people place heritage

CONTEXT

City of Whittlesea Heritage Study

Volume 1: Thematic environmental history

Final draft
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Prepared for

The City of Whittlesea

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Report Register

This report register documents the development and issue of the report entitled *City of Whittlesea Heritage Study, Volume 1: Thematic environmental history* undertaken by Context Pty Ltd in accordance with our internal quality management system.

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ABBREVIATIONS

DSE	Department of Sustainability and Environment
HV	Heritage Victoria
PROV	Public Record Office of Victoria
RHSV	Royal Historical Society of Victoria
SLV	State Library of Victoria
VGG	*Victorian Government Gazette*
VHR	Victorian Heritage Register
VPP	Victorian Parliamentary papers
VPRS	Victorian Public Record Series (PROV)

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PREFACE

The *City of Whittlesea Thematic Environmental History* comprises Volume 1 of the *City of Whittlesea Heritage Study 2010* (the Study). The Study builds upon an earlier Conservation Study prepared by Meredith Gould Architects in 1991 (the Gould study).

As part of its report the Gould study re-printed an existing history of the Plenty Valley that had been prepared by Paul Hicks in 1988, the *Plenty Valley Historical Survey* (the Hicks history). Despite being re-produced as part of the Gould study, the Hicks history was never designed to be a history of the City of Whittlesea, but an analysis of the Plenty Valley, which, in addition to the central and eastern portions of the City of Whittlesea, takes in sections of what is now the Shire of Nillumbik. As part of the Study, Context was asked to 'update' and re-structure the Hicks history. It was specifically asked to ensure that the new history was adapted so as to cover the entire area of the City of Whittlesea, rather than just the Plenty Valley, and to ensure that the new history was prepared in accordance with Victoria's Framework of Historic Themes.

This history is intended to provide an explanation of the themes and activities that have been important in shaping the City of Whittlesea so as to provide a context to assist with the identification of heritage places that illustrate the rich cultural history of the municipality. While the history represents an expansion of the existing Hicks history, we note that there are certain areas which are not covered by it. In particular, there were insufficient resources to allow us to undertake a detailed analysis of the area's Indigenous past.

The thematic environmental history should be read in conjunction with the other volumes of the Study. The terms used throughout this report are consistent with *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance*. A glossary of these terms and their meanings is provided at the end of this report.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This thematic environmental history provides an explanation of the themes and activities that have been important in shaping the present day City of Whittlesea. It is important to understand that this document is not intended as a complete social or political history of the municipality, but rather as a summary of human use and impact upon the landscape in the years since first contact with Indigenous inhabitants[1]. It is not a chronological record and should not be read in this way.

Rather, the history is organised according to themes so as to provide a context to assist with the identification of heritage places that illustrate the rich cultural history of the study area. These heritage places include buildings and structures, precincts, objects, ruins, trees and landscapes. The themes are also embodied in the historic or continuing use of places and people's social and spiritual associations with them.

While the majority of heritage places in the municipality will be associated with a theme in the history, not all places are and there may be some that are individually significant for reasons that are independent of the themes identified by the Study. It was noted that some places may in fact be associated with themes at a regional, State or even National level. For example, places associated with major infrastructure such as water supply where the significance of the place needs to be considered on a metropolitan-wide basis rather than just in the context of a single municipality.

The themes used in this environmental history have been adapted from Heritage Victoria's Framework of Historic Themes.

> *The consistent organising principle for the Thematic Framework is activity. By emphasising the human activities that produced the places we value, and the human response to Victoria's natural environment, places are related to the processes and stories associated with them.*

Finally, it is important to understand that the history is arranged not as a hierarchy, which gives priority, weighting and privilege to some themes, nor is it simply a checklist. One place may have many themes reflecting the integrated, diverse and complex way that places evolve over time.

On this basis, each chapter includes:

- A brief introduction, which includes an explanation of which of the themes identified in the Victorian Framework of Historical Themes is relevant.

- An outline of the history of the study area, associated with the particular theme, broken into subheadings for easy reading.

- Current and archival photos, plans and maps.

- A description of some of the heritage places associated with the theme. The heritage places mentioned in this report are not an exhaustive list; rather they are representative of the many places that the Study has identified.

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1 This is referred to as the 'post-contact' period.

Historical overview

As described above, this thematic environmental history is set out in thematic, but not chronological order. The following table is provided to assist in understanding how the historic themes are associated with key dates in the historic development of the study area. Please note that this table is indicative only of broad timeframes associated with each theme and reference should be made to the appropriate chapter in this environmental history for more specific information about the actual periods of influence for each theme.

Theme	Period of Influence														
	Pre 1840s	1840s	1850s	1860s	1870s	1880s	1890s	1900s	1910s	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s
First contact & European settlement		■	■	■	■	▨	▨	▨							
Settling the land		▨	■	■	■	■	■	▨							
Utilising natural resources			■	■	■	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	■	■
Transport & communications		▨	▨	▨	▨	■	■	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	■
Building settlements & towns		▨	■	■	■	■	■	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	■	■	■
The environment & managing public land						▨	▨	▨	▨	■	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨
Governing & administration			■	■	■	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	■	■	■
Community & cultural life		▨	▨	■	■	■	■	■	▨	■	▨	▨	■	■	■

■	Primary period of influence
▨	Secondary or continuing period of influence
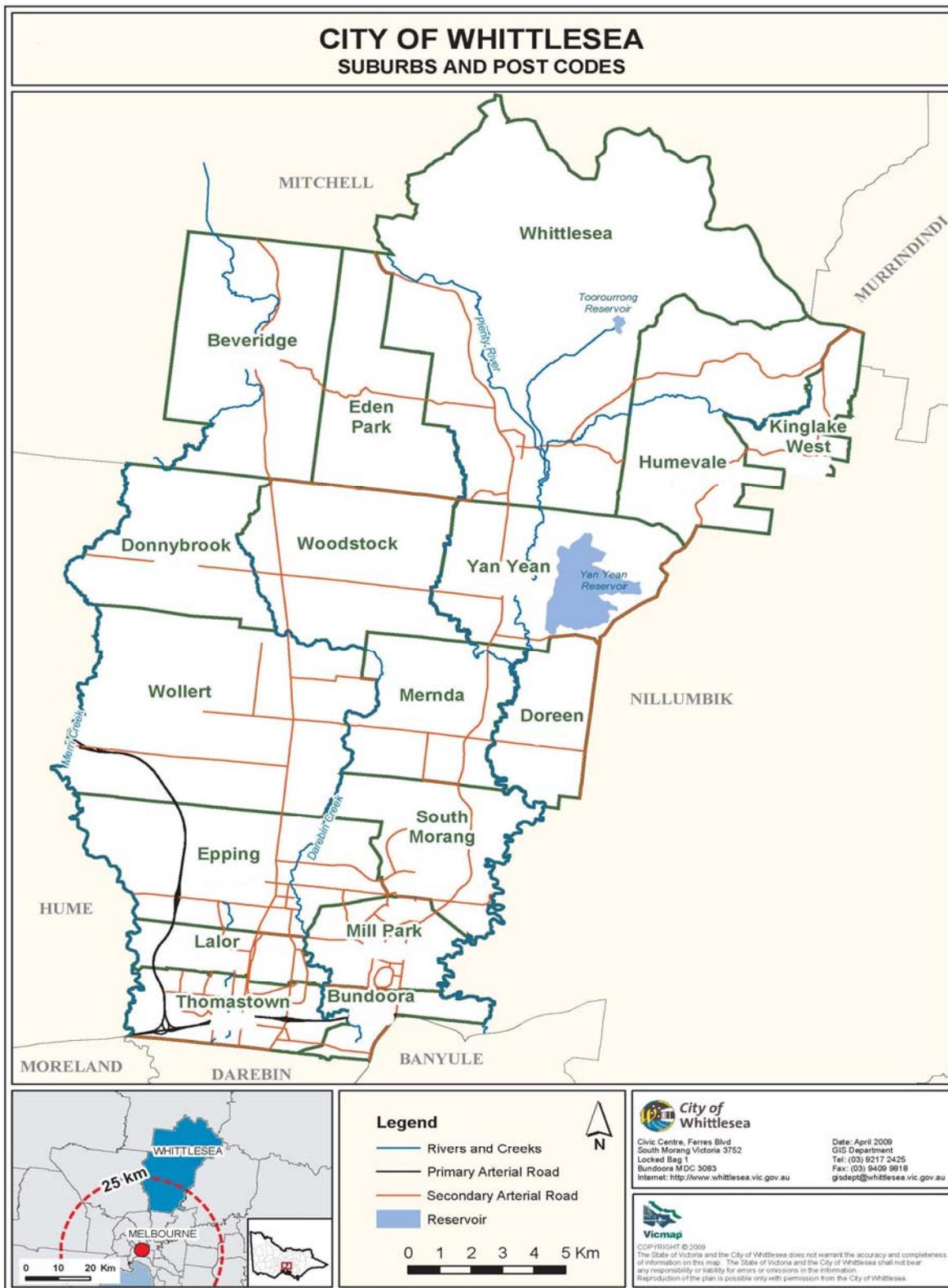
City of Whittlesea

Available from www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au. (Accessed 21.07.09)

1 FIRST CONTACT AND EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This theme addresses the sudden disruption of Indigenous life with the arrival of European explorers and pastoralists from the 1830s onwards. Dominated by the search for good pastoral land and the desire to identify and exploit resources, the newcomers brought with them a different way of valuing and interacting with the land.

This chapter incorporates the following Victorian Historical Themes:

- Tracing climate and topographical change
- Living as Victoria's original inhabitants
- Exploring, surveying and mapping

HISTORY

1.1 Tracing climate and topographical change

The Plenty River basin is the dominant geographical feature in the City. Within the basin there are three discrete regions. The first is the Kinglake plateau, the second the Nillumbik surface and the third the newer basalt lava plain.[2]

The Kinglake plateau was the oldest of the regions, created during the Mesozoic era. The Nillumbik surface was "an erosional land surface forming the basin to the north and east of Melbourne containing the Plenty River, Yarra River, Darebin and Merri Creeks and their tributaries".[3] The land was subsequently modified by relative changes in sea level, the outpouring of basalt and some tectonic movement.[4] The actions of the Plenty River, the Yarra River and Diamond Creek have removed much of the sand that was left during the tertiary era. The newer basalt lava plain was deposited in the western section of the valley about 1 million years ago and today forms the world's third largest basalt plain.[5] To the east of Merri Creek, the land sinks to form the Beveridge swamp, which contains flora and fauna species of national significance.[6]

1.2 Indigenous occupation and way of life

The geology of the land had an impact upon vegetation patterns in the valley. Early European descriptions note that the eastern side of the river was more heavily timbered, while the western side was predominantly grassland. The woodland forest at the southern end of the City was described as "dominated by various box and stringy bark eucalypts and a rich under-storey of shrubs, medium-sized trees and grasses."[7] In the north east of the City, near the boundary with the Shire of Murrindindi, the forests comprised mixed woodland and ash trees.[8]

In turn, the vegetation patterns had an effect upon the way in which the land was used by the Indigenous population. Before the European occupation of the area, the forested eastern section of the valley was home to a range of birds, possums and other small mammals. It

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2 Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works, Plenty River Basin Study (Phase 1), May 1976, 5-8.

3 Ibid.,

4 Ibid.,

5 Inquiry into urban growth boundary, Melbourne, 20 Oct 2009. See

www.parliament.vic.gov.au/osisdc/inquiries/UrbanGrowthBoundary/Transcripts/20.10.2009/3%20

%20OSISDC_UGB_Trenerry_20.10.09Corrected.pdf. (Accessed 01.02.10).

6 Ibid.,

7 Len Kenna, In the beginning there was only the land (Bundoora: Lions Club of Victoria, 1988), 10.

8 Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works, Ibid, Figure 10.

provided the Wurundjeri people (the traditional owners of the land) with sandstone, silt and mud stones for tool making.[9] In contrast, in the western section: "the thin soils supported a woodland of red gums among which could be found the bright yellow flowers of the Yam daisy in spring" as well as kangaroos and emus; while the river itself also provided water, fish and shellfish.[10]

1.3   Exploration and first contact

Captain W.H. Hovell and Hamilton Hume were the first Europeans (who recorded their journey) to travel overland from Sydney to Port Philip Bay.[11] The first description of the area now occupied by the City of Whittlesea appeared in their journal on 14 December 1824.

> *Having passed through the first plain… myself and Mr Hume ascended a high but single hill. In front from which we saw a very gratifying sight. This was a very extensive plain extending from west to south east for several miles with patches of forest which appear to separate one plain from another. But the whole appeared in front, say south, to be level but in parts in the plains some hills arose of a conical shape, with only here and there a few trees upon them. And all the soil of best quality.* [12]

Hovell and Hume's description of the land affirmed its desirability and, effectively, ensured that it would be settled. In 1835, after hearing about the area John Batman decided to investigate. He formed the Port Phillip Association and in May 1835 travelled to Victoria. After exploring the land, Batman, famously, signed his so-called treaty with Jagajaga (Douta Galla treaty) and other Aboriginal elders on 6 June 1835.[13] The events surrounding the signing of the treaty are vague, and (as the land had been claimed by the Crown) the treaty was also seen as worthless by Colonial Authorities. However, Batman's descriptions of the land around Port Phillip excited great interest.[14] Despite initial opposition from the Colony's administration, settlers began to flow into the region.

J.T. Gellibrand (a friend of Batman's who had prepared the treaty documents) was one of the first Europeans to explore the area, and on 12 February 1836 he recalled the naming of the river "Plenty":

> *We called the river the Plenty River as it is the only stream except the Barwun deserving the name River.*[15]

The River ultimately came to give its name to the valley through which it flowed.

Following Gellibrand's visit, the area was formally surveyed in 1838/39, in accordance with instructions from the colonial surveyor, Robert Hoddle. The survey not only measured and mapped the land; it also established two key north-south routes. The first was what became known as the Epping Road and the second the Sydney Road (now the Hume Highway).[16] The third major route, the Plenty Road, was gazetted in 1848.[17]

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9 Isabel Ellender, 'The Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes of the Plenty and Darebin Valleys', in Lucy Ellem (ed) Cultural Landscape of the Plenty Valley (vol 1) (LaTrobe University: Bundoora, 1995), 20.

10 Ibid.,

11 J.W. Payne, The Plenty: A Centenary History of the Whittlesea Shire (Lowden Publishing: Kilmore, 1975), 1.

12 Journal of Proceedings of Royal Historical Society, vol 7, 360. Quoted in Payne, Ibid., 1.

13 .J. W Payne, Ibid., 2.

14 Robert Wuchatsch, 'The Plenty Valley - An Historical Perspective' in Lucy Ellem (ed) Cultural Landscape of the Plenty Valley (vol 1) (LaTrobe University: Bundoora, 1995), 29-48.. "The country about here exceeds anything I ever saw, both for grass and richness of soil. The timber light, and consists of sheoak and small gum, with a few wattle." See www.onlymelbourne.com.au/melbourne_details.php?id=5579. (Accessed 24.06.09).

15 T. F Bride (ed), Letters from Victorian Pioneers (Heinemann: Melbourne, 1969), J. T. Gellibrand.

16 City of Whittlesea, Whittlesea's History, Available from www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/content/content.asp?asc=7&chr=h&cnid=1273 (Accessed 21.07.09).

17 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, III(a), 1991.

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2 SETTLING THE LAND: LAYERS OF SETTLEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Victoria's pastoral era began in the mid-1830s when pastoralists brought livestock, mainly sheep, across Bass Strait from Van Diemen's Land; or overland from the Riverina District, following Major Thomas Mitchell's exploration of new pastures south of the Murray River in 1836. It lasted until the 1860s when, as we shall see later in this chapter, a series of Land Acts opened up Victoria for selection and most of the large pastoral runs were broken up into smaller farms. The first pastoralists grazed their animals on vast areas of land illegally, thus acquiring the name 'squatters'. In 1836 the government formalised their occupation of the land by means of pastoral licences, for which pastoralists paid £10 per year. The pastoral occupation of what was then known as the Port Phillip District occurred rapidly. By 1850 all the best grassland had been taken up, with only the arid parts of the north-west and the inaccessible areas of Gippsland remaining unoccupied.[18]

The proximity of the City of Whittlesea to Melbourne and the resulting pressure for development meant that the squatter's grasp was weaker here than in more distant rural districts and, the age of the squatter lasted only a few short years. By 1841, the City of Whittlesea was included in what was termed the "settled districts" of Melbourne (a strip of land that ran within 40 kilometres of Melbourne, 24 kilometres of Geelong and 16 kilometres of Portland and Alberton in Victoria, and where farming development was encouraged and colony services provided).[19] As a result, the City of Whittlesea was quickly settled by small scale agriculturalists.[20] Subsequent selection Acts further eroded what remaining tenure the squatters possessed as smaller farms were developed and the land was aggressively cleared for more intensive land-use.

This chapter incorporates the following Victorian Historical Themes:

- Adapting to diverse environments

- Arriving in a new land

- Living off the land

- Promoting settlement

- Making homes for Victorians

- Migrating and making a home

- Shaping the suburbs

18 Tony Dingle, The Victorian: Settling, (Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, Sydney, 1984) 28, 68.

19 PROV, Land Acts in Victoria to 1884 (Govt. of Victorian, Melbourne 2008). See www.prov.vic.gov.au/peopleparliament/qt_landacts.asp (Accessed 02.03.10).

20 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, II (i).

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2.1 Early squatters and land owners

By 1837 settlement of the Plenty Valley had begun. In the beginning the changes to the natural landscape were, comparatively speaking, relatively small. Labour and capital were scarce and on most runs there were no fences apart from those around holding yards. There were no sown pastures, no fodder crops and only the most rudimentary buildings. Dingle concludes "Because they did not own the land and had no security of tenure, squatters kept housing and fixed equipment to a minimum."[21] However, in 1847 as part of the *Sale of Waste Lands Act*, new regulations were gazetted allowing squatters to purchase 'pre-emptive rights' to their homestead blocks.

Under the Act, pastoral run holders who previously held grazing leases (sometimes called 'grass rights') were able to purchase up to 260 ha. (640 acres) of their runs before any land in the locality was made available for purchase by the general public. This privilege was given in recognition of their pioneering efforts. This legislation gave landholders more certainty and thus encouraged them to construct more permanent and substantial homes, outbuildings and other structures, which began to alter the landscape of the study area, a process that was further accelerated by the selection era.[22]

Key early settlers in the City of Whittlesea, were George Sherwin, John Sherwin, Dr William Ronald, John Bear and Captain John Harrison. The large runs of these early pioneers sprawled across many of the townships and boundaries that have since been established. George Sherwin erected his hut in what is now the township of Whittlesea and his brother, John, took up an area of 10,000 acres east of George's property and between the township of Whittlesea and modern-day Kinglake (the area is still known as the Sherwin Ranges). To the north of George Sherwin's property Campbell Hunter (George Sherwin's Cousin) set up "West Lowlands", while to the north of Lowlands, James Kirk and Dr John Harlin took up their property "Glenvale".

To the south of Sherwin, Dr William Ronald took up a holding "Virtue Hall." To the west of him (over the Plenty River) was Captain John Harrison. East of Dr Ronald was the run of George Ryder and behind that land taken up by John Bear. South of Bear's property was land held under Crown lease by McLachlan and Campbell (1841-43) and later purchased by Patrick Reid.[23]

On the Plenty River, Charles Payne took up 16,000 acres and ran 500 cattle. In the south east of the City, Cornelius Haley took up land near Haley's Gully Road and founded "Allwood", (the name was later changed to "Caledonia"). The south and west of the City were dominated by the Campbell family. In 1839 James Campbell took up the run Campbellfield. Following his death, in 1841, Charles Campbell took over the property. His brother, Robert Campbell, took up the Kinlochewe run and held it until 1854 when he became insolvent. Finally, Neil Campbell took up land in the Parish of Keelbundoora.[24] To the west of the Campbell holdings was James Malcolm's property "Olrig", probably named after the parish in Scotland.

Heritage place – Lyndoch Park

Soon after taking up his pastoral run, George Sherwin built a slab hut near the Plenty River (probably on the opposite side of Lyndoch Park). In 1841 he travelled back to Parramatta, his birthplace, and married Margaret Thorne. On his return Sherwin commenced the construction

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21 Dingle, The Victorians: Settling, 28.

22 Peel., Rural Industry in the Port Phillip Region (MUP: Melbourne, 1974), 49-53.

23 J. W. Payne, The Plenty, 4-5; Lindsay Mann 2010.

24 Ibid, 6.

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of a more substantial dwelling. Lyndoch Park, as the dwelling became known, was erected over a long period from the 1850s by local builder, David Johnston. In c1900 a return verandah was erected around the house.

George Sherwin is remembered for his community activities. An educated, articulate man, Sherwin was instrumental in having the Plenty Road laid out from Melbourne to Whittlesea, and amongst other positions, was also the first chairman of the Whittlesea District Road Board, established in 1862. Today, in addition to Lyndoch Park, George Sherwin's presence in the district is commemorated by the presence of Hut, Sherwin and Paddock Streets in the township of Whittlesea.

Lyndoch Park
Context, 2009.

2.2 Selection and freehold land sales

The tracts of land taken up by the squatters were not secure though and the early squatters were rapidly squeezed out by a series of government land sales that opened up the district to broader settlement. This led to closer settlement with an increased emphasis on more intensive forms of agriculture such as dairying and cropping as major rural occupations. This in turn accelerated the process of change that was begun with the granting of Pre-emptive Rights and led to perhaps the most significant alterations to the pre-contact landscape of the study area until the advent of suburban development in the post war period. While the Pastoral era left few permanent marks upon the landscape, the advent of farming as well as legislative requirements resulted in a more visible pattern of development.

For example, one of the requirements of the Land Acts was for owners to undertake improvements such as fencing. New and increasingly large homesteads and outbuildings were erected, and fencing, hedges and windrows of trees were established to mark property boundaries, to protect stocks and crops from wind, and also for aesthetic effect. As a result, the relatively open landscape of the Pastoral era was transformed to become the more enclosed landscape that still exists in many rural parts of the City today.

In addition, the selection period also brought profound social and cultural changes. Whereas squatters were usually 'male, young and unmarried' and conditions made it difficult to sustain family life, the family became "the foundation stone of the selection era."[25] The selection era thus stimulated the development of larger and more permanent settlements, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

25 Dingle, The Victorians: Settling, 28, 68.

The first land sales in the City of Whittlesea area occurred in 1839 (just a year after the survey of the area had been completed by Hoddle); the sale was held in Sydney and the price asked was 15s per acre. Most purchasers were speculators, and had little long-term interest in the future of the district. They subdivided the land and either sold or leased the lots. The resulting smaller lots attracted small scale farmers, and the character of the district quickly began to change. The subsequent subdivision and the later development of towns increased the population and further changed the character of the area. Early developments appeared in Kinlochewe (near Donnybrook) (1839), Merriang/Beveridge (1840) and the Medlands Estate (c1853)[26] followed by Woodstock (c.1853), the Township of Whittlesea (1853), Egglestone Estate (near Hazel Glen/Doreen) (1853) and Wollert (1853). As a result, by the mid 1850s the Plenty district had established itself as a major pastoral and agricultural district, dotted with small towns. It was feted in Parliament as the "second most important district in the colony".

The discovery of gold had a profound impact upon the district, and upon patterns of settlement within the City of Whittlesea. Initially, the large numbers of people flooding on to the goldfields meant that there was a surge in the demand for meat and agricultural products. The prices of wheat, beef and hay all rose sharply.[27] The Plenty Road was also one of the major routes to Victoria's north-eastern gold fields. It quickly filled with diggers, traders and those carting goods to and from the goldfields. The steady flow of people through the district generated income but also encouraged settlement. As miners returned from the goldfields, some stayed in the area, swelling the population of the settlements. The passage of a series of Land Selection Acts in the 1860s was also designed to assist settlers of small means and to help them to pay off small holdings (40-640 acres). There were significant problems with the legislation, which was periodically amended; however, the effect over time was to aid the development of the area and encourage small farmers to settle in, and work, the area.[28]

Land speculation

In June 1851, Henry ('Money') Miller purchased 640 acres of land between one and two miles west of Morang, for £640. The land was transferred to his wife, Eliza Miller, but was then transferred back to Miller and, in March 1862, sold to Josiah Morris Holloway for £675. The land was then subdivided into acre lots and gridded without reference to land formation. The resultant plan featured a small town square and was neat and regular with nostalgic references to places remembered, such as Regent Circus, Portland Place, Oxford Street and Cheapside. The development was called the "Township of Separation." The first sale was of lots 1 and 2 to Henry Turnbull, two acres for £3, 8s. Later, James Cummings bought lots 505-9 and 515-19 for £2 each. Lot 204 between Sackville and Fitzroy Streets was bought by William Dods for £1, 4s, 3d. By 1865 Separation had 65 houses, a Methodist Church and a local school (operating from the church building). There is also some suggestion that the town had its own pub.[29] However, five years later the town was in decline. In 1882, the school was closed. The former church and school building was moved to Yan Yean; and later to Yarrambat where it was converted into a woolshed.

A similar though less successful attempt at speculative land development took place at Eden Park (See section 5.2).

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26 Payne, 89. There are, however, earlier reports of sales. See, *The Argus*, 19 July 1852.

27 Meredith Gould Architects, Conservation Study, II (iii b)

28 Meredith Gould Architects, Conservation Study, II (iii b)

29 John Waghorn, Interview with Leo Martin, 11.07.09.

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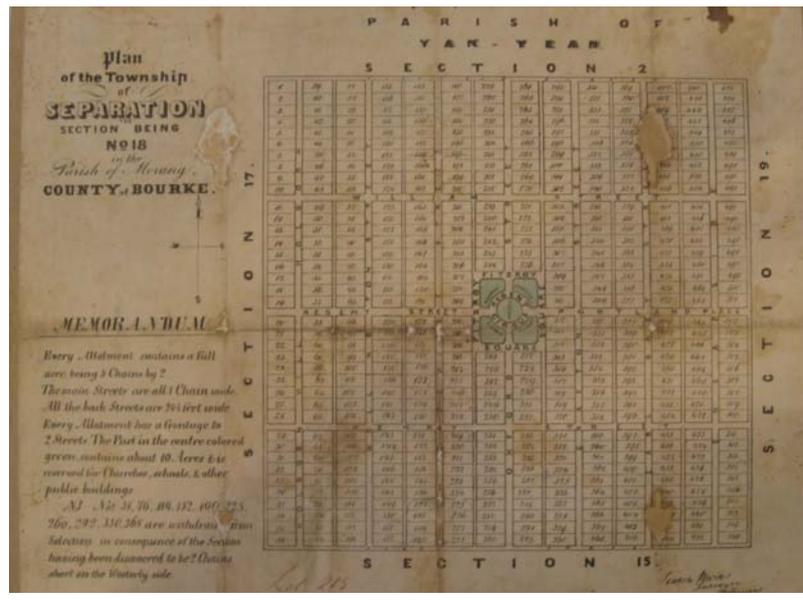
Plan of the township of Separation,

SLV Collection
MS 10784

2.3 Homestead Associations

Homestead Associations were essentially co-operative societies that aimed to provide their members with the opportunity to develop smallholdings. Under the *Settlement of Lands Act 1893*[30], blocks of land not exceeding 2,000 acres could be subdivided into lots of 50 acres and leased to a Homestead Association with a membership of not less than six people. Members of the Association paid a nominal rent, provided that they continued to make improvements to the land. The idea was not a success and the part of the Act allowing Homestead Associations was abolished in 1904. While these Associations only survived for a brief period of time, they did have an impact in the Humevale district—originally settled by the Edgar Wilkins Homestead Association, the Northcote Homestead Association and the Imperial Homestead Association in c1894. The history of the Associations tells of the community's struggle. The land selected was of poor quality, and farming was difficult. Two assessments conducted by a school inspector at the time reported that the community would not be able to raise the money to construct a school without assistance from the government and questioned whether the settlement would survive. Perhaps the difficulties experienced by early settlers are best illustrated by the fact that of the three settler lists available, in 1894, 1897 and 1937, there is a variation of 30% between the names on each list, indicating that (even once the Homestead Associations had been abolished in 1904) many settlers were unable to make a living from the land. In an attempt to survive, many settlers would farm poultry and grow fruit.[31]

Heritage place- 25 Gingles Road, Humevale

The property consists of Lots 27 and 28 of Section A, Parish of Linton. Lot 27 was first occupied by William James Brown, a farm labourer and member of the Imperial Homestead Association. In the first four years of his occupation, Brown constructed a four roomed house of palings, and improved the land by erecting fencing, and cultivating oats and potatoes. By 1910, buildings and improvements to a value of 120 pounds had been erected and by 1914, the original house had been converted to a barn and a four bedroom weatherboard house with an iron roof valued at 50 pounds, stood on the property. Brown obtained title to the land in 1914 and sold it immediately to Henry George Adams. It stayed in the Adams family until it was bought by Daniel Draper in 1940.

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30 The act was also responsible for creating other settlement initiatives, including "Village Settlements".

31 Payne, The Plenty, 121.

Lot 28 was first occupied by George Bassett from Brunswick East, also a member of the Imperial Homestead Association. By 1906 he had constructed a house (slab and bark roof measuring 24 feet by 12 feet and a separate kitchen, measuring 8 feet by 7 feet). The property was valued at 30 pounds. Isabella Bassett obtained the title in 1906 and the property was sold to Catherine Adams in 1919.

The current house was probably that erected between 1910 and 1914 by William Brown. If this is the case then the house has since had an additional room added, as a 2010 description of the property notes "a 5 room old timber dwelling in liveable condition, original hayshed". The 'original hayshed' in the description may be the original house.

25 Gingles Road, Humevale
Context, 25.06.09

2.4 Closer and Soldier Settlement in the 20th century

Government policy to promote intensive land use continued after the Selection Acts with the introduction of the Closer Settlement Scheme. The Scheme aimed to increase rural populations, promote intensive land use and increase agricultural exports. Under this legislation, the Government purchased large estates (usually large pastoral properties) and subdivided them into small allotments that were available for people with limited capital to turn into farms. The policy proved to be a failure, mostly because the allotments were too small to become viable farms. At Bruce's Creek (Glenvale), over 40 settlers took up blocks (of about 20 acres). Government grants helped to provide access to roads and bridges, but it was a minimal existence for most. The bulk of the settlers departed during 1914-18 and Glenvale as a village ceased to exist.

Despite obvious problems with the scheme, it was massively extended as a repatriation measure after World War I, when the Government attempted to settle 16,000 returned soldiers on farms throughout Victoria. The Glenvale area was subsequently taken over by the Closer Settlement Board in 1921 and 1,000 acres were subdivided in to small dairy farms. The subdivided land extended from Wildwood Lane (now Milky Lane) north to Towts Lane and from a line a mile west of Wallan road to a similar line, 1.5 miles east of Wallan road.

After World War II, a much smaller and better conceptualised Soldier Settlement Scheme was instigated. Under this Scheme three properties within the City of Whittlesea were purchased and subdivided for soldier settlement, and allocated to eligible-ex-servicemen. Near Wollert, *Coonan's Estate* was established on land purchased from the estate of Michael P. Coonan. It consisted of three small dairy farms of roughly equal size. On *Bridge Inn Lane*, 476 acres (between Wollert and Mernda) were subdivided into three dairy farms. Finally, F.J. Hill's

Summerhill Estate was created when 2,676 acres were subdivided and set aside for mixed farms capable of running sheep or cattle, with some dairying.

2.5 Migrating for opportunity

The settlers who came to the Port Phillip district in the 1830s, firstly from Van Diemen's Land and then overland from Sydney and the Riverina were overwhelmingly of British and Irish origin, although many, like Batman, were colonial born. From 1839 migrant ships began to bring people directly from Britain to populate the new Port Phillip District.[32]

Among the first non-British migrants to settle in the City of Whittlesea were German families who settled at Westgarthtown. The German settlement at Westgarthtown, which is discussed further in Chapter 5, was one of a number of German settlements established in Victoria between 1840 and 1860. Small groups of Germans also settled at Harkaway (near Berwick), Germantown (now Grovedale), near Geelong; at Greensborough, around Doncaster, Bulleen and Nunawading, and at Oakleigh. These settlers sometimes came to Victoria via South Australia.[33]

A second wave of migration began after World War II. Between 1945 and 1963 almost 1,000,000 migrants arrived in Victoria.[34] The majority (over 47%) arrived from the UK, but other nations were also heavily represented. Over 69,000 people arrived from Germany, over 65,000 from the Netherlands, over 40,000 from Italy, over 33,000 from Greece and over 28,000 from Malta.[35] In excess of 200,000 people classified as 'refugees' (with no country of origin given) also arrived during this period.[36] By 1972, as many as 60% of families living in the southwest corner of the then Shire of Whittlesea were described as "migrant families."[37] The introduction of large numbers of migrants into the community created opportunities, but also raised particular challenges- in particular, in relation to the provision of infrastructure and language services. A local monthly community newspaper -*Outlook* that covered the Thomastown area in the early 1970s featured articles in English, Italian and Greek. The paper continued throughout the early 1970s to promote the benefits of migration, stressing the importance of English classes for migrants and the difficulties faced by migrant communities.[38] Census data illustrates that since the 1970s the City of Whittlesea has continued to provide a home for many migrant communities and today the City has a higher than average migrant population - 61.7% of residents were born in Australia (compared to a nation-wide figure of over 70%). 52.9% of residents only speak English at home compared to a nation-wide figure of over 78%. The most common language (other than English) spoken at home is Italian (8.7%) followed by Macedonian (8.3%) and Greek (5.7%). Today the City of Whittlesea is the third most culturally diverse municipality in Victoria.[39]

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32 R. Broome, The Victorians: Arriving (Fairfax, Syme & Weldon: Sydney, 1984), 48

33 Peel., Rural Industry in the Port Phillip Region, 16, 27

34 Victorian Year Book, Migration to Victoria (Assisted) 1945 to 1963.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Outlook, February 1972.

38 Outlook, July 1971. One Article reflects upon the reasons that settlers returned from Australia. It notes that of those that left, the majority cited an inability to make friends as the primary reason for their departure. See Outlook, February 1972.

39 City of Whittlesea, Cultural Heritage Program Guide 2009, 7.

3   UTILISING NATURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

The rivers and pastures that attracted the first pastoralists to the City of Whittlesea also provided scope for more intensive land uses such as dairying, cropping and mixed farming. The presence of dense forests in the north and west of the city led to the development of a timber industry. Stone had been quarried from the early days of European settlement; however, the exhaustion of bluestone deposits in Melbourne's west led to a substantial expansion of quarrying in the district from the 1950s.

This chapter incorporates the following Victorian Historical Themes:

- Living off the land

- Grazing and raising livestock

- Farming

- Transforming the land and waterways

- Exploiting other mineral, forest and water resources

- Processing raw materials

HISTORY

3.1 Grazing and agriculture

The first graziers in the region were the squatters who came to the area in the 1830s. They carved out large tracts of land and set about generating an economic return from working their properties. However, the proximity of the Plenty Valley to Melbourne meant that the squatter's dominance was short lived.[40] The surveying and selling of the Plenty Valley proceeded apace and by the mid 1840s all land to the west of the Plenty River was in private hands. The squatters' passing was not mourned by the general population. On the one hand, the squatters' large runs were seen to deprive other, small holders of the opportunity to own and farm land. On the other, the huge runs and relatively low need for labour acted to stymie population growth. In Beveridge the earlier growth of the town was effectively stifled by the return to the region of the squatter, John Sherwin (Sherwin was also Member of the Legislative Assembly for East Bourke (1864-65) and the Member of the Legislative Council for the 'Southern' Electorate from 1866 until his death in 1868).[41] In 1865 one local commented, with obvious distaste that, as a result of Sherwin's activities, the town was "becoming more and more a sheep run."[42] By the turn of the 19th Century, Sherwin's property, 'Braemore' exceeded 6,000 acres in size, extending to the old Hume highway in the west and towards the foot of Mt Disappointment in the north-east.

The development of the agricultural industry in Victoria in the 19th century was assisted by farmers or agricultural societies. The Port Phillip Farmers Society, established in 1848, was the first such organisation in the Port Phillip district and led to the formation of branches in other districts from the 1850s onwards. Funding was provided by the Colonial government and the Society provided advice to the Government on "all matters concerning agricultural and pastoral matters." The importance of the Whittlesea area as an agricultural district was illustrated in 1859 with the formation of the Whittlesea Agricultural Society to encourage the "advancement

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40 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, IV.

41 Re-member, John Sherwin, 2004. See www.parliament.vic.gov.au/re-member/bioregfull.cfm?mid=858. (Accessed 01.02.10).

42 Stephen Skinner, quoted in Payne, The Plenty, 49.

C⊙NTEXT

of agriculture and horticulture," "improve the breed of stock", "make examination and trial implements" and to collect and disseminate seeds, plants and information.[43] The WAS held its first show in 1859, which became an important annual event, and continues today as discussed in Chapter 8.

Fred Kruger, Sheep and cattle station, Merriang
SLV collection. H2006.123/24

3.2 Dairying

The fertile soils of the Plenty Valley were perfectly suited to the dairy industry and dairying was practised in the area from the 1840s. By 1873, Stephen Morgan had a 2500 acre dairy farm with 320 cows and employed 40 men. Morgan's farm was one of the largest dairy farms in the Colony. At that stage though, transport of the produce to Melbourne was by horse and cart, along the Epping Road.[44] The arrival of the railway in the late 1880s provided local farmers with a far easier way to transport their produce to market, and assisted the growth of the industry. Subsequent improvement of grazing pastures, allowed the full potential of dairying in the district to be realised.

The type of production carried out initially depended on the proximity of the farm to its market. Until the development of refrigeration and improved transport in the late 19th century it was only the dairymen closest to Melbourne who could supply the growing urban market with whole milk. In other areas milk had to be turned into butter (or cheese) if it was to reach its market in an edible condition.[45] Thus, the dairying industry is often represented by two key phases; cheese and butter making predominantly in the late 19th century, and whole milk production from the early 20th century onwards.

In the late 19th century, the dairying industry was revolutionised by technological advances which included effective refrigeration (which allowed long-distance marketing of perishable products and more effective quality control), the development of the centrifugal cream separator, and the invention of the Babcock tester (which accurately measured butterfat content in milk). The increased use of fertilisers also allowed carrying capacities to be increased. These advances, together with the opening of the Whittlesea railway in 1889, created new markets for the dairying industry in the Whittlesea area and led to changes in production. For the first time, dairy farmers who were close to a railway station could despatch their whole milk directly to Melbourne by loading cans directly onto trains at the stations. The transport of milk by train continued until the interwar period when trucks began to assume this role.

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43 Whittlesea Agricultural Society, The Whittlesea District, foreword (Whittlesea Agricultural Society: Melbourne, 1949)

44 Outlook, May 1971.

45 Tony Dingle, The Victorians: Settling, 115.

These changes are reflected in the increased size of some of the dairy farms established in the early 20th century such as the Burnside Dairy.

Heritage place – Burnside Dairy

Burnside Dairy was established in 1922 by R.R (Milky) Kerr (the property had previously been devoted to wool growing under the name Kooringal). Kerr had a long history in the dairy industry. He had previously been a dairy supervisor with the Department of Agriculture and Red Poll herd supervisor at the Werribee research farm. Prior to moving to Yan Yean, he had been a partner in the Banyule Jersey Stud at Heidelberg. When he moved, Kerr brought 46 milking cows from the Banyule Stud and soon set about improving both pastures and buildings.

Over the years Kerr enlarged his farm. In the 1930s he introduced the use of clover and superphosphate on to Burnside. The innovations had a dramatic impact upon pasture quality and also the quantity of milk produced; other farmers, seeing the results soon followed suit.

By 1934 Kerr had commenced supplying milk to Melbourne's public hospitals. In 1938, the new Burnside Dairies (designed by W. Rutledge and built by S. E Greenwood) were opened by the Minister for Agriculture, Hon. E. J (Ned) Hogan. The local paper reported that "Between 400 and 500 guests were present at the official opening on Monday of the new pasteurising and brine cooling plant at Yan Yean". The property was 326 acres, yet it carried 340 herd of stock, produced 1000 tons of ensilage and 100 tons of grass hay per year, and gave employment to thirty people.[46] Water for the Burnside Dairies was supplied from a steel tank erected nearby on Sheoak Hill. The tank had been imported in sections from England and held 50,000 gallons pumped from the Yan Yean Aqueduct. The Burnside plant was the first outside the metropolitan area to pasteurise milk, and its capacity was able to treat the entire district's production.[47] Interestingly, when, following World War II, a small Soldier Settler Scheme was launched (See section 2.3) it was dairy farms that were created.

Burnside Dairy Building, Yan Yean
Context, 01.09.09

3.3 Quarrying

Small scale quarrying has occurred in the Whittlesea district since it was first settled. The area is rich in basalt (bluestone) that was used by local settlers to construct both their homes and the walls that, upon occasion, divided their lands.

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46 Payne, The Plenty, 199.

47 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, 13.14.

CONTEXT

The exhaustion of the basalt deposits in Melbourne's western suburbs led to the rapid expansion of the industry in the City of Whittlesea. Initially the quarries were comparatively small, and the Council sought to contain works to the area between Lalor and Epping, from High Street west to the Merri Creek. However, this was soon to change. By 1958 Alpha Quarrying Co had started operations and G. H. Reid started up the following year. Blue Metal Quarries established operations in the area soon afterwards and, in 1974, Apex Quarries opened a $2 million dollar complex near Wollert. By the late 1970s Apex was employing 40 people. Apex was taken over by Pioneer Concrete Services, which in 2000 was, in turn, taken over by Hanson Australian Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of Hanson Plc. In 2007, Hanson merged with the UK Company Lehigh Ltd. Through this process the Wollert quarry has continued to operate.

3.4 Timber

Logging in the Sherwin ranges started soon after settlement and gradually developed. The discovery of gold saw a dramatic jump in the population and a corresponding increase in the demand for natural resources, including timber. As a result, during the 1850s timber splitting for posts, rails and palings brought hundreds of workers to the Whittlesea area.[48] The early splitting industry was unregulated and the Mountain ash forests that had lined the northern and western reaches of the City were, in parts, stripped bare. The damage to the landscape, together with the disruption that was caused by the resulting erosion changed the landscape and polluted the newly constructed Yan Yean Reservoir, one visitor to the southern slopes of Mt Disappointment reported that "it would be difficult to imagine greater desolation than meets the eye… everywhere … the ground is covered with dead trees and vegetable debris in all stages of decomposition".[49] Following the establishment of a Select Committee, in 1876, to investigate the impact of logging on the Yan Yean Reservoir, a series of restrictions were put in place to limit damage to the catchment. These were controversial and had a significant economic effect upon the town.[50] To quote James Ryan (Shire Secretary): "the trade is banished from the district, property in the township is unoccupied and unsaleable, the road traffic is gone, the toll revenue has diminished to one third".[51]

Timber tramways

The restriction of timber cutting in the Yan Yean catchment did not mean the death of the township of Whittlesea, or even the timber cutting industry. In the short term the industry declined; however, the completion of the railway line to the township of Whittlesea opened up other areas to logging. Between 1911 and 1926 a wooden timber tramway operated to the town from the area around Flowerdale. The tramlines began at Whittlesea station and stretched to Kinglake West where "one route went north along Flowerdale road to Chandler's Mill at Stony Creek and a second in steep country up in the Chyser Creek, seventeen miles from [the township of] Whittlesea."[52] Timber brought in to the township of Whittlesea on the tramway was subsequently loaded on to railway carriages for transportation to Melbourne. Remains of the tramway still exist, in the forests of Flowerdale and along the Yea road.

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48 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, III (b).

49 Quoted in Payne, The Plenty, 179.

50 See Robert Wuchatsch, The Plenty Valley – An Historical Perspective, in Cultural landscapes of the Plenty Valley, Lucy Ellem (ed) (LaTrobe University: Bundoora, 1995), 40.

51 James Ryan, Whittlesea Shire Secretary, Quoted in Payne, The Plenty, 178.

52 Payne, The Plenty, 181.

3.4 Water

Creating a water supply for Melbourne

The story of the creation of the Yan Yean water supply system is a story about the development of Melbourne as much as the development of the City of Whittlesea. While the primary purpose of the system was to supply water to the City of Melbourne, the impact of the Reservoir upon settlement in the Whittlesea district was significant.

In 1850 the City of Melbourne charged the engineer James Blackburn, with the task of finding a reliable source of water for the growing population of Melbourne.[53] In 1851, Blackburn reported to the Melbourne City Council on his investigations as to the best site to build a new water supply. He proposed to harvest the waters of the Plenty River (and its tributaries), which had its source at Mount Disappointment, (north of the township of Whittlesea) and to convey the water to the city through means of gravitation.[54] Blackburn's selection of the Plenty River as the source of the new supply rested on the relative purity of the proposed catchment area; the economical benefits of a close proximity to Melbourne (compared, for example, with the Upper Yarra); and a sufficient gravity fall through the Plenty Valley to Melbourne. The Melbourne Council had been earlier advised in 1843 of a similar proposal by Patrick Reid, a farmer in the Plenty River region.[55]

The Council was enthusiastic, but ultimately high costs precluded it from taking on the work. It decided against the Plenty River scheme and instead tried to raise funds for a cheaper reservoir above Dight's Falls.[56] However, the new Victorian Government had little faith in the ability of a municipal council to execute such an ambitious engineering undertaking and was unwilling to provide the necessary funding. A Select Committee, formed in 1851, recommended that the business of building a water supply and sewerage system should rest with the Victorian Colonial Government.[57] In 1853, the Victorian Government appointed a Board of Commission of Sewers and Water Supply (the Water Board) to investigate options for supplying the City of Melbourne with water, to operate the city's sewers and water supply and to levy water rates on the public. The Committee, in turn, appointed a British engineer, Matthew Bullock Jackson to investigate the various schemes that had been proposed.[58] Jackson concluded that "a scheme developed by the late James Blackburn Esq was, with some modifications, the best that could be devised."[59] Blackburn had initially proposed that the Plenty river be diverted, so that its entire length would be brought into the northern end of the reservoir valley and pass out over a by-wash at the southern end, before re-entering the river's normal course. The plan was intended to promote the water's "circulation."[60] Ultimately, Jackson amended the proposal to construct the current inlet channel which, originally, tapped into the Plenty just south of Cades Lane.[61] The development of this scheme became known as the Yan Yean water supply system.

The Yan Yean project was Melbourne's first large-scale engineering water supply system and the first such system to be completed in Australia. Work began on the Yan Yean Reservoir in 1853 and in 31 December 1857 a large crowd assembled at the valve house in Carlton Gardens to witness Major-General Edward Macarthur, deputising for the Governor, turning on the Yan Yean water supply. A procession then moved through the streets to the standpipe on the

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54 E.G R itchie,. The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works: Notes on the Melbourne Water Supply, 20 December 1902 (MMBW: Melbourne, 1902), 1.

55 Ibid, 109.

56 J.C Jessup, & MMBW, An Historical Survey of Melbourne's Water Supply (MMBW: Melbourne, 1954), 11.

57 R.C Seegar,. 'The history of Melbourne's water supply', Victorian Historical Magazine, vol. 19, 1941–42, 116 .

58 The Argus, 5 June 1854.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.

61 Information from Lindsay Mann, Private Correspondence, 27 January 2010.

corner of Elizabeth and Flinders streets, where the Chairman of the Commission turned on a jet of water that "projected sixty or seventy feet in a perpendicular direction", splashing the onlookers.[62]

Harold John Graham, Yan Yean Reservoir, the Embankment

National Library of Australia. nla. pic-an6439249-v.

Despite initial enthusiasm for the system, major problems soon emerged with both the quality and quantity of the water supply. A high incidence of illness in Melbourne, thought to be the result of lead-poisoning, was blamed on the new tin-lined lead pipes, which turned out to be faulty. Many people refused to drink the Yan Yean water and instead relied on rainwater tanks. Two governmental inquiries were held in the late 1850s and 1860s to determine the cause of these problems. To stop the water supply being contaminated, one of the tributaries of the Plenty River, Bruce's Creek, was diverted away from the inflow channel because it was found to be contaminated by stock and the Clearwater Channel was constructed. As noted in the previous section, a further significant change came in 1876 when, despite the protests of timber interests, the government reserved the catchment of the Yan Yean system for water supply purposes and excluded timber cutters. By 1886 the Yan Yean catchment was completely closed to all activities except water harvesting and in 1888 a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into Melbourne's sanitary condition reported favourably on the quality of Yan Yean water, finding it "unusually free from living micro-organisms".[63] The changes significantly improved the situation, and by the late 1880s the construction of the system was widely perceived to have been a success.

Meanwhile, by the early 1870s Melbourne's population had reached 200,000, the maximum the Yan Yean system had been built to serve, and had increased to almost 300,000 by 1880. Water shortages were experienced, particularly by residents of the higher suburbs east of Melbourne and during the 1870s and 1880s the Department of Water Supply took measures to increase the rate of delivery of water to Melbourne. In 1875 the 30 inch pipe from Yan Yean Reservoir to Morang was dug up and replaced by an open Aqueduct with a larger carrying capacity. The Aqueduct ended at a small reservoir in Morang, known as the Pipehead Reservoir. In 1882-8, the Yan Yean water supply system was extended with the construction of a weir on Wallaby Creek, along with an Aqueduct and an artificial waterfall known as the Cascades, to bring seven million gallons per day of clear mountain water to Jack's Creek, a tributary of the eastern branch of the Plenty River, and thence to the Yan Yean Reservoir. Meanwhile, a bluestone Aqueduct was constructed to carry the water directly from Jack's Creek to the Yan Yean Reservoir. This Aqueduct, known as the Clearwater Channel, connected directly to the Reservoir intake channel near the Plenty River. The connection to the Plenty River at that point was thereafter closed.

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62 Dianne H. Edwards, Yan Yean: A History (Yan Yean School Council, Yan Yean, 1978), 28.

63 Ibid., pp 64-68, 75-76, 84.

In 1886 the Toorourrong Reservoir was constructed on the eastern branch of the Plenty River just below the Jack's Creek junction. Its purpose was to allow the sediments in the fast flowing stream to settle before the water entered the Clearwater Channel. It also contributed an additional five million gallons a day to the Yan Yean water supply.[64] In the same year a further extension was made with the construction of the first of four weirs on Silver Creek, another tributary of King Parrot Creek, and an Aqueduct to link the weirs with the Wallaby Creek Aqueduct. These works effectively marked the completion of the Yan Yean water supply system.

The Yan Yean Reservoir
Context, 01.09.09

Mills

The Plenty Valley was, in the early part of its life, a significant producer of grain. The availability of water, from the Plenty River, and the proximity of grain producers made it an ideal site for the establishment of flour mills.

On 31 July 1839, just after the survey of the area had been completed, a notice appeared in the *Port Phillip Gazette.* The notice advertised the upcoming sale of land, but tellingly, it also noted that there were "several mill sites with a never failing supply of fresh water."[65] The area (portions 19 and 20, Parish of Keelbundoora) was purchased by John Gardiner and later sold to a land dealer (P.W. Welsh) who on-sold the property to George Coulstock and his wife, Frances.[66] The Coulstocks also purchased Portions 2 and 3, Parish of Morang, which ran to the Plenty River. Here, they established the first Mill on the Plenty River (and one of the earliest in Victoria).[67] The Mill itself was constructed at some point during the early 1840s.[68] Despite the Mill's promising position, it was poorly designed and the business was unsuccessful. When the Coulstocks defaulted on a mortgage repayment, the mortgagor (Henry 'Money' Miller)

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64 Dingle, A.E. & Doyle, H. Yan Yean : A History of Melbourne's early Water Supply (Public Record Office: Melbourne, 2003), 83.

65 Port Phillip Gazette, 31 July 1839.

66 The terms under which the property was bought were a point of some contention. See, for example The Argus, 14 May 1847 for details of the dispute and the interests in the land claimed by the various parties.

67 W. Lewis Jones reports that the earliest mill may have been established at Bass Landing in 1836; but that "until the 1840s much of the flour needed by the people of the Port Phillip District was imported from Van Diemen's Land, from New South Wales and from abroad", W Lewis Jones, Where Have all the Flour Mills Gone? A History of W. S. Kimpton and Sons – Flour Millers 1875-1980 (Flourmiller's Council of Victoria: Melbourne, 1984), 10.

68 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, III (c).

CONTEXT

repossessed the land. The Mill finally closed in 1862; much of the machinery was subsequently used in the construction of a steam driven mill in Preston.[69]

The Carome Mill was constructed in 1841-42 on portion 19 in the Parish of Morang. The Mill was built and owned by a Mr Serjeantson, who operated the Mill himself, but later leased its operation out to Mr Anderson (from Anderson and Massey of Westernport). The opening of the Yan Yean Reservoir in 1857 seems to have had a significant impact upon the operation of the Mill and, perhaps tellingly, the following year the Mill (with 411 acres of land) was sold on. The buyers were William Hardesty and Abraham Willis.[70] Willis spent a good deal of money improving the Mill (he installed a new 'overshot' waterwheel and an extra pair of millstones). However, the construction of a dam by the Thomas' Mill (only one mile upstream) significantly damaged the potential of the Carome Mill (see entry below for details). In 1859, Abraham Willis and the Mill operator took action in the Supreme Court. They argued that by constructing a dam, Thomas's Mill had interfered with their "riparian rights."[71] Thomas was, however, able to argue that the dam was of benefit to both mills and that no damages were warranted. Deprived of regular river flows, the Carome Mill was dealt a second blow by proposed legislation that would have effectively prevented its operation. The government offered £600 in compensation to the Mill owner. However, Willis was apparently not satisfied. In 1868, the Mill burned down "in suspicious circumstances", an event that prompted the *Argus* to cynically observe "The mill that grinds corn may … be valuable to its owners in a number of ways. [it] may be a good thing to have blown up – to be burned down – to be compensated for – to be rebuilt."[72]

Thomas' Mill was established by Moses Thomas (a qualified engineer). Upon his return from the gold fields in 1854, Thomas proposed to construct the Mill at Wanstead next to the Bridge Inn farm. However, the redirection of the pipeline from the Yan Yean Reservoir forced him to amend his plans. The second site Thomas selected was approximately one mile upstream from the Carome Mill. This site was more successful and in 1855 Moses started operation of his Mill. The Mill had cost £6,000 to build and was powered by steam. However, a sharp drop in the charge for milling (2s, 6d to 1s, 6d) quickly placed financial strain upon the Mill. As a result, Moses abandoned steam power in favour of the cheaper option of water power. However, the water flow in the Plenty River was relatively inconsistent and often not vigorous enough to turn the wheel (a problem that had been exacerbated by the diversion of water into the Yan Yean Reservoir).[73] To ensure a regular flow of water Moses dammed the river. The damming of the river ensured a reliable flow but created problems for those further downstream (see Carome Mill listing above). Thomas won the court battle brought by the owners of the Carome Mill. However, even with the dam, the water supply was frequently insufficient to operate the Mill, Thomas appealed to Parliament (or rather a Select Committee of Parliament) for compensation. The Select Committee recommended that he be awarded £2,000 compensation but the motion was voted down in Parliament. Operation of the Mill continued until 1863 when a storm washed away the dam that Thomas had constructed. Thomas lacked sufficient funds to either reconstruct the dam or continue the milling operation without it and the Mill closed.[74]

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69 Payne, The Plenty, 136.

70 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, III (c).

71 The Argus, 3 September 1859.

72 The Argus, 12 August 1868. In the event the insurance company initially paid £700 in damages. However, the money was claimed back after a coroner's jury determined that "the burning down of the Mill was wilfully caused".

73 Ironically, the reservoir was initially intended to protect the business of mill owners and guarantee the operation of the mills.

74 Payne, The Plenty, 139. Also See Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, III (c) (iii).

Heritage place – House associated with Boadle's Mill

Jonathan Boadle was a significant figure in the early life of the Whittlesea district. He was born at Wright Green, England in 1816 and arrived in Port Phillip as a young man. By 1849 he was standing to be elected for the Darebin Creek district.[75] Boadle was an active farmer, running cattle and winning prizes for his produce. By the 1860s he had "extensive interests at Whittlesea and Bundoora", which included Boadle's Steam Mill. A description of the Mill given in 1866 indicates that it was powered by steam and had a capacity of 10-12 bushels per hour.[76] The Mill was located "adjacent to the house at the rear of the service station on the Plenty Road, South of Whittlesea".[77] The original mill buildings do not survive, but this house, owned by Helen Boadle, Jonathan Boadle's wife, dates from the c1860s or 1870s and is thought to have been connected to the operation of the Mill.

House associated with Boadle's Mill

Context, 18.08.09

Donnybrook Mineral Springs

Another source of water was the Donnybrook springs, which are reported to have been used by early settlers in the area. However, it was not until 1912 that the Director of the Geological Survey (E.J. Dunn) formally reported the existence of two springs in the Donnybrook area. An *Argus* report from 21 February 1912 describes the water coming from the springs as being "a strong flow of excellent water of palatable quality."[78] By that time various developments had taken place and both springs had pipes driven in to them.[79] The report, prepared by Dunn, recommended further development and that they be made "available to the public."[80]

Over the past century or so, various attempts have been made to develop the springs as a going concern. On 1 November 1912 Donnybrook Mineral Springs Pty Ltd was established, but the

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[75] The Argus, 25 June, 1849.

[76] Payne, 140.

[77] Payne, 140.

[78] The Argus, 21 February 1912.

[79] Victorian Mineral Water Committee, Donnybrook Mineral Springs. Full details are available from www.mineralwater.vic.gov.au/project/pdf/Donnybrook_MS73.PDF (Accessed 16.11.09).

[80] The Argus, 4 January 1912.

CONTEXT

business (for reasons that are unclear) failed and was deregistered on 9 May 1917.[81] In 1920 an attempt was made to commercially bottle the spring water by O.T. Pty Ltd.[82] In 1935, the land was bought from the Crown by W. H. Stone and an accommodation resort was developed. In 1953 the property was bought by Mr A. Sattler and the mineral water was being sold under the name of "Donny Spa." The piping of the spring was reconditioned in 1958, but the accommodation side of the business was discontinued in 1960.[83] In 1983 the business was sold to Luigi Campeotto, the noted tenor.[84] Campeotto planned to expand the business and build a $1.5 million natural spa complex; however, he struggled to obtain finance and, in the face of the 1990s recession, was ultimately declared bankrupt.[85] In recent times, the complex has been bought by the Macedonian Orthodox Church, which is currently constructing a monastery on the site.[86]

Donnybrook Mineral Springs
Context, 01.09.09

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81 For the date of registration see Victoria Government Gazette No.3, 5 January 1917. For date of deregistration see www.asic.gov.au (Accessed 16.11.09).

82 Victorian Mineral Water Committee, Donnybrook Mineral Springs. www.mineralwater.vic.gov.au/project/pdf/Donnybrook_MS73.PDF (Accessed 16.11.09).

83 Ibid.

84 Nalini de Sielvie, Is this Your Caruso? Biography of Tenor Luigi Campeotto (Melbourne: Landin Books, 2006), 193.

85 Ibid, Chapter 28.

86 List of Macedonian Orthodox parishes in Australia Available from: www.orthodoxwiki.org/List_of_Macedonian_Orthodox_parishes_in_Australia (Accessed 17.11.09)

4 TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The growth of the City of Whittlesea in the 19th century was dependant upon agriculture and, to a lesser extent, the exploitation of its natural resources. A high priority of the new settlers was to establish transport networks that would enable them to carry agricultural produce and raw materials to Melbourne. The development of roads, and later the railway, was understood to be critical to the success of the region. They came to symbolise its early growth and had a significant impact upon the pattern of settlement.

This chapter incorporates the following Victorian Historical Themes:

- Establishing pathways

- Linking Victorians by rail

- Establishing and maintaining communications

HISTORY

4.1 Establishing a road network in the 19th century

The Sydney Road/Hume Highway and the Plenty Road were amongst the earliest established in the City. Along with the Epping Road, they formed the three key north-south routes through the City.

Sydney Road

The section of the Sydney Road between Melbourne and Seymour featured in an account of the first overland mail service between Port Phillip and Sydney.[87] By the end of 1840, the route of the Sydney Road from Melbourne to Kalkallo had been proclaimed. In 1849, the Surveyor, H. B. Foote was instructed to examine possible routes for the road from Kalkallo to Seymour; Foote, in effect, approved the use of the track north that was already in use. While the route had now been surveyed, the condition of the road remained extremely poor. In June 1850, a petition to the Governor described it as "impassable." The difficult nature of the country through which the road passed (at times rocky and at times marshy) created numerous problems, however, gradually the road was built. By 1854, it had reached Kalkallo and in 1855, James Bevan constructed the further 4.5 miles to Beveridge.[88] In total between 1850 and 1856, over £27,000 was outlaid in improving the road. Even with this level of expenditure, the road remained at times difficult, and improvements continued to be made for much of the 19th century. In 1928, the section of Sydney Road to the north of the metropolitan ring road at Thomastown was renamed the Hume Highway.

Plenty Road

The route of the Plenty Road was not settled until slightly later than the Sydney Road, when it was finally gazetted in 1848.[89] Its route was laid out by Robert Hoddle and it was one of the first thoroughfares that stretched to the northern regions of the City. The Plenty Road became the district's major highway. The original Plenty Road followed a meandering course

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87 Payne, The Plenty, 17.

88 J. W. Payne, The History of Beveridge (Lowden Publishing: Kilmore, 1974), 6.

89 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, III(a). S.T.Gray, History of Whittlesea, identifies the date as September 1854.

northwards, but it was altered after the construction of the railway so as to minimise the number of level crossings.[90]

Bridges

Despite improvements to roads in the area, travel was still difficult. In particular, a lack of bridges meant that many river crossings had to be made at fords that became treacherous following rain. In 1866, in an attempt to address the problem, Parliament voted a sum of £50,000 to help construct bridges across the state.[91] The money assisted in the construction of several significant bridges in the City, which provide an important reminder of the development of the early road network.

The Donnybrook and Wallan Wallan District Roads Board applied for a grant to construct a bridge over the Merri Creek on what was then called Yan Yean Road. The bridge was completed in 1868, at a cost of £549,17s, plus an additional £236,1s,3d allowed for the construction of the embankments approaching the bridge.[92] In September 1874, the Donnybrook and Wallan Wallan District Roads Board approved the construction of a stone bridge over the Mill creek on the Yan Yean road (in Donnybrook). A tender from R. Anderson for £679,13s,9d was accepted and the bridge itself was opened some four months later.[93]

Even without direct government assistance, local road boards and residents were keen to see the quality of road infrastructure improved. Sometimes local landowners and roads boards would work together to achieve this. For example, on the Epping Road, in 1868, a bridge over the Darebin Creek was constructed with Mr Cleeland (a local landowner) providing the timber and Epping Roads Board £50 for the labour.[94]

Inns and settlements

Some of the earliest settlements grew up around stopping places along the early roads, such as Inns, which were often situated near watercourses. The town of Mernda (originally known as Morang) was developed on the site of a station held by Captain Aneas McPherson.[95] The town is situated at the northern extreme of Plenty Gorge. It was originally the site of a crossing over the Plenty River, and from 1841 was also the site of the Bridge Inn (described at the time as a wattle and daub hut). The development of the township is discussed further in section 5.3.

Heritage place – Monier bridge at Barbers Creek

In December 1900 Cr. W. Thomas moved that tenders be called for the erection of a new bridge over Barbers Creek. Shire of Whittlesea engineer William Lockwood proposed the erection of a Monier Concrete arch bridge and on 9 March 1901 a contract, valued at £423, was let to Messrs Monash and Anderson.

The terms of the contract required Council to submit the plans to the Public Works Department whose Chief Engineer, Carlo Catani, demanded a number of changes. Significantly, Catani demanded that the bridge be raised three feet to clear the level of flood waters indicated on the drawing. This would have increased the cost considerably. John Monash volunteered to draft Lockwood's response, arguing successfully that the indicated level had been measured upstream of the bridge site, above a constriction in the waterway, and that the actual flood level at the site was lower than this.

Work on the construction of the bridge proceeded only slowly, and it was not until September, 1901 that Lockwood was able to report that "The traffic has been going over the bridge now

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90 Payne, The Plenty, 20.

91 J. W. Payne, Donnybrook-Kalkallo: 1855-1980 (Back to Kalkallo Committee: Kalkallo, 1980), 27.

92 Ibid..

93 Ibid, 30.

94 S.T. Gray, The History of the Shire of Whittlesea 1854-1960 (Unpublished Manuscript 8962, SLV), 15.

95 Payne, The Plenty, 6.

for some time". The Shire President remarked that Lockwood "deserved credit for the manner in which he had looked after his work". The final cost of the bridge would appear to have been just over £500. The bridge, about the twelfth constructed in Victoria by Monash and Anderson, served the district well until the 1960s, when a new bridge was built nearby. Monash and Anderson were pioneers in the use of reinforced concrete. They were also responsible for the construction of a second Monier bridge at Wollert.[96]

Monier Bridge,
Old Plenty Road, Yan Yean.

Context, 01.09.09

4.2 Railways and tramways

Whittlesea railway

In 1853 as part of the Yan Yean water supply project a 19 mile long tramway was constructed adjacent to the route of the pipeline between Yan Yean and Melbourne.[97]. At the conclusion of the project the tramway was abandoned. However, a decade later the expansion of the township of Whittlesea led the Victorian Government to consider re-opening the tramway. Despite an 1866 Select Committee report supporting the scheme, it did not progress.[98]

While the plans to re-open the Yan Yean Tramway did not materialise, residents of the Whittlesea district used the opportunity to appear before the Select Committee to lobby for the construction of a railway line from North Fitzroy to the township of Whittlesea.[99] In February 1867, following public meetings in the township of Whittlesea and at Morang, Fitzroy, Preston and Epping, residents of Upper Plenty sent a deputation to meet with Parliamentary representatives to discuss the possibility of laying rail lines in between the tracks of the old tramway, and using some of the existing infrastructure, for example, bridges.[100] The response was positive and a series of public meetings followed. In January 1869 a second deputation was sent to meet with the Minister of Railways. An engineer's report, commissioned by the Minister, revealed that the proposed route along the Yan Yean Tramway was inappropriate and that many of the bridges that would be used by the new railway were rotten and would need to be reconstructed.[101] The report put an end, in the short term, to proposals to construct a

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96 Gould Heritage Study and adapted from History of Monier arch bridges at Barber's Creek and Wollert, available from:

www.home.vicnet.net.au/~aholgate/jm/texts/bbcwhist.html (Accessed 24.02.2010).

97 ST Gray, History of Whittlesea, 67. MS.

98 Victorian Parliamentary Papers 1866 (2nd session), vol.1. Report from the Select Committee on the Yan Yean tram road.

99 S.T. Gray, History of Whittlesea, 200. MS.

100 Ibid., 201.

101 Ibid., 205.

railway and it was another 20 years before the railway line was finally constructed. The railway line to the township of Whittlesea finally opened on 21 December 1889, when 130 guards travelled to Whittlesea and attended a banquet in the Town Hall. The official opening occurred two days later, on 23 December, 1889.[102]

The opening of the railway line had a significant impact upon the economic and social character of the City of Whittlesea. The frequent services (there were 16 trains a day on week days and six on Sundays) made it substantially easier to carry produce from the township of Whittlesea and opened up new markets to farmers in the area. The relative ease with which the area could be reached encouraged further tourism and growth. For example, as noted in the previous chapter, a timber tramway operated between 1911 and 1926, which transported material from the Flowerdale area to the railhead at Whittlesea and thence to Melbourne.

At the start of World War I, the Victorian Railways embarked on a massive program to electrify the suburban railway network, but the program was delayed by the onset of war and did not get underway in earnest until after 1918. In 1921 the Whittlesea line was electrified as far as Reservoir and in 1929 was extended to Thomastown via a single track in 1929. A new station was also added at Keon Park on what is now the southern border of the municipality. In October 1949 the emerging suburb of Lalor was serviced by 'Rail Stopping Place 77', which was officially renamed after the suburb in 1952. Thomastown, however, remained the limit of the suburban system until 1959 when the line was electrified as far as Lalor and on to Epping by 1964.

The electrified railways sped up the journey to the city considerably and ran at more frequent intervals thus encouraging suburban development along the route. However, the growth of road transport also led to a gradual reduction in the use of the rural rail network by freight and passengers and the line to Whittlesea beyond Epping closed in 1959.[103] With increasing suburban development (See Chapter 5), construction is about to commence on the re-opening of the line from Epping to South Morang, with future extensions planned to Mernda.

The Railway to Albury/Sydney

In addition to the Whittlesea line, the City of Whittlesea also contains a small section of the main North Eastern Railway line between Melbourne and Sydney. The first proposals for a railway to north eastern Victoria were presented to the Victorian Government in the early 1860s. Construction of the North Eastern Railway was authorised in 1869 and tenders closed in March 1870. After considerable delay, the partnership of O'Grady Leggatt and Noonan was appointed to construct the Essendon to Seymour section of the railway, at a cost of £305, 555. Joseph Brady was appointed Supervising Engineer. The first soil was turned at Essendon on 20 June 1870 and the first rails were laid in March 1871. By June 1871 the track bed was completed and rails laid as far as Craigieburn. The line reached Donnybrook on 14 October 1872 and finally arrived in Albury in 1883.[104] The same year, the link between Donnybrook and Beveridge was duplicated.[105] In 1962 a standard gauge line was constructed adjacent to the main line between Melbourne and Sydney.

Heritage place – Donnybrook Railway Station

The station at Donnybrook was opened on 14 October 1872, with a single platform on the west (down) side. In 1882 an 'up' platform was provided and three years later a small signalling frame installed. The goods shed was erected in 1888. The existing station building was opened

102 Ibid., 200.

103 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, III(a)

104 Wapedia, Wiki: North East railway line, Victoria, 2009. See www.wapedia.mobi/en/North_East_railway_line%2C_Victoria?t=1.#2.. (Accessed 18.10.09)

105 Andrew Waugh, 'Donnybrook', Victorian Signalling Histories, No. 41, Version 1.0 (2002). Available from:

www.vrhistory.com/Locations/Donnybrook.pdf (Accessed 18.10.09)

on 19 September 1900.[106] The level crossing gates at the adjacent Donnybrook- Yan Yean Road crossing were replaced by flashing light signals in August 1961, during construction of the Melbourne - Sydney standard gauge line.[107] There has been little change at Donnybrook Station since.

Donnybrook Station

Context, 01.09.09

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106 Keith Turton, Six and a Half Inches from Destiny: The first hundred years of the Melbourne to Wodonga Railway, 1873-1973 (Australian Railway Historical Society, Victorian Division: Melbourne, 1973), 88.

107 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, 3.05.

CONTEXT

5 BUILDING SETTLEMENTS AND TOWNS

INTRODUCTION

Within the City of Whittlesea, the earliest settlements developed around facilities provided for travellers, which were often situated near creek and river crossings. As settlers began to arrive the demand for houses and facilities increased and schools, churches, shops, inns and other community infrastructure was developed. Other settlements grew as a result of the timber industry. The arrival of the railway in the township of Whittlesea in 1889 linked the township of Whittlesea to the City to Melbourne and sparked a further period of growth.

While the origins of most settlements are in the 19th century, the majority of the development in the City of Whittlesea occurred during the 20th century, and particularly in the period following World War II. Much of that growth was due to migration.

This section considers how the settlements and towns have evolved and how buildings and sites document the layers of settlement history.

This chapter investigates the following Victorian Historical Themes:

- Migrating and making a home

- Promoting settlement

- Living in country towns

- Shaping the suburbs

- Making homes for Victorians

- Forming community organisations

- Marking significant phases in development of Victoria's settlements, towns and cities

- Developing a manufacturing capacity

HISTORY

5.1 Early pastoral and village settlements

Merriang

The township of Merriang was located approximately five kilometres to the north-east of Beveridge. Merriang was initially known as Mercer's Vale, but was renamed in 1853. The first land sales in the area were held on 10 June 1840. Much of the land in the Shire of Merriang was sold to William Murray, William Lithgow and John Robertson. Some of the land was initially used for growing wheat.[108] However, a central portion (which ran by Merri Creek) was set aside for later development. It was on this land that the town developed. The area was further subdivided in 1853. Several of the early settlers enlarged their holdings. However, some also acted as quasi-developers, buying, subdividing and then selling on the land.[109] This process of subdivision encouraged new settlers, and generated a demand for services. The first store, run by William Strang, was opened soon after.[110] The further growth of the town (and area)

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108 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study,.(vi) Merriang.

109 Payne provides details of the subdivision itself. See The Plenty, 49.

110 Ibid.,

meant that by 1856 a school was also warranted.[111] The arrival of John Sherwin in the district was a catalyst for change. Sherwin's background was as a pastoralist. Under his influence pastoral activities were expanded and the growing of wheat curtailed, and the town began to die. The decline in population was undeniable. In 1863 the population was 700; by 1867 it was 525. Postal services to Merriang were withdrawn in 1923 and the address changed to Beveridge.

Westgarthtown/Thomastown

This area was initially surveyed under the direction of Hoddle and named the Parish of Keelbundoora. The eastern portion was more fertile and taken up quickly by farmers. To the east of Darebin Creek Road the Stevens and Crichton families farmed. To the north the Clinnick family took up the area known as Lalor. Some time between 1848 and 1852 John and Mary Thomas and their family took up land south from Main Street, opposite to Settlement Road and started market gardening.[112] They were successful, and their success encouraged others to join them, including John Bower, George Dyer, James Olney and Benjamin Johnson. The name Thomastown is thought to either refer to the first settlers, or to the large number of subsequent settlers who were also called Thomas.[113] The settlement was known as Thomastown by 1856.[114]

In 1850, another part of the Village was established when William Westgarth and Captain Stanley Carr purchased unalienated land from the Government (which today would extend from Main Street, Thomastown north to the Lalor Railway Station and from the Epping Road to a parallel line a mile west).[115] The land was the basis for a community of German Lutheran settlers who Westgarth recruited on a trip to Europe. Upon their arrival, the German settlers gave priority to establishing a church. An article published on 17 May 1856 in The *Argus*, reports a meeting of the congregation, at which it was determined that: "the Lutheran church continue to be based upon the word of God contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments", that "the Lutheran Church of Victoria continues in connexion with the Evangelical mother church of Germany" and that the "Lutheran Church of Victoria is a self governing Church."[116] A church for the new congregation was built that year, at a cost of £356. It opened on 17 November 1856.

The first school (a private school) was opened in about 1854, but closed soon afterwards. The same year, John Thomas donated land to the Wesleyan Church; the site was subsequently developed as a school and cemetery, while the remainder was sold to the Board of Education.[117] In 1856, the German settlers also opened a school, at which classes were, controversially, conducted entirely in German.[118] Subsequent improvements followed, including the establishment of a regular coach to Melbourne and the gradual development of a dairy industry. By the 1920s there were "scattered shops facing Epping road" in what was then the town centre (it has since moved to Main Street and Spring Street).

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111 The finances of the school were poorly managed and it closed some three years later, but was re-established the following year. Payne, The Plenty, 49-50. Education facilities had actually been available in the area since 1848 when a Church of Scotland School began on the slopes of Bald Hill, although an 1851 Inspector's report is far from complimentary about the school, stating "I fear the school does not deserve aid". J.W Payne, Education at Whittlesea, 1848-1978 (Lowden: Kilmore, 1978), 3.

112 Payne, The Plenty, 72. John Waghorn argues that the date was c1850. Interview with Leo Martin, 02.09.09.

113 Ibid., 74.

114 John Waghorn, Interview with Leo Martin, 02.09.09.

115 Payne, The Plenty, 73.

116 The Argus, 17 May 1856.

117 John Waghorn, Interview with Leo Martin, 02.09.09.

118 Payne, The Plenty, 74.

Upper Plenty/Township of Whittlesea

In 1838, Robert Hoddle issued instructions to "Survey [the] Plenty River and [the] Dividing Range to Mount Macedon". The plan that was produced featured an unnamed village reserve. At the centre of the reserve was a pre-existing cattle station owned by George Sherwin.

The first sale of land in the area occurred in Sydney on 8 May 1839. The largest purchaser was Thomas Wills. Wills bought 3,480 acres of land around the reserve. In 1853, Robert Mason, conducted a survey of the town and named it Whittlesea, after the village Whittlesey in Cambridgeshire, England. Mail services to the town began as soon as the first postmaster had been appointed. The first school in the township of Whittlesea was started in 1854.[119] The school was granted a government allowance and came under the control of the Denominational Schools Board in August 1855.[120] Logging in the ranges started soon after settlement and gradually developed. From 1866 to 1876 the town served a busy timber industry that operated in the Plenty Ranges. The steady increase in the quantity of logging acted as a catalyst for growth. Following the establishment of a Select Committee in 1876, to investigate the impact of logging on the Yan Yean Reservoir, a series of restrictions were put in place to limit damage to the catchment. These were controversial and had a significant economic effect upon the town.[121] To quote one observer: "the trade is banished from the district, property in the township is unoccupied and unsaleable, the road traffic is gone, the toll revenue has diminished to one third."[122] Logging started up again in the Kinglake ranges during the early part of the 20th century, but it never assumed the importance in the town that it once had.

Whittlesea, c1880-81

SLV Collection
H2007.130/63

The Pint Pot Estate

The Pint Pot Estate was a subdivision created in the centre of the township of Whittlesea. The Estate included all the land between Fir Street, the Main Melbourne Road (now Wallan Road), Laurel Street and Church Street.

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119 In 1854, there were upwards of 50 students being taught in private accommodation. Payne, Education in Whittlesea, 4.

120 Ibid, 5.

121 See Robert Wuchatsch, The Plenty Valley, in Cultural landscapes, Lucy Ellem (ed), 40.

122 James Ryan, Whittlesea Shire Secretary, Quoted in Payne, The Plenty, 178.

The Pint Pot Estate

Courtesy of John Waghorn

The Estate was surveyed and sold from 1888; however, sales were slow during the 1890s depression and much of the land was not sold until the early part of the 20th century. Today the Pint Pot Estate contains the centre of Whittlesea's commercial district and a series of significant heritage buildings.

Heritage place - 2 Walnut Street, Whittlesea

2 Walnut Street is situated on Allotment 148 of the Pint Pot Estate, a subdivision in the centre of Whittlesea. It was purchased by Colin McLennan in 1905. The earliest rate record is from 1908 and records 'house and land'. McLennan was a blacksmith, but his forge and shop was in Church Street, so this was probably used as his residence. McLennan died in 1919 and the property passed to his wife, Alice McLennan. Alice held the property until she sold to David Cornfoot in 1927. Cornfoot died in 1947 and probate of his estate was granted to David Cornfoot (jnr) (dairy farmer) and Leslie Russell (labourer) both of Whittlesea. The portion of land on which the house is situated was sold in 1949 to Edith Russell (Married Woman) before being purchased by James Cornfoot in 1956. It remained in James Cornfoot's ownership until the 1990s.

The history of the site and the style of the building's construction indicate that it was built by Colin McLennan between 1905 and 1908.

2 Walnut Street, Whittlesea

Context, 01.09.09

5.2 Land Speculation

Eden Park

In 1888, 1324 lots north west of the township of Whittlesea were offered for sale. The lots ranged from one to four acres in size. The development was called Eden Park. Promotional material released at the time emphasised the evils of urban life and advertised Eden Park as an escape from the city and the misery forced on workers by the 'land holding classes'.

> *Where the lands of a country have been monopolised by a favoured few, the working classes of that country have become impoverished, pauperised, and degraded, the land holding classes have become enervated, indolent, and lascivious and the country has gone headlong into ruin… How different the condition of the man who puts his own labour into the cultivation, or using of his own freehold land … The skilled mechanic who can average £150 a year is exceptionally fortunate. Let him put the same honest work and the same intelligence into the cultivation of his own land and it will be strange indeed if he does not realise an income of from £200 to £500 a year or even more.*[123]

Map of Subdivision of Eden Park, Wrongs and how they might be righted. (Phillips & Co, Melbourne, 1888).

SLV Maps Collection.

The text continued:

> *Here the strained nerves and overtaxed brain, results of the high pressure rate at which we live and work in this present age will find the rest and change which they need… Sheltered from all obnoxious and injurious winds by the lofty heights of the Plenty Ranges, and possessed of pure air and natural drainage, Eden Park enjoys such salubrity as is unknown in the crowded and unwholesome streets of the city and its immediate suburbs… The magnificent view to be obtained … serve to make Eden Park a veritable paradise for artists and lovers of the beautiful.*

The site was described as "within 3 miles of Beveridge railway station by good road and about 2 miles from Cambridge, better known as the village of Whittlesea". The soil was described as "mostly a rich friable chocolate coloured loam", and the water supply adequate from

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123 Phllips & Co. Wrongs and how they might be righted. (Phillips & Co, Melbourne, 1888).

"numerous water holes and small creeks." The information was mostly erroneous. The "good road" mentioned was only a bridle path for half the distance, while the soil, far from being "a rich friable chocolate coloured loam" was in fact, a rather poor grey soil of sedimentary origin; and the "creeks and waterholes" were only evident immediately after rain."[124] The prices were £56 for a two acre block, and £64 for corner blocks. Each block fronted a road sixty-six feet wide. Terms were 60 equal monthly payments free of interest.

Despite the relative isolation of the site and the poor quality of the soil, the development was (for the developers) a commercial success. At its peak (in the early part of the 20th century) Eden Park had a school, a post office, and even a police station site; over 100 people of "small means": domestic servants, retired clergymen, miners etc. were paying £1 per annum in rates for individual blocks, with large areas still in possession of Burwood Building and Investment Co.[125] Slowly, the land was abandoned and those families that remained consolidated their holdings, often through adverse possession.

In the late 1960s the subdivision was rediscovered by developers. Advertisements in the *Diamond Valley News* promoted Eden Park as the "Satellite City of the near future"; blocks sold for $1,700.[126] Between 1969 and 1980 the number of individual owners of land in Eden Park more than tripled.[127] Today, the area largely consists of houses from the 1960s to the present situated on larger blocks. A handful of older houses from the original settlement and the unused road reservations provide an important reminder of the area's past.

Unused road reservation, Fourth Avenue, Eden Park,

Context, 2009.

Heritage place – Former Eden Park Post Office

Land here was purchased in 1883 by William Phillips, who sold it to the Burwood Land Building and Investment Co, the original developers of Eden Park. The company gradually sold off lots from the plan. On 7 December 1903, Christina Butler purchased lot 135 and lots 137-144. From 1905-1971, the property is thought to have been used as a post office.

The house on the block probably dates from Christina Butler's period of residence. Interestingly, two mortgages were taken out over the property, one in 1903 and one in 1909. It may be that one, or both of these, paid for the construction of the existing weatherboard

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124 Ibid., 143.

125 Payne, The Plenty, 143.

126 Diamond Valley News, 15 April 1969.

127 Eden Park Working Committee, Eden Park Estate: Restructure of an old and inappropriate subdivision (Ministry for Planning: Melbourne, 1980), 19.

CONTEXT

cottage and/or the adjoining stables, or improvements to them. The sections of remaining hedge that surround the property probably also date from this period.

In 1928, Christina Butler sold off Lots 143 and 144 to Ralph Hinton. Some six years later, Charlotte Grant purchased both lots. The lots were sold several more times until October 1974, when lot 144 was finally split from lot 143 and sold separately.

Former Post Office, Eden Park
Context, 2009.

5.3 Towns that grew with the Yan Yean Reservoir

Yan Yean

In the mid-1850s a township grew up at the construction site of the Yan Yean Reservoir. At its peak in 1856 up to 1,000 labourers including some with their families took up residence in slab huts or tents. A school, the Yan Yean Quarry School and the Yan Yean hotel were opened; two other hotels were also opened nearby. A house was built for the resident engineer, John Charles Taylor, on a hillside overlooking the Reservoir - this house later became the caretaker's residence.[128] Following the completion of the Reservoir, the town centre shifted back towards Old Plenty Road where a new school and a post office/store were established. Initially, the surrounding land was used predominantly for grazing, but from the 1930s, dairying became increasingly important.
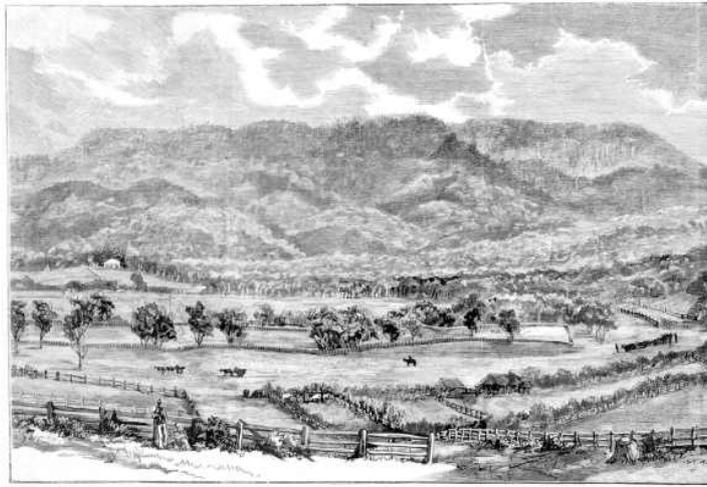
Morang/South Yan Yean/Mernda

The township of Morang was originally established at the site of a road crossing over the Plenty River, and from 1841 was also the site of the Bridge Inn. It was, however, the construction of the Yan Yean Reservoir that was to make the most significant contribution to the town's growth. Between 1853 and 1857 up to 1,000 men were employed in building the Reservoir. Their presence created a demand for other services, and in 1853 a school was opened "built of paling, weatherboard, and covered with a shingle roof, in size 25' x 12.5' and two skillion rooms for the master."[129] In 1856, the Bridge Inn was rebuilt and in 1860 a Presbyterian church was also constructed.

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128 Dingle and Doyle, Yan Yean, 26, 27, 109.

129 Payne, The Plenty, 113.

These events were followed, in 1861, by the opening of a post office. A bakery (which still stands) was built (probably during the 1860s) by Moses Thomas, the operator of the Thomas' flour mill on the Plenty River. [130] After its completion the Yan Yean Reservoir was a major attraction and provided a steady flow of tourists to the town. Three hotels, adjacent to the Reservoir, were constructed. [131] In 1893, as a result of the opening of the Whittlesea railway line, the town changed its name to South Yan Yean (there was already an existing Yan Yean station), but by 1913, the experiment had been abandoned and the town changed its name back to Morang. In recent times the area has come under substantial pressure from the growth of Melbourne's suburbs and, currently, a series of estates are being developed. These include: Mernda Villages, Renaissance Rise, Woodland Waters and Riverdale on Plenty. The development of these estates has effectively seen Mernda incorporated into Melbourne's north-eastern fringe.

Yan Yean Watershed and Whittlesea common.

SLV Collection. IAN26/05/86/84.

5.4 Suburban development in the 20th century

Suburban beginnings after World War I

The rapid population growth of Melbourne in the period following World War I created considerable pressure for the city to expand. The electrification of the Whittlesea railway to Thomastown (completed by 1929) provided an impetus to development and the first suburban subdivisions were created in southern parts of the City in the latter part of the 1920s and early 1930s.

In Thomastown, in the late 1920s, 1300 lots were subdivided in the areas surrounding the railway station. [132] The subdivisions included: Gilpins Thomastown Estate (555 lots, between Alexander and Heyington Avenue); Thomas' Estate (39 blocks, between Clarke and McLeod Streets); Newtons Estate (39 lots, between Clarke and McLeod Streets); Station Entrance Estate (118 Lots, between Main Street and Pleasant Street); Underwoods (26 Lots, on High Street); Halfway Platform Estate (30 lots, on Pleasant Road); City Centre Estate (340 lots,

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130 Payne notes that the venture was taken over by A. G. Standbury in 1868, See Payne, The Plenty, 114. In Historic Buildings of the Whittlesea Shire (Whittlesea Historical Society: Thomastown, 1985), Robert Wuchatsch and John Waghorn suggest that the date was during the 1870s. See Entry 48 "Turner's Bakery".

131 The Picnic Hotel, The Yan Yean Reservoir Hotel and the Yan Yean Hotel, Payne, The Plenty, 115 and 169.

132 John Waghorn, Private Correspondence 15.11.09.

CONTEXT

between Chappell and Tramoo Streets); and Newtown Park Estate (219 Lots, near Lalor Railway Station).[133]

However, the onset of the Great Depression slowed development and few houses were actually built prior to World War II.

Suburban expansion after World War II

Following the conclusion of World War II, development resumed and the growth in motor car ownership meant that the suburban boundaries were able to expand beyond the limits imposed by the public transport network. The relative proximity of Thomastown to the City centre and the ready availability of land drew many residents to the area. Many of these people were migrants (as noted in section 2.4).[134]

In the early 1950s the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works began preparing a plan to cater for the future growth of Melbourne. The Plan, released in 1954, covered the whole of the metropolitan area including districts that were 15 to 18 miles from the City centre and encompassed a total of 688 square miles or 1,780 sq km. In 1971, the planning area was extended by nearly three times including parts of Whittlesea. At that time the concept of growth corridors emanating from the city core along key transport routes was introduced.[135] One of these corridors was along the Plenty Valley following the route of the Whittlesea Railway.

Since the early 1970s this has led to the significant suburban growth within Epping, Thomastown and Lalor, as well as the creation of the new suburbs of Mill Park and South Morang. The population more than quadrupled from 27,000 in 1969 to approximately 130,000 in 2007. Thomastown in 2006 had a population of over 20,000.[136]

The trend has accelerated in recent years as areas closer to the city have been built up and by 2000, new suburbs were being built as far north as Mernda. The most recent metropolitan strategy known as *Melbourne 2030* endorsed the role of Whittlesea as a growth area of metropolitan significance and envisages a doubling of the population to 220,000 persons by 2030.

5.5 Responding to post-war housing shortages

The end of World War II and the return of hundreds of thousands of men and women who had served overseas created a severe shortage of housing that extended well into the 1950s. Eather notes that this shortage was caused by a number of factors that extended back to the 1920s and included the curtailment of housing construction during the 1930s depression, the failure of the building industry to make up the shortfall of the late 1930s, and the restrictions on housing construction enforced by the Commonwealth during World War II.[137] Victoria's high rate of post-World War II population growth, the largest of all Australian states, and a shortage of building materials compounded the problem.[138]

In August 1946, in response to the ongoing housing shortage, the Federal Government announced a joint-venture housing and building program with the States. The aim was to employ 130,000 workers in the construction industry over a total of ten years. It was hoped

133 Ibid.

134 John Waghorn, Private Correspondence 15.11.09.

135 Susan Priestly, The Victorians: Making their mark (Fairfax, Syme & Weldon: Sydney, 1984), 246, 252.

136 Census Data. See www.censusdata.abs.gov.au. (Accessed 21.07.09)

137 Warwick Eather, 'We only build houses', in Renate Howe (ed.) New Houses for Old: Fifty years of Public Housing in Victoria 1938-1988
(Ministry of Housing and Construction: Melbourne, 1988), 69.

138 Ibid., 70.

that the large-scale employment would provide not only jobs but also houses, which would in turn reduce rents and stimulate investment.[139]

The roll out of the joint-venture assumed the presence of developers and a market. Co-operative societies had existed for decades; but the idea of co-operative housing was new. In response to lobbying in 1945 the Victorian Government passed the *Co-operative Housing Society Act*. The Act provided government-guaranteed financing for the co-operatives and permitted that up to 90% of the cost of the development could be borrowed by the purchaser. The co-operative model had several advantages; it ensured that those handling the transactions, the directors of the co-operative, the solicitor, the valuer etc had local knowledge of the sites, while the absence of a need to generate profit ensured that the blocks could be sold more cheaply. Each co-operative was nominally overseen by a government officials and the lending body; however, in reality the co-operative exercised considerable autonomy.[140]

Co-operative societies began to register almost immediately after the legislation was passed and one of the first, known as the Peter Lalor Cooperative, was established in what would become known as the suburb of Lalor.

Heritage place - Peter Lalor Estate

The Peter Lalor Co-operative was particularly bold because it planned not only to arrange the financing of the project but also to serve as the developer and construction company. The Co-operative was founded by Peter Russell, Alf Greenwood, Leo Purcell and Bill King. The suggestion was that the movement would be free of political ideology. However, in reality the aims of the Co-operative (better living conditions for the working classes),[141] the name of the venture (Peter Lalor was the leader of the Eureka Stockade rebellion) and the fact that three of the four founders were associated with the Labor movement provides an indication of the political leanings of the organisation.[142] A later meeting with both the (Labor) Immigration Minister and the (Labor) Prime Minister again served to re-affirm the Labor ideals of the majority of the co-operative founders.

The Co-operative made a decision to purchase land to the north of Thomastown in 1947. A prominent town planner, Saxil Tuxen, was employed to prepare a plan for a "garden suburb".[143] The plan produced was for an effectively self-contained suburb, which would feature business sites, a theatre, a community store and a community building. All the businesses and community buildings were intended to function on a co-operative basis. An architect (S.F. Frew) was subsequently appointed. Frew developed a series of 12 housing models, varying between 9.5 and 11.7 square metres in size. The number of designs was intended to not only provide options for residents but also to prevent the repetition of housing forms.

The development of the area was troubled by under-financing but characterised by a good deal of hard endeavour on the part of the founders. Nonetheless, a funding shortage in 1949 forced the sale of 500 blocks of land to the War Service Homes at a discount on the price paid by new residents. The money eased the immediate problems of the Co-operative but limited the co-operative's control over the broader estate.

Efforts from members of the co-operative and other volunteers who attended working bees from as far afield as Fitzroy, Collingwood, Carlton and even Essendon and Brighton played a significant role in ensuring the viability of the development. Today Lalor has grown

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139 Gary Johns, Building a Suburb- The Peter Lalor Home Building Cooperative Society (Occasional Papers vol 1, no2, Dec 1978), 4.

140 Ibid. 5.

141 Ibid. 8.

142 Interestingly, Peter Russell (the fourth member) was an architect and journalist with the Argus. In contrast to his fellow founders, Peter Russell was reported to have "complete faith in the ability of the private sector to solve the housing shortage". No explanation is given as to why, given his views, he participated in the project. Ibid 7.

143 Tuxen was the designer of a number of other developments in Melbourne, including the Ranelagh Estate, on the Mornington Peninsula.

CONTEXT

considerably and in 2006 had a population of 19,500.[144] Despite the expansion, a large proportion of the original development remains intact.

First house constructed on Peter Lalor Estate, 400 Station Street, Lalor

Context, 01.09.09

5.5 Industrial Development

The rapid influx of new residents after World War II provided a ready workforce and many factories that had traditionally been located in Melbourne's inner suburbs relocated to the area. The Whittlesea Shire Council (as it then was) zoned a large section of Thomastown, from Keon Parade north to Heyington Avenue, and from High Street East to Dalton Road, as an industrial area. This area included the site already occupied by Fowlers Pottery (which was established in the area in 1927– see below).[145]

The relocation of industry to this area was supported by State and Commonwealth Government policies, which encouraged decentralisation of industry from older parts of the city centre to greenfields sites on the city fringe.[146] From as early as late 1942 the Australian Government was giving consideration to how the country's economic and industrial resources could be successfully transformed from a war to a peacetime footing once hostilities had ceased.

Responsibility for planning the needs for post war industrial development lay with the Division of Industrial Development of the Department of Post-War Reconstruction. Originally the Secondary Industries Division, this division became a permanent body in 1948, and operated until 1956 when its functions were incorporated into the Department of Trade.[147]

The Division of Industrial Development aimed to develop and expand secondary industry in post war Australia in areas that included rural reconstruction, conversion of munitions and armament factories for other industrial uses, encouragement of an Australian car manufacturing industry, workforce training and employment opportunities, electricity supplies, fuel production and industrial technology.

Throughout the 1950s and 60s a range of significant industries relocated to the southern reaches of the City of Whittlesea. These included Bostik (1958), Australian Electrical Industries (1960), Australian Sisalcraft (1965), Bates (Australasia) Pty Ltd (1965), B. B Chemical Co. (1960), Britex Metal Products (1963), Carborundum Pty Ltd (1963), Dreadnought (1968), Eagle Remac Pty Ltd (1964), Englehard Industries Pty Ltd (1963), Goodyear Tyre and Rubber Co (1968), Hancock Brothers Pty Ltd (1960), Kelso Manufacturing Co (1963), Kerby (Vic) Pty Ltd (1968), Melbourne Rope Works (1964), Melbourne Saw Manufacturing Co (1968), Monier-Reid Asphalt (1965), Non Ferral Pty Ltd (1960), Pyrox Limited (1963), Reservoir Printing Works (1968), Sutton Tool and Gauge

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144 Census Data. See www.censusdata.abs.gov.au. (Accessed 21.07.09)

145 John Waghorn, Private Correspondence 15.11.09.

146 Susan Priestly, The Victorians: Making their Mark, 264.

147 National Archives of Australia (NAA), Fact Sheet 244, Industrial development in Australia after WWII (2006)

(1963) and Wonderfold Baby Carriages (1960).[148] The expansion was actively supported by a promotional campaign and the publication of *Northside Story*, a publication that advertised the potential and successes of growth to Melbourne's north. The May 1966 edition opens with the headline "Melbourne's northern suburbs are answering expanding industry's needs- first maximum site space – second, central location with minimal traffic problems"[149] The industrial development provided regular employment within the area, but it also changed its character. Articles in the local publication *Outlook* from 1972 regularly complained about the environmental problems caused by manufacturing industries, not to mention the visual pollution of the landscape that development brought with it.[150]

Today, there are still substantial industrial sites in and around Epping and Thomastown. In 2007, Stanley tools set up its Australian headquarters in Northpoint Enterprise Park, Epping. Plans to move the Melbourne Fruit and Vegetable Wholesale Market to the Northpoint Enterprise Park are currently underway. Other businesses operating from the park include: Aquarium Industries, Polymer Technik, Austral Wright Metals and Sumitomo Australia.[151] These industries continue to play a significant role in providing local employment in the City of Whittlesea. In the 2006 census, 17.1% of the City of Whittlesea's population were classified as technician and trade workers (against a national average of 14.4%), 13% of workers were classified as labourers (against a national average of 10.5%), and 10.6% were classified as machinery operators and drivers, against a national average of 6.6%.[152]

Heritage place – Fowlers Pottery

Fowlers Pottery was established in Sydney by Enoch Fowler, who arrived in Sydney from Ireland in 1837. Fowler's son, Robert, took over operation of the business in 1873. Following World War I, the demand for domestic wares grew. In response, Fowlers became a public company in 1922 and opened a second factory in Thomastown in 1927. Production started the following year. Skilled workers from England were imported to establish the pottery at Thomastown. Clay was shipped in bags by train from Sydney. Gould notes that "The first kilns were coal and briquette fired, but later electricity and oil were used". Fowlers Thomastown pottery was the first to install an electric furnace and an oil fired 200 foot tunnel kiln installed during the late 1950s was then the equal of the most modern in the world. In 1957 the pottery was claimed to be the largest producer of sanitary and bathroom fittings in Victoria. Domestic crockery ware, mainly pudding bowls, was also produced."[153]

The establishment of the factory provided a source of employment for many within the City of Whittlesea, but it also marked the start of the City of Whittlesea's large-scale industrial development.[154] Today the factory operates as a gymnasium.

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148 List prepared by John Waghorn, 15 November 2009.

149 Northside Story, May 1966.

150 For example, Outlook, March 1972.

151 Northpoint Enterprise Park, Current owner/occupants, 2009. Available from: www.northpoint.net.au/current_owners.html (Accessed 18.11.09).

152 Census Data. Available from

www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/ABSNavigation/prenav/ProductSelect?newproducttype=QuickStats&btnSelectProduct=View+QuickStats+%3E&collec tion=Census&period=2006&areacode=LGA27070&geography=&method=&productlabel=&producttype=&topic=&navmapdisplayed=true&javascri pt=true&breadcrumb=LP&topholder=0&leftholder=0&currentaction=201&action=401&textversion=false (Accessed 18.11.09).

153 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, 4.14.

154 Fowler's Pottery. Information available from: Australian decorative pottery of the 1930s, R. Fowler pottery history, available from: www.auspottery.com/Fowler_history.htm (Accessed 19.11.09) and Australian Dictionary of Biography, Robert Fowler, available from: adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A040229b.htm (Accessed 19.11.09).

CONTEXT

Fowlers Pottery, Thomastown

Context, 10.03.10

6 THE ENVIRONMENT AND MANAGING PUBLIC LAND

INTRODUCTION

When settlers first came to the region, in addition to the problems caused by isolation, they had to learn to adapt to a new environment and to live with a range of devastating natural phenomenon - bushfires, prolonged droughts and periodic floods. The early history of what is now the City of Whittlesea revolved around attempts to farm the land and exploit the natural resources of the region.

Early settlers in the area had little understanding of land management and the thin soil was rapidly exhausted by constant cropping. The clearing of land also presented problems and logging polluted local rivers and caused serious erosion. In the 20th century new attitudes towards conservation and preserving the natural environment led to the formation of National Parks and bushland reserves. The development of the Parks was fostered by, and perpetuated, a growing appreciation of the beauty and significance of the Australian landscape.

This chapter incorporates the following Victorian Historical Themes:

- Living with natural processes
- Appreciating and protecting Victoria's natural wonders

HISTORY

6.1 Floods and fires

In the Melbourne area, the years of 1848, 1849 and 1850 were unusually wet.[155] The heavy rain caused flooding (and significant damage to the roads). However, it also caused the rapid growth of grass and ground cover in many bushland areas. Clearing of the land in the Plenty Valley had begun, but large tracts were still thick bush. The summer of 1850-51 was particularly hot. The first week of February was even worse, with strong northerly winds. The temperature soared well into the 40s and the wind sucked the moisture from the air and the vegetation. Two bullock drivers (who left a fire untended) are reported to have been responsible for the start of a blaze that grew to consume large tracts of the City of Whittlesea and came to be known as the Black Thursday fires. The *Argus* describes the blasts of air omitted from the fire as being:

> so impregnate with smoke and heat that, the lungs seemed absolutely to collapse under their withering intinence; the murkiness of the atmosphere was so great that the roads were actually bright by contrast. The usual unpleasantness of hot wind was exacerbated by the existence of extensive bushfires to the Northward.[156]

Details of the fires themselves are contained within the *Argus* the following Monday. The paper states:

> On the Plenty … an almost inconceivable amount of damage has been done. We mentioned that some ten or twelve farms had been destroyed, but this is very far from approaching the actual destruction caused, since it is said that more than a hundred families have been thrown by the devouring element houseless upon the world. The property of Mr Wills, and a vast amount of wheat estimated at 20,000 bushels has been burnt; the property of Mr Harlin and several others of the Upper Plenty, has also suffered very seriously, and so fatal has it been to Mr Wills' estate

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155 Len Kenna, In the Beginning there was only the Land, 40.

156 The Argus, 8 February 1851.

that only one of his tenants (Mr Johnston) by good fortune escaped. A shepherd on Dr Ronald's station saved his family, self, and sheep by hastily getting on to some ground previously burnt.[157]

An image of the Black Thursday fire of 1851 (painted some 13 years after the event) portrays the fires in graphic detail.

William Strutt, Black Thursday 1851

LaTrobe Collection, SLV H28049.

Following the fires, in 1851, William Howitt described the land in the following terms:

On all sides you perceive the signs of its [the fire's] ravages. Some trees are totally killed and stand black and spectral objects. Others have been severely scorched; their bark is black and charred; and yet they have put on fresh foliage. Beneath them lie countless giant trunks, many of them of the wildest and most grotesque shapes; while others still stand, although bleached, naked, and as it were bony, pointing their skeleton branches toward the sky.[158]

In February 2009, fires again tore through the region, destroying homes in Humevale and Kinglake West and, tragically, killing 179 people throughout the State. The damage caused by the 2009 fires is still very much in evidence and, at the time of writing, some of the homes that were destroyed are yet to be rebuilt.

6.2 Reserves, State and National Parks

In the period following settlement, Ellem suggests that there was "hostility" towards aspects of the Australian landscape (essentially those that failed to fit into an English landscape aesthetic). Gradually, over time, attitudes began to shift. In the 1880s, the anonymous Melbourne correspondent, who went by the *nom de plume*, "Vagabond", noted the form and beauty of a red gum "as fine as any English oak" and criticised the destruction of Australian native vegetation.[159] By the early 20th Century, the establishment of parks and reserves to protect the natural landscape indicate that any hostility towards the landscape was fading. On the periphery of the Plenty Valley, the establishment of the Kinglake National Park (1927) was a popular initiative.[160] By June 1928, the Kinglake Progress Association had taken to actively marketing the native charms of their town. The *Argus* reported that: "The new Kinglake Progress Association has decided to arrange for the preparation of a film showing the natural beauties found on the Kinglake plateau, particularly those in the Kinglake Park."[161] A few

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157 The Argus, 10 February 1851

158 William Howitt, Land Labour and Gold; or Two Years in Victoria, 1855 (Facsimile editions. J. Butlin (ed) Sydney University Press, 1972).

159 Lucy Grace Ellem, "Picturesque and Panoramic: English Landscape Traditions and the Plenty Valley", in Lucy Ellem (ed) The Cultural Landscape of the Plenty Valley, 73.

160 The Argus, 1 March 1927.

161 The Argus, 27 June 1928.

months later, the trustees of the Kinglake Park were in the process of making regulations for the park to actively prevent the "removal of ferns and shrubs."[162]

162 The Argus, 16 October 1928.

CONTEXT

7   GOVERNING AND ADMINISTRATION

INTRODUCTION

This section considers the impact on the landscape of services provided by the different levels of government, and also the role of communities in securing these services. Much of the infrastructure associated with service provision is significant from a heritage perspective, not just because of its form but because of the memories and connection that members of the local community have with it.

This chapter incorporates the following Victorian Historical Themes:

- Developing institutions of self-government and democracy

- Educating people

HISTORY

7.1   Development of local government

The City of Whittlesea has a complex municipal history. It is a political and a social history that both reflects and mirrors aspects of the broader history of the State.

Roads Boards

In the early days of its development roads in Victoria were of a poor quality and transport was difficult. This was particularly true of travel in regional Victoria where early settlers had neither time nor money to spend upon improvements.[163] While the roads were in poor condition, they were used by a relatively small number of people. However, the gold rush of the early 1850s generated far more traffic and, in turn, placed far more strain upon the infrastructure. This led to a series of petitions that were lodged by those complaining about the condition of the roads. For example, on 16 July 1852, a petition of gold diggers published in the *Argus* railed against the poor quality of the roads and the cost (not to mention the dangers) of using them.[164] A select Committee Report from 1852 described "the succession of quagmires impassable by wheel carriages and traversed by pack horses conveying goods and merchandise".[165] The establishment of the Central Roads Board (1853) was an attempt to manage and improve the condition of the roads and, effectively, marked the start of local government in Victoria. The origins of the City of Whittlesea are in the Roads Boards of: Merriang, Whittlesea, Epping, Morang and Woodstock.[166] The Epping District Roads Board (1854) and the Woodstock Roads Board (1857) were amongst the first to be established.

Shire of Darebin

On 26 August 1870 an application for the districts of Epping, Morang and Woodstock to form a single Shire appeared in the Government Gazette. On 26 September 1870, the Shire of Darebin was created.[167] On 22 September 1871, an application was lodged asking that the Shire of Darebin be divided into two Shires. This appeal was granted and, as a result, the

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163 Payne, The Plenty, 13.

164 The Argus, 16 July 1852, 2.

165 Report of Select Committee of Legislative Council on Roads and Bridges, 1852. Quoted in Payne, The Plenty, 13.

166 Gray, History of Whittlesea, 1.

167 History of the City of Whittlesea. Available from: www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/content/content.asp?cid=369&tid=369&cnid=1273. (Accessed 22.10.09)

southern portion of the Shire was severed to form the Shire of Jika Jika.[168] The Shire of Darebin itself existed until 1895 when it was incorporated in to the Shire of Epping.[169]

Shire of Whittlesea

On 1 January 1875, the Whittlesea Roads Board and the Morang riding (part of the Shire of Darebin) were merged to form the Shire of Whittlesea.[170] In 1915, the Shires of Epping and Whittlesea were merged to form the Shire of Whittlesea.[171] The Shire of Whittlesea was proclaimed a city in 1988. Since the City was proclaimed there have been some changes to its boundaries.

City of Whittlesea

The present day City of Whittlesea dates from 1994, when, following Council amalgamations, some sections of the former City of Whittlesea were lost to other municipalities. Arthurs Creek, Yarrambat and Nutfield as well as sections of Doreen were ceded to the Shire of Nillumbik and sections of Kinglake were lost to the Shire of Murrindindi, while Craigieburn was transferred to the control of the City of Hume. As a result of the changes the city was reduced in size by approximately 18%. Despite the loss of these areas, the population of the City of Whittlesea has continued to grow. In 2006 it stood at over 124,000, up from just over 95,000 in 1991.

7.2 Education

The establishment of both private and public schools was an important activity in the various communities within the City of Whittlesea from an early date. Schools are a tangible symbol of community formation and illustrate the rise and sometimes decline in a district over time.

The National Board of Education functioned from 1851 to 1862 managing government-funded, non-denominational schools, of which 193 were built throughout Victoria. This was superseded by the *Common Schools Act*, which was passed in 1862. Finally, in 1872, the *Free, Compulsory and Secular Education Act* was guided through the Victorian parliament by George Higginbotham, which heralded a new era of State education in Victoria. Many new schools were established after this date.

Meanwhile, the various churches also were involved in the provision of education. Church or denominational schools sometimes became National or Common schools (and later State Schools) if they obtained Government Funding.

Early church, National & Common schools

Early schools in the study area were provided by church organisations and local communities and individuals with the assistance of the Government as either National or Common Schools. Some wealthy families could afford tutors or to send their children to boarding schools in Melbourne.

The early growth of the township of Whittlesea and the surrounding towns led to the relatively early establishment of a series of schools. Typically the earliest schools were private enterprises. The establishment of a private school was not an act of altruism but a financial venture. The school buildings were often basic and teachers relied upon school fees to maintain/improve the buildings and to pay their own wages. A report from a school erected on the Fawsley Estate (about five miles from Bald Hill) provides an indication of the conditions in the first schools in the district:

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168 Gray, History of Whittlesea, 2.

169 Ibid., 38.

170 History of the City of Whittlesea. Available from: www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/content/content.asp?asc=7&chr=h&cnid=1273 (Accessed 29.10.09).

171 Gray, History of Whittlesea, 46.

This is a new slab hut, 20 feet by 15 feet, well built. It is not quite finished, no door or floor but with a fireplace… The school only opened this week but there are 27 names on the list, 10 girls, 17 boys, 20 Roman Catholics, seven Presbyterians. They bring their own books and write neatly on their knees or on the table. Charges are reading and writing 10/- per quarter, higher subjects 13/- per quarter.[172]

Successful private schools were often converted to (or prompted the establishment of) government schools. This was the case in the township of Whittlesea, where a private school began operating in 1854.[173] Its success (it had over 50 students in its first year) encouraged the Victorian Government to grant the teacher at the school an allowance and, in 1855, to bring the school under the control of the Denominational School Board.[174] On other occasions, the absence of a properly run/managed school prompted local protest and government action. In 1863, Henry Gibbs applied to the Victorian Government for a grant of land to replace an existing private school "I have to request that you will procure for us a site for the new school house in the reserve in this Parish."[175]

Government support (and funding) while welcome did not necessarily guarantee a school's permanence. In Woodstock, a National school was opened in 1875. However, a lack of pupils led to the closure of the school in 1901. It briefly re-opened in the 1920s, but closed again in 1929.[176] A similar situation arose at the Township of Separation. The Separation subdivision was designed in 1851 and marketed the following year. A private school was operating before 1851; however it was deemed inadequate (by some at least), because at a meeting on 21 February 1853, Moses Thomas initiated a movement for the construction of a National School. An application was made to the Board of Education for £300 together with a sum to "support the school master."[177] By 12 October, the school was completed, although it remained unfurnished. However, by the mid 1870s the town was in decline. The deterioration in the prospects of the town led to a gradual reduction in the number of students attending the school and it was finally closed in 1882.[178] On other occasions the local community was left to provide its own schools. The residents of Doreen took matters in to their own hands when, prior to 1867, they erected a school house and schoolmaster's residence on land donated by William Reid.[179] The school was a success and in 1873 the title deeds were forwarded to the Government who took over responsibility for its operation.[180]

State Primary Schools

The passing of the 1872 *Education Act*, which saw the building of many new schools throughout Victoria happened to coincide with a time of settlement and growth in the municipality. Consequently, a number of the schools in the area date from the 1870s and illustrate the beginnings of a comprehensive State education system in Victoria. For example, Morang South Primary School No.1975 opened on 1 November 1877 in a bluestone building with an attached residence. The old school building was saved from demolition in 1971 after a 'spirited defence' by the local school committee, and renovated for use as a library and for other purposes.[181]

The introduction of Government schools was not only an important sign of progress in the region, or an indication of the growth of the role of the government in local affairs. Schools

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172 Report from Inspector Childers, Quoted in Payne, Education at Whittlesea, 3.

173 In 1854, there were upwards of 50 students being taught in private accommodation. Ibid, 4.

174 Ibid, 5.

175 Quoted Ibid..

176 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study.

177 Payne, The Plenty, 112.

178 The school building continued to fulfil its original purpose when it was moved to Yan Yean to provide additional school facilities.

179 Payne reports that the "school building stood on the south side of Chapel Lane, almost opposite Linton Grange and was constructed of sapling studs, with a shingle rood and paling exterior". Payne, the Plenty, 82.

180 Ibid.,

181 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, 10.04

also performed important social and administrative functions within the local community. For example, Payne notes the existence of a Mother's Club at Whittlesea Primary School. He argues that, in addition to fundraising, the club "effected a liaison between parents, pupils and staff, and … acted as a hostess group, welcoming or farewelling visitors or staff, organising Christmas parties with gifts for children or teachers..." Payne makes similar observations in respect to Wollert School.[182] From a social perspective, these sorts of committees have also played a part in the life of the community and have, as in the case of Morang South, helped to preserve the history of areas. The development of schools in the region has acted as a catalyst to the establishment of a whole range of social ties that have, and continue to, benefit the local community.

Tertiary education

More recently, the development of the Phillip Institute of Technology in Bundoora (which in 1992 merged with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) and became RMIT's Bundoora campus) has provided the City of Whittlesea with a large tertiary institution. The Campus is divided in to two sections (the east and the west). The western section is set on 42 hectares of parkland and has been designed to be eco friendly and sustainable. It features a rare collection of 800 plus old red gum trees, with historical markings made by Indigenous Australians. RMIT Bundoora offers specialised programs in aerospace engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, medical sciences and social sciences.

Heritage place – Thomastown Primary School

Thomastown Primary School was established in 1854, as "a school of learning during the week and worship on the Sabbath." The original school, completed in November 1854, was of timber construction. It was replaced in 1877 by the current brick building. The brick building was extended in 1925. The establishment of the Peter Lalor Estate (in 1947) brought new students to the school and created a need for further school accommodation. To ease the pressure on the brick building, some classes were taught in the Mechanics Hall in Spring Street. In 1953, the Eden Park School (which had closed in 1943) was transported to Thomastown, and pressed in to service. Over the next 20 or so years, the school continued to expand and additional small light timber structures were erected on the site. By 1977, the school consisted of 16 classrooms, a canteen, office, staff, production and store rooms, together with the Eden Park building and the original brick school. The Eden Park Building was destroyed by fire in 1977, and a further fire, on 13 July 1978, destroyed a good deal of the remaining school buildings, leaving only two small timber structures and the original 1877 brick structure. The school was rebuilt and the new facilities were opened in March 1985. In 2001, the school was extended.

Thomastown Primary School, constructed c1877.

Context, 17.09.09

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182 J.W Payne et al., A Centenary History of the Wollert State School no. 1861, 1877-1977 (Lowden: Kilmore, 1977), 30.

8   COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL LIFE

INTRODUCTION

The growth of the City of Whittlesea did not only create demand for housing and administrative services, it has also created a strong demand for community and cultural facilities. Early in the development of the City, political and social gatherings were frequently held at hotels or private homes. During the selection era, the homes of individuals were often used as meeting places. Later, as the first community buildings started to be constructed they often served multiple functions and it was not uncommon for a church to act as a school and also as a meeting hall.

The construction of these community buildings not only met an immediate community need, it also served a symbolic one. It was a statement about the community's character and also a vote of confidence in its capacity to survive. At times the confidence was warranted. The township of Whittlesea, for example, has endured and grown. At other times, it was misplaced. The settlement of Separation gradually dwindled and its church was finally closed in 1882 and later relocated.

The importance of these buildings lies not just in their architectural qualities but in the role that they have played in community life. They represent important stages of life within communities from early childhood until old age and, as a result, possess great social value.

This chapter incorporates the following Victorian Historic Themes:

- Maintaining spiritual life

- Forming community organisations

- Preserving traditions and commemorating

- Marking the phases of life: dying

- Achieving distinction in the arts

HISTORY

8.1   Religion

Churches, along with schools, were key institutions in the development of settled communities. While schools were built with government funds, the churches were required to raise their own money for buildings and many congregations worshipped in private homes, public halls or schools before they had chapels of their own.

The first church services held in the district were held under a tree in "Target's Paddock" around 1848, while the first Anglican vicar was Rev William Copeland who arrived in 1853.[183] From that service the spread of churches throughout the district was comparatively rapid. By 1860 churches were constructed in Woodstock (Catholic, 1853)[184], Westgarthtown (Lutheran, 1856) and Morang (Presbyterian, 1860). In other towns, sites had been set aside for Churches. In Epping, for instance, sites were reserved for a Catholic and Presbyterian Church, as well as a cemetery and a village market. The first Anglican Church service in Epping was held in August or September 1863, probably at the site allocated to the Church of England in Campbell Street (now the site of the railway station car park).[185] The first service at Christ Church, Whittlesea

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183 Duffy, Reminiscences of Whittlesea, 11; Lindsay Mann 2010.

184 The school building was located in a farmer's shed. See Payne, The Plenty, 107.

185 R. W. Hartley, Epping Rising: An Account of the Anglican Church in and Around Epping (Epping: Anglican Parish of Epping, 2009), 1.

occurred on 25 February 1866 and was conducted by the visiting Archbishop of Melbourne, Charles Perry.[186]

By 1900 there were churches in all major settlements in the City of Whittlesea. The churches, together with their associated buildings, have made a substantial contribution to town and rural streetscapes throughout the region. Significant community events have been celebrated at the churches, and small monuments within the churches sometimes provide a reminder of those events. Features of the Church include gifts from parishioners. For example, in the Whittlesea Anglican Church, the altar rails are a gift from the Clark family as a tribute to their parents, the pillars leading to the chancel are in memory of a loved Vicar, Rev. Wilford Downes James, while the altar is dedicated to the parishioners of the district.[187]

In addition to being sites of personal significance many of the churches in the City of Whittlesea also provide insights into the settlement and development of the district. For instance, the construction of the Methodist church in the township of Separation was an indication of its growing population. As the town declined the church fell in to disuse and, following the closure of the school in 1882, was relocated to Yan Yean and later to Yarrambat. The movement of the church illustrates the rise and fall of each of these settlements, as well as being a good example of the common 19th and early 20th century practice of relocating institutional buildings on the basis of need.

In the 20th century the increase in population led to the establishment of new churches and religious organisations. St Pauls (Anglican) was established in Thomastown in 1965. The church operated until, in 1994, a decision was made to sell the site and to develop a regional ministry centre around the Epping church. The sale of the site, to a Samoan congregation of the Assemblies of God, took place in 1998.[188]

Churches also illustrate the social and cultural changes of communities. The Mayfield Presbyterian church at Mernda, erected in 1860, was one of several early Presbyterian churches that reflected the relatively large number of Scottish settlers in the Plenty Valley in the mid 19th century. While early settlers in the district were almost exclusively Christian, the large numbers of migrants that moved to the district following World War II were not. Growing numbers of non-Christian migrants have, recently, seen the establishment of other religious institutions within the City. For example, since its completion in the early 1990s, the Thomastown Mosque has provided a key religious and social site for members of the local Islamic community.

Heritage place – St John's Church of England

The first Church of England (Anglican) service was held in Epping in August or September 1863. Early services were held in a school room, but a permanent building was opened on 25 July 1869. The original St John's Church was built of bluestone and was based on the common English parish church, using Gothic revival form, but differed in that it had a wider than usual nave.[189] A sanctuary and vestry designed by the noted architect, Louis R. Williams, were constructed in 1937. The church has remained largely unchanged since this time.

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186 Christ Church Whittlesea. Available from www.christchurchwhittlesea.org/history-of-christ-church/ (Accessed 03.02.2010).

187 Duffy, Reminiscences of Whittlesea, 10-11.

188 Hartley, Epping Rising, 57-58. Details of other Anglican parishes within the City of Whittlesea re also provided within Appendix 2 of R. W. Hartley's book.

189 Ibid., 5.
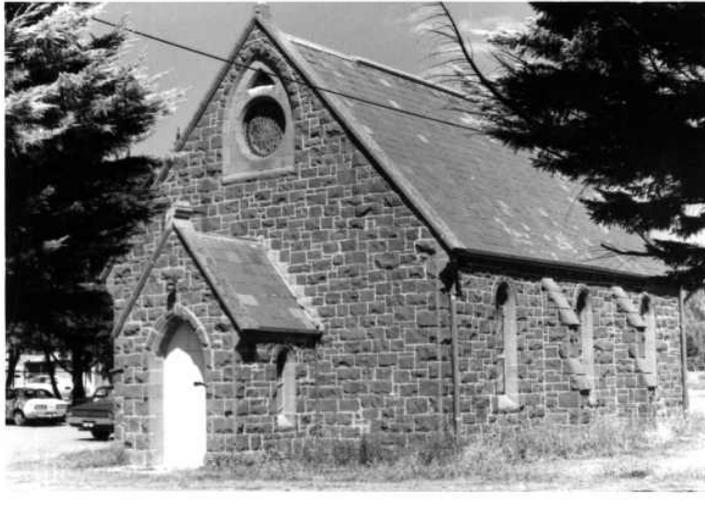
St John's Church, Epping c 1977

SLV H95.200/1389

8.2 Memorials and remembering

Memorials imbue the land with meaning. They mark sites of significance and are reminders of the community's shared heritage. Like many communities throughout Australia, the City of Whittlesea erected memorials to honour those who served and died in the Boer War, World War I and II. In the township of Whittlesea a Memorial Arch was erected by soldiers and citizens of the district in memory of the fallen who enlisted in the district.[190] The Whittlesea War Memorial Arch was opened on 5 March 1927 by His Excellency the Governor (Lord Somers). Within the district's schools and churches, memorials were also erected. In December 1921, a war trophy was unveiled at Thomastown State School.[191] The Anglican Church in the township of Whittlesea contains a memorial to a young solder killed during World War I, as well as a memorial to those killed during World War II.[192]

Heritage place – Epping Memorial Hall

For those servicemen that returned from war, the foundation of local branches of the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) played an important role in providing support. The Epping sub-branch of the RSL was established on 6 May 1920, its boundaries were Mahoneys Lane in the south, Merri Creek to the west, Plenty River to the east and Donnybrook Lane and township to the north.[193] The Epping sub-branch closed in 1922. However, following World War II, it was revived. The sub-branch was initially accommodated in the Whittlesea Shire Hall; however, with assistance from members of the local community (many of whom were members of the Peter Lalor Building Co-operative Society) a temporary building was erected in High Street, Epping, adjacent to where the Memorial Hall stands today.[194] Plans to build a permanent hall were conceived in 1953 and, after over a year of fundraising, the Epping Memorial Hall was officially opened on 7 April 1955.[195] In 2001, a grant of $172,500 from the state government paid for renovations to the Hall. Today, the Hall is a popular venue for all sorts of community events from ballroom dancing to band competitions.

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190 The Argus, 5 March 1927.

191 Epping RSL Club History. Available from www.eppingrsl.com.au/history (Accessed 03.11.09).

192 Duffy, Reminiscences of Whittlesea, 10-11.

193 Epping RSL Club History. Available from www.eppingrsl.com.au/history (Accessed 03.11.09).

194 Ibid.

195 Ibid.

Epping Memorial Hall

Context 10.03.10

8.3 Cemeteries

Just as surely as communities needed their halls to socialise, churches to worship and schools to learn, they needed a place to bury and remember their dead. Sagazio notes that:

> *Cemeteries constitute a significant spatial and visual element in the urban or rural landscape and contain important historical and cultural information about the communities that created them. They reflect vital aspects of our social, religious, folk, architectural and literary history which are not found in such a combination in any other place.*[196]

In the early days of the City of Whittlesea's history, isolated and even unregistered burials were not uncommon.[197] On the hill to the south of Merri Park (near Woodstock) there were several graves fenced until about 1910. While, downstream from the Carome Mill, several burials also took place.[198] The first public cemeteries in the district were located at Yan Yean and Epping. The land for the Yan Yean cemetery was donated, in 1854, by Dr William Ronald. The land for the Epping cemetery was set aside in its original survey and gazetted in the same year (see heritage place below).

In Thomastown, the Lutheran settlement of Westgarthown was established in 1850 by William Westgarth and Captain Stanley Carr, who purchased unalienated land from the Thomas holding (which today would extend from Main Street, Thomastown north to the Lalor Railway Station and from the Epping Road to a parallel line a mile west).[199] The land was the base for a community of German settlers who Westgarth recruited on a trip to Europe. Upon their arrival, the German settlers gave priority to establishing a church, which opened in 1856.[200] The Cemetery associated with the church contains the remains of about 200 people dating from the earliest days of the settlement. It remains open to members of the congregation and descendants of the original settlers.[201]

Heritage place – Epping Cemetery

Following Hoddle's survey in 1837, John Hosking and Terry Hughes, both Sydney investors, purchased the land south and west of the Darebin Village Reserve (now Epping). The Wollert

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196 Celestina Sagazio, Cemeteries, Our Heritage (National Trust of Australia (Victoria): Melbourne, 1992), 25

197 Payne, The Plenty, 151.

198 Ibid.

199 Ibid., 73.

200 The Argus, 17 May 1856.

201 Robert Wuchatsch, Westgarthtown: A History and Guide (Friends of Westgarthtown: Thomastown, 2004), 11.

CONTEXT

Pastoral run, extending over the remainder of the parish, was leased by John Pike JP. Charles Caldwell Campbell had the run from 1840-50.

The land remained pastoral until surveyed into modest farms and convenient roads by Robert Mason. In his survey of the Epping township, Mason set aside 17 acres for a cemetery and recreation reserve. Cemetery trustees were duly appointed. On 22 May 1858, tenders were called for the enclosure of the cemetery area[202] and on 11 June 1858 regulations were formally gazetted. The cemetery was subdivided in to various sections to serve different denominations. A single public burial in open ground cost £1,2s,6d whereas interments in private graves were more expensive. Burials on Sundays cost double and additional charges were levied for the right to erect headstones. In 1894 the sextons hut burned down, taking it with it the first burial register. The second register dates from 1894 and contains the names of many early settler families. The 1903 minute book records that meetings were held at the Epping Hotel, the publican Joseph Newton being the secretary of the Cemetery Trust. The other trustees were storekeeper James Boyle (Chairman), Postmaster Aitken and School teacher Madigan. Later, when Newton died, meetings transferred to the Victoria hotel.

The cemetery reserve was large and general maintenance of the site was beyond the financial resources of the Trustees who struggled to maintain the site. In 1956 five acres (without graves) was transferred to the adjoining recreation reserve. The cemetery was closed in 1967 to all except those holding deeds to sites and internments in existing family graves. Today the grassland contained within the cemetery is of regional significance and contains 10 species of native grass and six species of lily. The cemetery is now administered by the City of Whittlesea, with maintenance provided by the Epping Apex Club on a voluntary basis.[203]

Epping Cemetery

Context, 07.08.09

8.4 Community halls

Along with schools, the first public building to indicate the formation of a settled community in the City of Whittlesea was invariably a hall, typically built on a corner of land donated by a selector, with funds raised by community members. The local public hall was a focal point of community life, serving as a social centre for dances, concerts and other entertainment and celebrations, a venue for charity functions, educational lectures and political meetings, and as temporary municipal offices, churches, schools and court houses. As the place where neighbours gathered to work for common goals, receive instruction, worship, sort out their

202 The Argus, 22 May 1858.

203 Compiled from information board at the Epping Cemetery and Gould Study.

differences and enjoy recreation together, the public hall was the place where the local community was formed and sustained.

The most common kind of public hall in the 19th century was the Mechanics' Institute hall. Mechanics' Institutes originated as a form of self-improvement for working people who had little access to higher education or book learning. They were set up initially to provide libraries or reading rooms and to run lectures and debates, but their educational function was minimal. Mechanics' Institutes were popular throughout Victoria because they attracted government subsidies, and by the 1880s there were more than 300 in the colony.[204] Other community halls were known simply as public halls, particularly after the Mechanics' Institute movement waned, around the turn of the century. There were also a few privately owned halls made available for public use.

The Mechanics' Institute and Free Library at Mernda was opened on 26 December 1888. Walter Thomas was appointed as librarian and trustee, a position he was to fill for the next forty-one years. Shire Council meetings were held in the hall from 1915 to 1939.[205]

Heritage place – Doreen Hall

In 1908, five acres of land on the north west corner of the Doreen crossroads was purchased from the Egglestone estate of Henry and John Cooke by Messrs. L.W. Clarke, W. Christian and R.L. Reid, who were trustees for the Doreen Hall and Recreation Ground. During 1909 the reserve was cleared and levelled. On Arbor Day in July, 500 trees were planted by school children and their parents. A large hall was subsequently erected at the cost of 300 pounds. The official opening took place on 4 December 1909. The *Evelyn Observer* reported that "... the hall, which has seating accommodation for 250 people is built on the most modern lines, with stage, dressing rooms, etc. and its design and construction reflects infinite credit on Mr. A.W. Barr" - the architect and builder. In the evening, following the opening, a ball was held. The newspaper report concluded that "never in the history of Doreen has a more enjoyable evening been spent ... The gay dresses of the ladies, the capital music, the excellent supper and the glory of the moonlight might, all served to lend a glamour to an evening which will live in the memory of all who took part.[206]

The hall has played an important role in the life of the community. In 1924 it was used to host events to raise school funds[207] and in the 1930s for meetings of the Country Women's Association.[208] The hall is currently derelict but is the subject of a vigorous local conservation campaign.

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204 Priestly, The Victorians: Making their mark, 235.

205 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, Place 11.01.

206 Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, 12.07.

207 The Argus, 10 November 1924.

208 The Argus, 23 October 1933.

CONTEXT

Doreen Community Hall
Context, 18.09.09

8.5 The Whittlesea Show

As noted in section 3.1 the Whittlesea Agricultural Society was formed in 1859 and held its first show that same year. The Annual Society Show has since become a significant commercial and social event in the Whittlesea district. The show started off as a "fair"[209] and in his account of the show, Duffy stresses its social value to the community and recalls that it was "of the nature of a gymkhana with competitions".[210] On Show Day, 1889 the railway between Melbourne and the township of Whittlesea finally opened, ending 40 years of the coaching service. The choice of Show Day to open the railway demonstrates in clear terms the significance of the show to the region.

In 1901, the growth in the status and popularity of the show attracted the Governor General, Lord Hopetoun and a host of politicians. Since then a string of dignitaries has attended show events.[211] By 1905 the show had outgrown its original ground (near the intersection of Plenty Road and Laurel Streets)[212] and it was moved to the present showgrounds. In 1915, the Preston *Leader* reported that:

The annual show was held in the Society's grounds, claimed to be the most picturesque in the State - on Thursday, and passed off very successfully. The show ground was in perfect order, being covered with a beautiful green sward, and the day being fine, patrons moved about with every degree of comfort... Thursday's show, in the opinion of those competent to judge, surpassed all previous exhibitions. Nothing could be more gratifying, as it shows that the Society is not only growing in popularity, but widening its influence.

From 1903 to 1939, a feature of the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria's annual Melbourne Show was a competition for the best exhibit from a district or region. Never unplaced in thirty eight years of competition, Whittlesea won twenty six first prizes, ten second prizes and two third prizes.

In the 1940s, the Whittlesea Show's wool exhibit, organised by Les Batten, became more important than that at the Royal Melbourne Show. Les was soon engaged by the Royal Agricultural Society to coordinate their wool exhibitions. During the 1970s, the Whittlesea Show was extended to cover two days, such had its success become. Many district families have

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209 Whittlesea Show. Available from www.whittleseashow.org.au/sponsorship.pdf [Accessed 09.07.09].
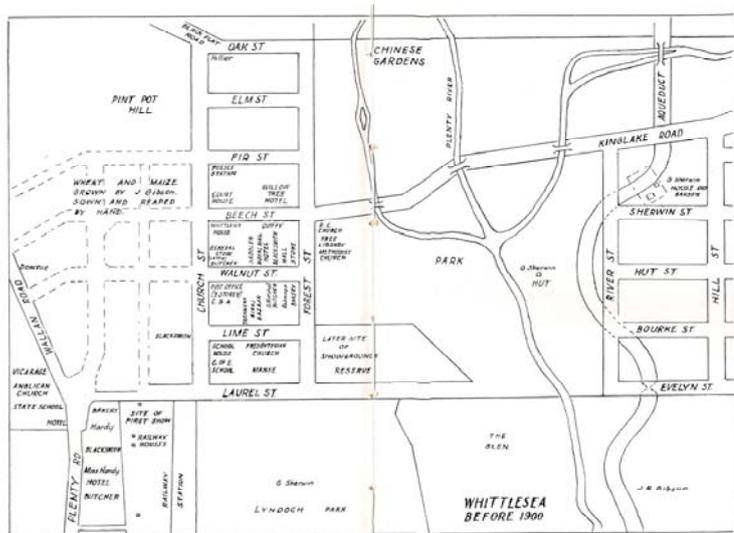
210 Duffy, Reminiscences of Whittlesea, 19.

211 For example, in 1908 Mr Harper MLA is reported as speaking at the Whittlesea Show. See The Advertiser (SA) 21 November 1908.

212 Payne, The Plenty, 142. Also see E. M. Duffy Reminiscences of Whittlesea, 19.

now been associated with the Whittlesea Agricultural Society for over 100 years.[213] In 2009 the show celebrated its 150th anniversary.

Whittlesea Showgrounds
Context, 18.08.09

Map of Whittlesea before 1900 shows original Showgrounds location. E.M. Duffy, *Reminisces of Whittlesea.*

8.5 Artists

The landscape of the City of Whittlesea has long been a source of inspiration for artists and many of the earlier depictions of the City of Whittlesea emphasised its pastoral qualities, as well as the efforts of early settlers to 'improve' the land. The photographs of the landscape photographer Fred Kruger provide an insight into the way that the landscape was understood.

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213 Preceding Text largely taken from Meredith Gould Architects, Whittlesea Conservation Study, 14.57.

CONTEXT

Fred Kruger,
View on the Yarra near Bundoora,

State Library of Victoria Picture Collection, Accession No. H24817

Kruger's idyllic depictions of life are firmly in the European tradition of "pastoral romanticism."[214] However, by the mid part of the 20th century artists were focusing more upon the uniquely Australian aspects of the landscape. Within the City of Whittlesea, notable local painters from the mid and latter parts of the 20th century include: John Borrack, William Frater and Arnold Shore. John Borrack, in particular, has a long association with the City of Whittlesea (his grandparents owned the Ziebell farm at Thomastown) and has spent much of his career exploring landscapes in the area.[215] Borrack considered the rich pastoral landscapes of the area to be the "epitome of everything [he had read] within Australian literature and seen in many paintings [and] an unsullied extension of the rapidly developing landscape [he] had come to know around the Ivanhoe and Heidelberg area."[216] Borrack's depictions of the landscape stress its unique Australian qualities; the dusty sky and gum trees are significant features of the work below.

John Borrack,
Spring Landscape and Waterholes, Mernda.

Taken from: www.johnborrack.com /news/news.htm (accessed 03.02.2010).

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214 John Borrack, 'Memories of Painters and Paintings in the Plenty Valley', in Lucy Ellem (ed) Cultural Landscapes of the Plenty Valley, 77.

215 John Borrack, Memories of Painters and Paintings, in Lucy Ellem (ed) Cultural Landscapes, 77.

216 Ibid.

The Whittlesea region was also a popular subject for several other significant artists- Fred Williams, John Perceval and Clifton Pugh have all painted the landscape of the Plenty Valley. Clifton Pugh lived in Cottlesbridge (in the Shire of Nillumbik, close to its border with the City of Whittlesea). Fred Williams and John Perceval painted extensively at the Yan Yean swamp, and Perceval produced "some major works at the Cooks road area, Mernda".[217] Unlike Kruger or Borrack, these artists provided an impression of the landscape as much as a faithful depiction of it. Their aim was to convey how it felt, as much as how it looked. Their representations changed the way that the region (and the Australian bush more generally) was seen.

Fred Williams' work *Trees in Landscape: Yan Yean* featured below uses quick 'impressionistic' brush strokes to stress the colour and energy of the Australian bush.

Fred Williams,
Trees in a Landscape: Yan Yean

Taken from www.savill.com.au
(Accessed 24.07.09)

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217 Ibid, 84.

GLOSSARY

Cultural significance	*Cultural significance* means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations.
	Cultural significance is embodied in the *place* itself, its *fabric, setting, use associations, meanings, records, related places* and *related objects*.
Conservation	*Conservation* means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its *cultural significance*.
Burra Charter	The *Burra Charter* is the short name given to the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, which was developed by Australia ICOMOS at a meeting in 1979 in the historic South Australian mining town of Burra. It is now widely accepted as the basis for cultural heritage management in Australia.
	The Burra Charter may be applied to a wide range of places - an archaeological site, a town, building or landscape and defines various terms and identifies principles and procedures that must be observed in conservation work.
	Although the Burra Charter was drafted by heritage professionals, anyone involved in the care of heritage items and places may use it to guide conservation policy and practice.
ICOMOS	*ICOMOS* (International Council on Monuments and Sites) is a non-governmental professional organisation formed in 1965. ICOMOS is primarily concerned with the philosophy, terminology, methodology and techniques of cultural heritage conservation and is closely linked to UNESCO.
Place	*Place* means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of building or other work, and may include components, contents, spaces and views.
Post contact	*Post-contact* means the period after first contact between indigenous and non-indigenous (sometimes referred to as 'European') individuals or communities.

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