

◆ The Switchback ◆

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From the President

It has been a while since our last Newsletter and the committee has been very busy collating more local history.

The 1950s Phone box is now restored and located at Everbloom Nursery while it waits for its new home in our museum. We are still looking for a 1950s phone to put in the box, so if anyone knows of one could they please get in touch with us.

We have had several walks on Saturdays, one was the Parkerville Quarry and the other was to Hovea camp site.

I would like to thank Briony Waterhouse, Maureen Tie and Val Martin for manning the History section of the CALM walk in John Forrest National Park.

Your Society has donated two Peace rose bushes to the rose garden at the War memorial where two had been lost several years ago. These roses were planted on Remembrance Day.

This issue is based around the war years as this is the year Australia remembers 50 years since the end of World War II.

You will find this a new look Newsletter and we will be producing it regularly to keep you informed on our local History.

If you have any information or articles you would like to see in our Newsletter please do not hesitate to send them in. We hope to see you at our meetings which are still held at Parkerville Children's Home on the first Tuesday of every month at 4.30.

We hope to be moving to our new meeting place in the Glen Forrest Station Master's house soon so we will keep you informed.

Andrew Pankhurst
President.



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Mundaring and Hills Historical Society

(Inc.)



Afternoon tea with a difference Greenmount 1943

A leisurely Sunday afternoon was often spent at the grandparents home in York Rd, Greenmount.

At about 3pm Grandma and the maiden aunt would set the table in the front room with an embroidered cloth, then the sugar basin with the lumps, sandwiches, home made biscuits, and a fruit cake, always a fruit cake. Next would be the side plates and cups and saucers, with the delicate blue flower on them, I always had to have the cup and saucer with the yellow daffodils on it as it was stronger.

A bell would be rung out the back verandah to call in the men folk, who were usually down the back part of the block. Then we would sit down to tea. We could see out to the York Road, from the open french doors, and now and again a car would pass by. Not many as it was war time and petrol was rationed.

MUNDARING SCHOOL AND WAR MEMORIAL APPROX. 1933

Suddenly the stillness of the lazy Sunday afternoon was filled with a loud sound. A small black sedan had come down the hill towards Midland too fast and rolled over outside the house. I was told to stay inside, while the adults ran out to see what help they could give the occupants.

I crept up to the front gate while the adults were occupied closer to the car and we were all surprised and relieved to see four young American sailors climb out of the upturned car. They had been drinking and were quite unhurt. They were laughing at their predicament. They were all talking in that familiar U.S. drawl they all pushed the car back on its wheels, jumped in and with a wave to all of us carried on their way down the hill towards their destination. We all trooped back inside and had our afternoon tea.

by Valma Martin [nee Kay]

WAR MEMORIAL 1923 -1995

The War Memorial was constructed on the corner of Nichol St and York Rd - now Great Eastern Hwy.

The following notes from the Swan Express show that funds were being raised by collecting money from local residents to erect a Fallen Soldier's Memorial. From Jan 1921 to Dec 1922, 85 pounds 9 shillings 5 pence had been raised and money was also raised by several local sports meetings and dances.

In a letter dated 8th May 1923 to the Under Secretary of Lands written by E.D. Forsyth Sec Greenmount R.B. Lion Mill, he says the people of the district have erected a memorial to the fallen soldiers of the district and enclosed a sketch.

In 'A History of the Shire' by I Elliot, quote on Sunday 6th May 1923, His Grace Archbishop Riley unveiled the Greenmount District War Memorial. According to extracts from the 'Swan Express' money was still being raised in 1925, to complete the fallen soldiers memorial and the unveiling of the memorial tablets affixed to the cenotaph was held on Sunday 14th March 1926.

The 11 perches of land that the memorial is on was gazetted an 'A' class reserve in October 1923. A fence was erected to protect the cenotaph.

In 1937 Mr. F.B. Mason Sec of the Mundaring Road Board wrote to the Under Sec Of Land requesting that the reserve be vested in this board and the Mundaring Roads Board "will improve and beautify the land in the future". This is probably when the rose garden was planted. Another local story says that Mr Alex McCallum may have donated the rose bushes, as his gardener Mr Atkinson pruned and tended the roses while in Mr McCallum's employ.

Prior to the reserve being vested with M.R.B., the Mundaring R.S.L. elected a committee to control the reserve.

In 1933, H Rutherford, H Patton and J Wilshusen were elected- from 'Swan Express' 28 Sept 1933.

In 1987 with the impending sale of the school for a future shopping centre, it did appear that the cenotaph and rose garden would have to be moved to make way for this development. The Shire of Mundaring engaged Landscape architects P&M Toobey to plan the cenotaph relocation to the south end of Nichol St in Sculpture Park.

\$20,000 was budgeted for this relocation in the Shires 1992 budget. Many elderly residents were appalled at the idea of their memorial being removed from it's prominent site. The Mundaring and Hills Historical Society received several requests from locals to lobby the shire about the proposal and also the waste of ratepayer's money. I was elected as M.H.H.S. delegate to speak at the Shire Building and Planning Committee meeting on the appropriate date that this matter was up for discussion and with the support of Councillor R. Atkins this plan was temporarily put aside until further meetings with shire and local R.S.L. Other letters of disapproval for this relocation had been received by the Shire from local ratepayers.

In 1995 another plan was on the drawing board for shifting the cenotaph to a safer site on the reserve, as the local R.S.L. had received a grant from the Federal Government's 'Australia Remembers' programme to upgrade and restore our war memorials.

A plan to upgrade the area around the memorial and add some seats under the trees is also a consideration.

With the proposed streetscape plan which will narrow Great Eastern H'way, hopefully the traffic through the town will be slowed down. The cenotaph looks like staying in-situ.

I and many residents of Mundaring can only hope that our Shire planners can see there is no reason to shift the memorial now. **By M Tie**

DID YOU KNOW

Did you know that John Simpson, Kirkpatrick, famous as Gallipoli's "Man with the Donkey" did not receive any military award for his brave deeds? Simpson, who had dropped the Kirkpatrick part of his name, was a field ambulance private who on his own initiative carried many wounded men to safety on the back of a stray donkey he found nearby.

Sadly, Simpson was killed on May 19th 1915, just 24 days after he had landed at Anzac cove, as he led his donkey through heavy fire down the slopes to safety.

Several attempts over many years to have a Victoria Cross awarded to him have failed, so this year, a new approach is being made to the authorities. The Echuca-Moama RSL is seeking nationwide support in appealing for the award of a Cross of Valour for him. Hopefully, this will succeed.

Reference: Bill Lynn, reported in the West Australian, 20 May, 1995

WALK TO HOVEA CAMP

On Saturday 16th September several members attended the walk to the old Hovea Sustenance Camp site. This proved to be a very interesting walk enjoyed by all members that went.

The Hovea camp was started in April 1931 at the north eastern end of the National Park. Here up to 550 men were to be employed removing dead trees from the forest and cutting them into lengths for firewood. The men worked 1.1/2 days per week in return for their keep and 5 shillings. The firewood was taken to the railway stations in the city and suburbs, where it was distributed free to needy families on sustenance.

1931 was one of the coldest winters on record and the men had to live in tents.

In July 1931 their pay was cut to 4/6. This caused a stop work protest, however Scadden the Minister for unemployment refused to receive a deputation from them until the men were back at work.

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HOVEA WALK

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In November 1931 the number of men on sustenance was 13500 in Western Australia alone. It was decided to close the camp around this time as summer was coming and the wood was not needed by the city folk. The Hovea camp had been a successful venture and similar camps were set up in the South West where men were employed in irrigation schemes and dams such as Harvey, Wellington etc. Interestingly enough, this camp was on the recently named Clutterbuck Creek.



MUNDARING WEIR 1920.

Two visitors standing along side the Zig Zag.

MUNDARING WEIR DURING THE WAR

In World War One the Government was concerned that the Weir could be a target for attack if Western Australia was ever invaded by the enemy as it was the major water source at the time. The Weir wall was patrolled by soldiers every day and night and the public were not allowed access on the wall during this time. Gates were installed at the ends of the weir wall to stop any access.

The soldiers were replaced by police on the wall after a while as the soldiers were needed elsewhere. There was concern that the enemy could send men up the Helena River to blow up or damage the Weir or the pumping stations. There were several things done to stop this from happening, back up pumping stations were installed in case the main pumping stations were ever damaged. These pumps were in no way as big as the original pumps so if they were required there would have been a loss in water volume.

Further down the river soldiers were situated behind a stone wall, this was known as the Fortification. It was constructed on the north side of the river so the soldiers could look down on the river and the road on the south side. The Fortification was manned 24 hours a day by soldiers so they could intercept any people on the road or making their way up the valley to the wall. Fortunately the soldiers never were confronted with the enemy, however it is surprising to see what concern and the lengths that were taken for a war that was so far away.

The wall is still visible to this day, however it is very well hidden. If you have not seen the wall and would like to see it you can contact the MHHS and we will endeavor to point you in the right direction.

IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION OR ARTICLE THAT YOU THINK MAY HAVE HISTORICAL VALUE WHY NOT BRING THEM ALONG TO OUR MEETINGS SO WE CAN TRY AND FILL IN MORE OF THE HISTORY OF THE HILLS.

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR PLACES OF HISTORY TO VISIT, SO IF YOU KNOW ANY PLEASE TELL US

THE SWITCHBACK

The Switchback was a wooden tramline to take the timber from the Port and Honey sawmill down to the Mundaring Weir rail head where it was then taken to Maylands where the Port and Honey timber yards were situated. This tramline relied on the momentum of the wooden trams to carry it all the way from the mill to the pumping station. The trams were then towed back up the line by horses to be refilled.

OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD IN FEBRUARY OUR SOCIETY WILL BE IN RECESS UNTIL THEN. MAY WE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH EVERYONE A MERRY CHRISTMAS

THE MUNDARING AND HILLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES FOR THEIR SPONSORSHIP OF THIS NEWSLETTER

EVERBLOOM NURSERY 665 RAILWAY TCE SAWYERS VALLEY	2951666	NICHOL ST DELI NICHOL ST MUNDARING	2952714
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PLEASE SUPPORT THESE SPONSORS

The Switchback

IF A COLOURED SPOT APPEARS HERE, YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE IS DUE

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