

# Hawthorn Historical Society



*Newsletter* •



*December 2013*



*Barbara Woodward receiving life membership to  
the Hawthorn Historical Society*

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# Hawthorn Historical Society

(Hawthorn Historical Society is affiliated with the Royal Historical Society of Victoria)

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	Ms Pamela Carter	
	Andrae Talarico	
	Elizabeth Love	
	Elizabeth Yewers	

## Hawthorn Historical Society Publications

**Faint traces: Chinese in Hawthorn  
before the Second World War**

Diane Nicholas & Mary Sheehan, \$12

**Hawthorn streets index**

Gwen McWilliam, (reprinted 2004), \$15

**Street Walks**

Gwen McWilliam, \$1



We can now send out your  
newsletter by email!

[hawthornhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:hawthornhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

If you would like to receive future  
newsletters this way.

## Hawthorn History Walks

Discover the history of Hawthorn with a series of self-guided walks produced by the Hawthorn Historical Society.

A booklet for each of the 18 walks is available from  
Hawthorn Library for \$1.00 each.

## News

### FAREWELL: MERL MERCHANT

Merl Merchant who died recently was an early member of Hawthorn Historical Society. Together with her husband Tim she was very active in the society in her younger years. As a librarian she was well qualified to work, with several fellow members, on historical records that have been important to our society and to Hawthorn Library.

She was also involved in the formation of the Boroondara Historical Societies' Association, and was its first secretary.

Many members will remember her as a regular attendant and helper at our meetings, until ill health forced her to limit her involvement. Merl was a keen supporter of HHS and a generous person with her time and her important recollections of the early days of our society. We miss her.

### WORKING WITH LOCAL HISTORY



We are excited to inform you that starting early next year, members of the Society will be working regularly in the Hawthorn Library Local History room on a set day and time each month (dates to be confirmed shortly). We will receive training to assist the Hawthorn Information Librarian, Elizabeth Obotaire, with tasks related to the local history collection, such as indexing, labelling, filing and creating local history displays.

This is a great opportunity for members to contribute, learn more about the collection, get involved with some research of their own and keep in contact with fellow members. We hope that having a regular 'presence' in the library will encourage visits from others in the community with an interest in Hawthorn's history and perhaps we can help answer a few questions as well. Please think about joining us next year

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SPEAKER – 10 NOVEMBER 2013

Our AGM was well attended and included a number of non-members (always welcome) who had come specially to hear our Guest Speaker.

Major General Michael O'Brian's subject was *The Lost Soldiers of Fromelles* and his presentation was outstanding. While, not surprisingly, it was quite a military-style presentation, this was interesting in itself. His use of maps showing the German and Allied lines, and his description of some of the tactics involved, together with photographic material, really brought home the horrors of war.

It also brought home, however, the value placed on human life in the magnificent work he and colleagues have been doing in recording the recovery and identification of the remains of World War I soldiers found in Belgium in 2007.

For those of us who can remember the days when many people would not talk about war, believing it was best forgotten, this is an incredibly important historical record that we have been privileged to hear.



Major General Michael O'Brien inspects a *Soldier's Penny* with Elizabeth Yates, a member of the audience.

## Website update

### NOVEMBER WEBSITE MUSINGS

One of the facts of life is that there is always more we can learn and discover, so I've been on a very steep learning curve over the last few months, upgrading my skills in website management. I feel our website is now taking shape and is starting to fulfil its promise of helping us preserve the history of Hawthorn – it's places, people, historic houses, public buildings and important events.



### RECENT ADDITIONS

The amount of new material added to the **Resources** section on the website, has necessitated the addition of subheadings so that our readers can find the material more easily. One of these new categories is **Families of Hawthorn** and I think this will be a useful way to provide information about important early community leaders and the lives of the ordinary families who lived and worked in Hawthorn over many years.

I'm now really pleased to have some interesting reading in this section for you. Not only do we have another Chapter from Geraldine MacFarlane's book *Hawthorn Sketches – Life in the Valley*, titled "Bill Ayles", but we have a fascinating essay also written by Geraldine, about her relatives George and James Burston - *What are we to do with our boys? – Contrasting masculinities in Early Victoria*.

Valerie Ling has graciously allowed us access to her *Reminiscences*. Her family first purchased No.10 Harcourt Street back in 1880 and her family have remained in Hawthorn ever since. In a future Newsletter we will have an article focussing on Val's childhood memories of attending school at Stratherne (now Rossbourne School) in Power Street.

We are currently working on material that is suitable for primary school students, to help them learn about the history of their local area. Two teacher resources will become available over the next few weeks. The first is to help students think more closely about some of the things they take for granted in their community – such as schools, parks and services, transport, sport and industry. We will have PowerPoint presentation entitled "How has Hawthorn changed?" – What was Hawthorn like back in 1850 or even in the 1950? What is it like living in Hawthorn today? How and why did things change? The second is a simple quiz focussing on identifying old buildings in Hawthorn. We also have additional snapshots in the **People** and **Places** section and new interesting and perhaps quirky pieces of information in the **Did you Know?** History section.

### RECENT RESEARCH QUERIES

We have responded to a flurry of inquires about houses, their history and past occupants and the impact of the development of the railways on certain areas. If you can offer any further information about the following please contact us.

- 39 Auburn Parade, East Hawthorn;
- 25 (once 17) Lisson Grove (*Ivanhoe*) and
- 45 Lisson Grove ( 1909) 53 Lisson Grove (1919)
- 6 Coppin Grove
- 17-19 George Street
- 14 Wellesley Road - home of Tuisko Turso Seppelt in the 1930s.
- houses in Lilydale Grove in relation to the raising of the Railway line.
- 208 Barkers Road - re an application to Council for the demolition of old house "*Walhampston*" built by 1867 and owned by Alfred Tabor.
- Uriah Cooper (resident in Creswick Street) and Robert Broome Ridler (butcher in Richmond and abattoir owner in Hawthorn)
- Information re the Outer Circle Railway for a documentary



# Hawthorn's Lovely Ladies



Hawthorn Historical Society



December 2013 No.3

Hawthorn has had a rich history since its European settlement in 1836 and this is reflected in the delightful diversity of housing styles. Over the decades, large homes were built with extensive gardens, for the 'well off', but also many charming villas and cottages, were built for the local businessmen and workers. This series of *Hawthorn's Lovely Ladies* aims to showcase just a few of the treasures to be seen as you walk around your Hawthorn neighborhood.

## Austin Street



This is one of several lovely homes in Austin Street, Hawthorn. Built around 1877, the houses is a fine example of late Victorian architecture, with multi-coloured brickwork and tuck-pointing. The style reflects the optimism of the period, during which houses became grander and more ornate than previously. Houses were usually free standing, with intricate iron lacework, complex tiled patterns on verandah floors, one projecting room and arched doors or windows. Often red or blue glass was featured beside the entry doors. It is worth a stroll past the house just to enjoy the spring garden.

Austin Street was named for the owner/builder Thomas Austin, who built a number of houses by the creek and in Majore Street between 1877-1881. The house is on land originally purchased by

Thomas Power in 1846 and later subdivided as Glan Yr Avon by Thomas Evans.



## Article

### FROM WORKHOUSE TO WAR AND BEYOND

By Elizabeth Yewers

How did a boy who apparently hailed from Deniliquin end up with his name on the Honour Board of a Hawthorn church?

Who would have thought that asking this question would take me to the workhouses in England, the training farms of NSW, Australian child migration and a glimpse of the literary scene in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Australia? Researching the backgrounds of the 223 soldiers and 2 nurses who served in World War I and whose names are on the Honour Board at St Columbs Church, Hawthorn, I came across G.F. Carmichael, Sapper Geoffrey Francis Carmichael, #7704. Most of the soldiers listed had next-of-kin with Hawthorn addresses, or they were born there or had known connections. But Sapper Carmichael was born in South Australia under a different name and his next of kin was his brother Keith in Deniliquin, his parents both having died by September 1915 when he enlisted, having just turned 19 years old.

Francis Geoffrey Mullis was born 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1896 in Adelaide, South Australia, the first child of Henry Francis Mullis (b. 1860, Northampton), an English architect, and Grace Elizabeth Jennings Carmichael (b. 1867, Ballarat East). Grace's father, a miner, died when she was 3 years old and her mother remarried Charles Naylor Henderson who took over operation of one of Sir William Clarke's stations near Orbost where she lived from about 10 until she moved to Melbourne when she was 20 years old.

Grace developed a love for the Australian bush, writing poetry, which was published, first in the *Bairnsdale Advertiser* and subsequently in *The Australasian* under the pen name of 'Jennings Carmichael'. She earned her living as a ladies' companion, became a nurse at the Hospital for Sick Children in Melbourne, producing a book, *Hospital Children*, an account of her time there, in 1891, and was considered to be a most gifted poetess by her contemporaries. She worked as a private nurse and continued to write and be published very regularly and to move in literary circles in Melbourne until her marriage and move to South Australia and then to England.

By 1901, Grace and Henry had two more children Thomas Clive (1898) and Archibald Keith (1900), born in England and were living comfortably in central London with a "sick nurse" (why?) and a maid. It is uncertain what happened in the next three years, but another two children had been born, Rupert Wyatt (1902) and Audrey (1904), and sadly both Grace and Audrey died in 1904 in the Leyton Parish Workhouse, West Ham, Essex. That Rupert's birth place is recorded as West Ham also suggests that the family may have been located in the workhouse by 1902. Was Henry ill and unable to work?

Early in 1909 it came to be known in Australia that three of the boys (Thomas had died in 1906) were in the care of the guardians of the Northampton Workhouse and nothing was known of their father Henry's whereabouts. Australian literary circles, particularly women writers, began promulgating this news in the local newspapers. In April of 1910, the feminist writer Catherine Hay Thomson wrote an article for the Argus Newspaper, appealing to the Australian public to rescue the boys "from *"the pauper taint"* so that they may be brought to their mother's country, placed under the control of some man of sterling worth, a farmer for preference where under guidance, in pleasant rural environment, they will have every chance of developing into useful citizens and of living peaceful, happy, and upright lives."<sup>1</sup>

Funds were raised for this purpose through public subscription. The Department of External Affairs was involved, the Premier, Mr Short consulted and in December 1910, Geoffrey, Keith and Rupert, aged 14, 11 and 8, arrived in Melbourne. On their arrival in Australia, the boys took their mother's surname Carmichael. They were met from their ship by three ladies who were secretaries of the committee dealing with their

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<sup>1</sup> The Argus 16<sup>th</sup> April 1910,

repatriation and then “*At the invitation of Mrs. Franklin, who is a distant connection of their late mother, they, with several members of the committee went to the Swastika Club, where light refreshments were served, and the children found acquaintance with some at least who have been instrumental in bringing them to Australia.*”<sup>2</sup> Their first period in Australia was spent at the home of a Mrs Edwards, at “Pine-grove”, Lennox-street, Richmond, previously the home of George Coppin until his death in 1906.

The boys were fostered in private homes from this point. It is unclear whether this was together or apart. When he enlisted in the A.I.F., Geoffrey stated his guardian was Frank A. Russell, 19 Queen St Melbourne and his next of kin as his brother Keith, living at Arrawatta, Deniliquin. When Keith himself enlisted, he stated his next of kin as his brother Rupert, then living at Eastleigh College (166 Williams Rd, Prahran) then later at Arrawatta but his ‘adopted father’ was R.W. Holmes of ‘Arrawatta’ (probably Richard William Holmes, also a stock agent in Deniliquin).

Geoffrey’s war service was unremarkable. He served in India and Iran in the No 1 pack wireless signal troop for the duration of the war, returned to Melbourne and was discharged from the AIF in June 1919. Frank Arthur Russell, Solicitor, Geoffrey’s guardian, lived at 6 Coppin Grove, Hawthorn prior to his marriage in 1910, with his father, Frederick Robert Russell (chief inspector of schools) and his stepmother Lucia Coles Russell. Frank Russell, was a young solicitor, with his brother in the firm Russell & Russell but was soon to become a published author and eventually, left the law and had a prominent career in Australia and overseas in journalism until his early death at the age of forty-eight in London. Early in discussions about the boys, Frank Russell said that his legal firm would be willing to train the oldest boy and also give him his articles in due course. And it appears that this is exactly what happened.

Following his war service, it seems that Geoffrey did take up the law. He worked as a solicitor until 1932, when, following an indiscretion, he was struck off the solicitors’ roll. He worked in various jobs, then in munitions during WWII, later as a public servant and died in 1978 at the age of 81.

Keith Carmichael (Archibald Keith Mullis) also enlisted in the AIF in May 1917 and served with the 57<sup>th</sup> Battalion in France. He suffered from severe gas poisoning returning to Australia in July 1917. He married Dorothy McMahon at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Burwood Road, Hawthorn, in April 1926 with a reception at “Manresa”. His brothers were in attendance. He worked as a railway officer and died in 1958 in Mooroopna.

Rupert was 12 at the outbreak of WW1 and did not serve but he did enlist in June 1940 to serve in the AIF in WW2. He worked as a farm labourer and lived near Horsham. In 1916 he was a student at Eastleigh College in Prahran then moved back to Arrawatta. From 1923 to 1929 Arrawatta Station was used as a Training Farm, one of several run by the state governments to equip child migrants from Great Britain for life as farmers in Australia. It was instituted in response to an overwhelmed social service system in the UK as well, particularly after WW1, a depleted supply of man-power in Australia. Boys were trained for 3 months before being sent on to work where labour was needed. The scheme began in 1911, was halted in WW1 and then operated from 1921 through until the Depression. Rupert was not brought to Australia under this scheme, but may well have benefitted from the training available.

When the Carmichael/Mullis boys were brought to Australia in 1910, the whereabouts of Henry Francis Mullis, their father, was unknown. In 1911 he was living at the Salvation Army shelter, *The Lighthouse*, in Baker-street, Spitalfields. This was one of the “Elevator” shelters which combined factory space with hostel accommodation offering men the opportunity to acquire skills with a view to their getting permanent employment. Henry declared his occupation as ‘architect’ and may have been using his drafting skills as there was furniture construction at this site. Hopefully he went on to acquire independent employment. In 1913, Henry remarried and he died in 1935 aged 75. It is unlikely that he ever knew his boys. The person who started the chain of events which brought the Mullis boys to Australia was Catherine Hay Thomson, whose life is interesting in itself; the young principal of Queen’s College Ballarat (later to be

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<sup>2</sup> The Argus 10<sup>th</sup> December 1910. The Swastika Club was a movement of women’s social clubs, in this case a literary circle.



amalgamated with Ballarat Grammar) in 1879 with her mother operating as housekeeper, Catherine was one of the first women to matriculate from the University of Melbourne. She co-founded the Austral Club, a literary club for women and in 1899 became joint proprietor of the *'Sun: An Australian Journal for the Home and Society'*. She worked as a journalist and literary agent throughout her life, marrying at the age of 60 for the first time, a widower 20 years her senior. She died within a few months of her husband in 1930.

The story of Sapper Carmichael's life and those of his family is a remarkable one. It tells of loss, changed names and changed fortunes and of national pride and care for the sons of the nation. And did they develop into "useful citizens"? It seems so. Did they live "peaceful, happy, and upright lives"? Let us hope so.

November 2013

## Gallipoli and Beyond 100th Commemorative Events

### Do you have any artefacts, diaries or photographs from the WWI era?

On 25 April 2015, Australia and New Zealand will commemorate the centenary of the ANZAC landings on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey. Gallipoli has special significance to many Australians. For the families of those men and women who served at Gallipoli, and in the many other battles and campaigns of WWI, the 2015 commemorations are particularly poignant.

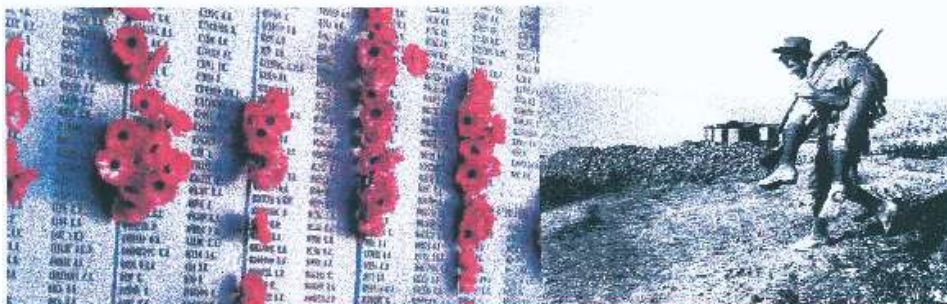
**We are seeking stories, diaries, photographs or copies of memorabilia from our residents to potentially be incorporated into a publication to honour the legacy and record the stories of WWI ANZACs from the Boroondara area.**

**If you, or someone you know, has items that could be included as part of this publication, or for further enquires please contact:**

**Jennifer Gazeas, Arts and Cultural Services.**

**Phone 9278 4770**

**Email [gallipoli@boroondara.vic.gov.au](mailto:gallipoli@boroondara.vic.gov.au)**



 **BOROONDARA**  
City of Harmony



## Forthcoming events

**2014**

### **40th anniversary of the Hawthorn Historical Society**

Next Year Hawthorn Historical Society will be celebrating it's 40th Anniversary. The committee has planned a wonderful program and we are sure that it will be of interest not only to all of our current members but to local residents and history lovers as well.

Activities will include lectures, a street stroll, historic church and school tours, displays, new local history publications, research sessions, newsletters, an Anniversary Dinner/Cocktail party and other social festivities.

Some dates are still to be finalised but please make a note of the following in your 2014 diaries.

#### **Guided walk through St. Columbs Anglican Church** **Saturday 1 March 2014 at 2pm**

Join Elizabeth Yewers on a tour of the Historic St. Columbs Anglican Church.



#### **Glenferrie Road Festival** **end March 2014 (date still to be confirmed)**

Join us at the Hawthorn Historical Society's stall at the Glenferrie Road Festival and engage with members of the community who have a real interest in the history of Hawthorn.

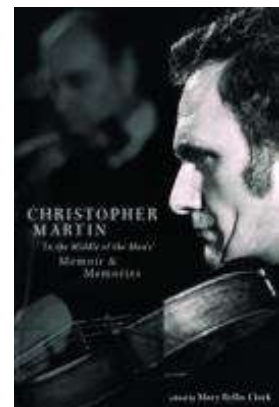


#### **How do I research the history of a property?** **13 May 2014 at 7pm** **Hawthorn Community Precinct meeting rooms 3 and 4**

Join Myra Dowling (Family & Local History Librarian with Boroondara Library Service) who will explain how to research the history of a property using the Glenferrie Hotel, and Annie Rosney as licensee, as a case study.

#### **Christopher Martin - Hawthorn Musician** **19 July 2014 at 2.30pm** **Hawthorn Community Precinct meeting rooms 3 and 4**

Mary Ryllis Clark, editor of the Christopher Martin "in the middle of music: memoir and memories", will speak of Christopher Martin a prominent Hawthorn musician.



**These events are not to be missed so we are looking forward to having you and your friends join us.**

*Hawthorn Historical Society*



invites you

to

**a guided walk through**

**St Columbs Anglican Church, Hawthorn**

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014**

**at 2pm**



**Founded in 1879, and conceived as a chapel-of-ease for Christ Church, Hawthorn,  
the first services at St Columbs were held in the current building in 1883.**

**The history of the church is closely bound with the history of the suburb and its  
people.**

**Members: Free of charge**

**Non –members: \$2 donation**

**Address: 5 St Columbs street, Hawthorn**

**Parking available in Patterson street with easy access to the Church**

**Enquiries: [hawthornhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:hawthornhistoricalsociety@gmail.com) or 0418 172 936**