense of community.

Self-improvement was the catch phrase of the time. These halls were built from about 1854 to the 1920s. The Gold Rush assisted with population explosions, and the cities that grew often had several MIs. Ballarat had 11 including one for the extensive local German population.

The photos are wonderful, many show hard ordinary country folk with horses and carts, another a working bee with both sexes well represented. Others are of people peering into dilapidated structures or just chimneys and trees, very evocative.

Not all were small or built with local labour and locally felled and milled timber. Melbourne's Trades Hall building, *The Athenaeum* in Collins Street, Collingwood, Fitzroy, Geelong and Malvern, to mention a few, are grand, imposing structures.

They were built to suit local sites, budgets and communities. There was no fixed size or style and they were added to as time went by. Internal toilets and Gloria Pressure Lighting system were installed, and then eventually the celebrated electricity.

Many of the buildings had several lives, bushfires being their greatest danger, as well as arson, fires from open fireplaces etc. White ants were a recurring concern. Many were also shifted from one site to another, and photos show this.

The libraries were created with care but few resources, which usually had to be hard fought for. Many had elegant reading rooms with tables, lamps and comfortable chairs, where newspapers and a wide range of magazines could be perused.

Wonderful stories of dedicated librarians fill the pages including an older woman walking home several miles at night with a lantern. They were obviously early female employers.

Records tell the number of books kept, sometimes how they were

received, the number of loans and visits. Many were subscription libraries that later became free. Famous people like John Pascoe Fawcner generously donated many volumes to several libraries and Sir Redmond Barry gave some too.

The halls which held the libraries are the main story, as they record the heart and soul of the communities. Soldiers going to the Boer War, and World Wars 1 and 2 were farewelled and a lesser number eventually welcomed home. Weddings, parties, kitchen teas, funerals, school concerts etc were all held there. The rights of passage of a community were regularly witnessed. Dances and balls were a wonderful meeting place, however, one hall had a *No Dancing* policy.

As the needs and the structure of local societies changed, so did the Hall; movies and billiard tables were installed. Some were used as churches and schools until they could establish their own buildings.

Many are still going and proudly supported by their communities but their uses have changed as the groups in modern society have. I particularly enjoyed Pam's short story called *Dingo Flat* in the introduction of the book.

This is a superb reference text and has well identified references and a good index. Like the phone book, it isn't for reading from cover to cover, but for looking at local history, family history, and social history. It is a welcome addition to library shelves.

Carol Stals
GEHS member

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The above book is
 available from
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