



# FORREST HISTORY NEWSLETTER



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## FRESH FUNDS FOR OUR SOCIETY

We are most grateful to those members who responded to our call to renew subscriptions. They included:

Biddy Hammond, Ros Upson, Pat and Rosemary Murnane, Trevor and Pam Jennings, Ted Jennings, Bill and Joan Jennings, Annie Trew, Brian and Heather Neale, Delwyn Seebeck, Joyce Howcroft, Josie Llewellyn (Frizon), Maureen Ward and John Weickhardt, Frank and Jean Whitehead, Don and Jean Whitehead, Sue and Neil Harris, Joyce Howcroft for the Lion's Club, Darkie and Mavis Trew, Elizabeth Barbante, Audrey Miller, Mariette Deppeler, Sylvia and Alex Sanderson, Sandra and Cliff Cobbledick, John James, Beverley Frizon, Gillian Neale, John and Lois Hoult, Norman Houghton, Peter Shanahan, Kevin and June Matheson, Bev and Graham Mattingley, Phil Armistead, Barry and Glenda Gourley, Lois Kemp, Jenny and Ron Cunningham, Joan St John, Alf and Lorna Wilhelms.

## APOLOGIES FOR LAST ISSUE

We found it difficult to resist including that happy photo of 'Nan' Hoult celebrating her 100th birthday in our last issue. It was on file and must have been given to us back in 1909. Now John and Lois Hoult have kindly written to us to advise that Nan died on 2nd Sept. 2010 on the Gold Coast, but is buried in the Colac Lawn Cemetery with husband Oliver John. Please accept our apologies.

Sincere apologies also to the Frizon family for comments in the last issue which were offensive. They are unequivocally retracted and we regret any hurt they may have occasioned.

## FORREST FAMILY HISTORIES

This was the topic for our latest Society event held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2012. It was designed to capture those cases where families may have lived in Forrest or district for generations



and are able to trace their origin to grandparents who may have originated in England or the Continent and undertook that long and often dangerous journey by sailing ship to Australia where they had to make good, raise and care for a family. We had a number of family history presentations planned but some were unfortunately unable to attend. Peter Shanahan, the grandson of **William Pengilley**, the first licensee of the Terminus Hotel, Forrest (Geelong was playing at home) in addition to Frank Frizon, Bev

Whelan and Nora Potter who sent their apologies but fortunately **Peter Shanahan** and **Frank Frizon** were kind enough to participate in an interview on video which was played on the day and Bev Whelan provided an excellent summary on the **Whitehead family** for Jean Whitehead to present while Nora Potter provided a summary of the **Whelan family**. We also heard from Alf Wilhelm on the **Blundys** and Lorraine Evans outlined 4 generations of the **Evans family**. Leaving the best until last or at least to ensure we had sufficient time, Jenny Cunningham made a presentation on the **Curtis family** which was accompanied by an excellent 54 minute interview with Violet Harris (Curtis) on video made by **Jim Spiers in 1993**.



Typical route, London, Africa, Australia & return via South America.

## FORREST, HOME OF SPORT

*Read about our latest successful event, held on Sunday 9th September, in the next Newsletter. We were able to celebrate Forrest's latest Premiership after 7yrs.*

### CLAY BIRD SHOOTING

Lyle Trew, at 85, has made the first contribution to our **Forrest, Home of Sport** event. He remembers as a school child, his uncle, Cyril Fox, got him to work the traps for the **clay shooting** which he thinks took place on the other side of the railway line. (Does any one remember the location?) He felt a bit insecure in a little tin shed letting off the clay birds in different directions on call while shooters let fire with their shot guns over his head.

Lyle didn't ever come back to Forrest after he joined the army at age 18, but he has memories as a boy setting rabbit traps after school and skinning and stretching the skins. He also set net traps for eels. As a young footballer he remembers jogging from Forrest to the Oval then still having to do the mandatory two laps before training. He remembers going by train for away games and on the return trip, if they won, the driver would sound the Cock a Doodle Do on the train whistle coming into town. (but not if they lost!)

## PENGILLEY

Peter Shanahan's great grandfather Thomas Pengilley, Born 1832, came from Sunninghill, Berkshire, to the west of London, just south of Windsor Castle. He sailed to Australia on the 'Syria' in 1852 and came to Geelong where he had a shop in Latrobe Terrace and in 1858 married Ann Shipley. They moved to the Goldfields at Morrison's not far from Meredith where



Mary Ann Pengilley



William

his Grandfather William was born 1864. This mining town was remembered for a very large Chinese population. They later had a Hotel at Sebastopol, near Balarat and then became the first Publican of the Royal Mail Birregurra. Their son William married Caroline Martha Cullen (Born at Kyneton 1886) and they immediately took up the license of the Terminus Hotel at



Opening Day 1892, Hotel, Store, PO.

Forrest. This was the year the railway opened. They had 10 children at Forrest and left around 1905 to take up the license of the Apollo Bay Hotel where 3 more children were born. The last of these was Peter's Mother, Kathleen Shanahan. The original settler William Henry Pengilley kept a day by day diary of his trip on the 'Syria' from which we were able to hear extracts. He missed his family and hoped to return though it might be some time

later! They made an interesting stop on route at an Island 'Tristan Cunha' off the coast of South Africa. The whole trip took 16 weeks and 5 days. One particular event, recorded in the diary, involved several sailors who became drunk and the ship was off course. When tackled by the Captain a fight broke out and if it wasn't for the intercession of some of the passengers the Captain could well have been thrown overboard!



On board, Thomas Pengilley drew this sketch of an iceberg in the Southern Indian Ocean.

The full trip diary is in our archive if any member would like to read it.

## WHITEHEAD

Jean Whitehead brought to the meeting an excellent new summary prepared by Bev Whelan on the Whitehead family which we had not seen before. It was accompanied by some excellent new photographs.

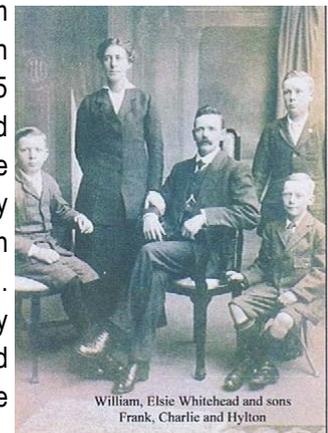
The Whitehead family originated from around Barnet, Middlesex, on the northwest outskirts of London. The fourth son of Edward and Maryanne Whitehead, James, born 1828, decided to migrate to Australia on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 1850 at the age of 21. He sailed from Plymouth on the

'Stag' arriving in Adelaide after a 3 month journey. Also on the ship was the 18 year old Elizabeth Richardson. We do not know if it was a ship board romance but the couple were married some months later in Adelaide. James worked as a gardener in the Adelaide Botanical



Gardens. They had 3 children, Elizabeth, James and Fredrick. They eventually moved to the Nhill area. Their life was based around market gardening and conducting a fruit and vegetable shop. They had 8 children in all. Their third child Fredrick James, born 1858, assisted his father in the market garden and in 1879 married Fannie Robinson at Mt Gambier, their eldest son William

born 1875 married Elsie May Smith in 1904. They had three sons,



William, Elsie Whitehead and sons Frank, Charlie and Hylton

their second, Francis Leo was born in Glenburnie, in 1906 and spent his childhood years at Gerangamete when his family moved there when he was 10 years old. He went on to marry Violet O'Neill of Upper Gellibrand (now known as Roadknight Creek) in 1925. They lived at Gerangamete for a few years and then resided at the corner of Blundy

and Grant Street for a number of years. The family moved to Hennigan's dairy farm (now Hennigan Crescent) on the Barwon River before buying a house in Main Street in 1944. Frank and Vi had a family of 5 during these years, Florence, William, Donald, Aileen, and Frank (jnr). Frank Snr bought two log trucks and carted timber out of the Otway's and later purchased two buses and became the local bus service transporting children to the secondary

school in Colac, footballers to football games, and locals to various entertainments. He continued the Whitehead love of gardening having a large vegetable garden.



**Violet and Frank Whitehead with family, Bill, Frank Jr, Don, Flo and Aileen on Christmas Day 1962, Main St, Forrest.**

## BLUNDY

When we made our visit to Yaughter we were indebted then to information on the Blundy family provided by Alf and Lorna Wilhelm. This time Alf was able to bring to our event a detailed account of the Blundy family with some great photos.

The Blundys originated from Rainham, a town in North Kent not far from the Thames. There were places nearby called Yaughter Lane and Yaughter Wood and it is presumed that that was the origin of the name given to the Parish following their settlement in Gerangamete.

Stephen Henry Blundy was born in 1836 and at the age of 15 along with his parents, Stephen Snr. and wife Jane and his four sisters and four brothers, arrived in Hobson's Bay on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 1852 as assisted emigrants on the "Lady McDonald", after 97 days at sea. As part of the conditions of assisted migration Stephen



**Stephen Henry Blundy**

and his older brothers and sisters were assigned as servants to various masters. However, by 1866 he had made his way to Sale in Gippsland and worked as a brick maker. He took up 28 acres at Briagolong, in Gippsland in 1866 and one of his first crops was Tobacco. By 1872 Stephen had won a

contract to supply 30,000 bricks for a new school which still stands today. The first hops grown in Victoria were also in that area of Gippsland. At that time Stephen's brother in law, Edward Usher, was already living at Gerangamete and Stephen moved their and took up land around 1876. When he applied for a crown grant for the property it was described as having a four roomed slab hut, two sheds and was growing Tobacco 2 acres, and hops 2 acres. By 1883, Stephen had married Mary Ann Morrison and started the generations of Blundy's to live in the Yaughter district. Stephen became involved in the local community being appointed to a committee to establish a church at Yaughter. He subsequently donated the land on which the new church was built. Along with being the first farmer to grow hops in the area, he made a substantial commitment to growing potatoes and was involved with other farmers in selecting the best type to grow. As the railway would soon be in service they also considered growing fresh vegetables and raising fowls and pigs.

Stephen Henry Blundy's wife, Mary Ann Morrison, whom he married in January 1883, was the sister of Catherine Ireland who had settled at Yaughter in the 1870's. They had 5 children, Cyrus, Elizabeth, Alfred Ernest, Florence and Catherine. Unfortunately, both Cyrus and Florence died of Diphtheria and Alfred who was considered to be too ill to

be taken on a long and arduous trip to Colac actually went on to live for 90 further years. The mother, Mary Ann, died at the early age of 36 and after the grandmother died in 1896 Elizabeth at 11 years became the housekeeper. Both Elizabeth and Alfred continued to live on the property for the rest of their lives. During the 1890's Stephen Henry had ceased growing tobacco and hops and planted many fruits trees, particularly apples, pears and plums on portion of the river flats. Alfred Blundy met Esther Lois (Ettie) White at church services held in the Gerangamete Hall on Dewing's Bridge Road corner and a romance developed which led to an 8 years engagement before they married in 1923.

Alfred and Ettie had two children, Lorna and



**Ettie, Alfred and Elizabeth**

Mervyn. Dairying was the main activity into the 1950's by which time Lorna was married to Alfred Wilhelms and moved to the Corryong area. Mervyn began to work in Albury in NSW. Elizabeth, Alfred and Ettie continued to live on the farm. Elizabeth died in 1966, Alfred in 1980 and Ettie in 1988.

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### Support for new History Centre

Supported by a 59 signature petition and a letter of support from the Forrest Community Group, The Mayor, Cr Stephen Hart and Cr. Lyn Russell visited the proposed site near the tennis courts and barbecue for the relocation of the Old Police Office on Tues. 21st Aug. At the Council Meeting the next day Cr. Russell moved an urgency motion to move ahead with the relocation. It was also supported by Cr. Brian Crook and Cr. Stuart Hart. As a 50 yr lease was involved the proposal will now be publicised to the community for comment. It was while we were looking at the ori-

### MARRIETTE'S SURPRISE

gins of the Frizon family that Marriette sprang her surprise. Francis Frizon was born in France in 1841. He came to Australia and settled in Ballarat as a watchmaker. Unfortunately his first wife died age 22. He then married Marriette Thomain, born in Amherst in 1857. From the front row Marriette Deppeler piped up saying, "yes, that's my great grandmother. I was named after her!"

They had nine children. The eighth, Laura, born 1884, was her grandmother and Laura's son Arthur Thomas her father.

### War Time Plane Spotting

It was conducted in a little shed about 50 metres from the Forestry Office towards the main town. The woman used to man it during the day and then men of a night, two men to a shift with one having a sleep for awhile then changing over. I remember Alan McGree coming in one night with a baby owl and they were trying to feed it worms and the worm's tangles into the feathers and had to be cut out – I don't think it survived. I remember all the drawings of the different planes were on the wall

## WHELAN

From the excellent material prepared by Nora Potter, we know that the Whelan's originated in Tipperary in the southern part of Ireland. Dennis Whelan, 24, wife Catherine, 30, and daughter Jane Whelan, 1 and a half, left Plymouth in July 1841 aboard the 'Lysander' and arrived in Geelong in October 1841. Dennis and Catherine had four more children in Australia, the first of whom was John Laurence Whelan, born 1843. He went onto marry Bridgette Stapleton, also Irish, from Cork. Their family of 9 included son Patrick John Whelan born 1873. Patrick, aged 12 worked with his father, John Laurence on contract grain threshing. About 1893 he settled at Forrest, farming where the present farm



Patrick and his bullock team

It was the ninth child, Alfred Edward Frizon, who married Queenie Harlock, both remembered by so many in Forrest and parents of Dorothy, Frank, Cliff and Josephine, such important contributors to our Historical Society.

so the people could identify them and phone through to the authorities whenever a plane flew over. I cannot remember how long it existed for. Dad was in charge of VDC in Forrest during the war and I remember our shed was full of guns, hand grenades, etc and when peace was declared in the Pacific, Dad went out into the back yard and was firing bullets into the air, also the celebrations went on at the hotel for some days.

*John and Lois Hoult*

is. By 1903 aged 30 years he was teamster with his own team of Bullocks working at Henry's Mill hauling logs and mill equipment.

In 1905 Patrick married Hannah Aida Newcombe, aged 22. Hannah was the daughter of Fredrick and



Back: William, Phillip, mother Hannah (nee Newcombe), Maurice, Hope, Alan, the father Patrick,  
Front: Norman, James, Frederick, Elsie.

Harriet Newcombe, and is believed to be the first white girl born in Connewarre in 1846. They had 9 children and Grandmother Harriet Newcombe, arriving on horseback from Yaughner assisted with most of the births. The last of the 9, born at Forrest was Alan Maxwell, (Tassie) and from there the story is familiar to us.

### Inter School Sports

David Frizon also came back promptly after receiving notice of our next event. He remembers when the Forrest Primary School was divided into houses for sport. Gold, Brown and Pink. Up until around 1973 they had interschool sports each year for a shield. Houses competed individually against other schools such as Barwon Downs, Gerangamete and Star of the Sea, Apollo Bay (who seemed to win most often). In earlier days Barramunga School also competed. Typical sports were sprints, potato race, sack race, tunnel ball, high and long jumps. He remembers that Ray and Colin Tebbles did well for Forrest. He was a bit too modest to say he did pretty well himself!