HISTORY HERE 256

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8. **Upcoming Events:**
Open House Melb (July)
Greek settlement (30/8)
Syndal **virtual** walk 27/9
Lost Waverley (25/10)
All welcome – we hope to see you there!

Extant Pre-suburban Buildings #70 – Mountain View Hotel

The Mountain View Hotel in Glen Waverley has been a landmark for many decades. Although its looks have changed several times, the buildings themselves have not changed as often.



It began in the 1860s and was deliberately built on the very corner of Springvale and High St Roads, so "drovers could lean on the bar without dropping the reins." It accommodated gold prospectors in the 1890s rush. At the same time it was the scene of a horrific family tradegy. Over the years it has been the subject of paintings and photographs, when few could afford to take photos.

The current buildings were erected in the early 1960s, when road widenings removed the older ones. Just visible through the modernising decorative grill in the 2026 photo above are the distinctive windows of the 1963 photo below.

Still a popular meeting place, the Mountain View is truly a historic Monash feature.



New WHS Later Hours

WHS is experimenting with extending its hours occasionally to accommodate researchers who cannot come during business hours. So far this has occurred a couple of times with some success. The next "Late Night Researching" is scheduled for 14th October 2026. Email for details waverleyhsvic@gmail.com

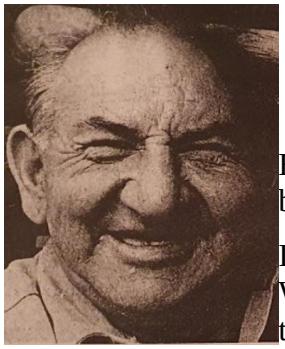
REMINDER

This year, WHS is trialing general meetings on the LAST Sundays of the month, rather than the fourth. This is because some of our members have other commitments on fourth Sundays. Please let us know how this affects you on waverleyhsvic@gmail.com.

Thank you to Matt Fregon MP, State Member for Ashwood District, for assistance with the printing of this publication. If you require assistance with any State Government issues please contact Matt's office.

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Merv, 63, Old King "Coal"

Sebire the Fuel Merchant, Mt Waverley 1960-70s

How did someone with gammy legs, someone who dreaded heaving bags onto his back, end up running a successful fuel yard for so long?

In about 1960, Mervyn Sebire was at a loose end, despite his work as a farmer in Wandin, so applied for work for his Dodge truck. The fuel yard at Blackburn station took him on and despite his leg problems he kept doubling sales there. That led to Oscar Werring noticing him, and asking him to manage his fuel yard in Mt Waverley. Oscar's health was deteriorating, but he interviewed Merv, signed him up and completing the paperwork to sell Sebire *Metropolitan Fuel* (MF) and its 5-figure debt, arranging for Merv to start the following day.



Sebire's fuel yard between the youth centre and Closter's hay paddock, 1972. Note the shed and fence, trucks and containers.

At that time many people used briquettes for heaters, hot water and more, and the potential for sales was huge. However, MF had only a second floor office at 310 Stephensons Rd (no storage yard) so logistics must have been complicated. Imagine Merv's feelings when he turned up to start the next morning, only to be told Oscar had passed away overnight! He rose to the challenge.

Though MF was doing quite well, it was in debt and competition was growing, so some improvements were needed. First, Merv found a spot for a yard right opposite the station, on what had been Closter's paddock. With a mate he built a large shed there. He employed an excellent team committed to providing good service. His was the only fuel company with a two-way radio system. Briquettes were delivered by a freight wagon to a siding (refer to Kevyn Brown's story on this siding and how it worked in HH 233) where they were forked into bags by hand, weighed and loaded onto a truck, ready for delivery. He also dealt with coal and wood in much the same way.



He kept up his farm work, going around the cattle each morning before driving down to Waverley to start the day's work. His company kept 350 hot water services and 450 heaters burning, from Blackburn to Clayton, Chadstone to Glen Waverley, at one stage turning over 6,500 tons a year. His was the largest fuel depot in Melbourne. Merv calculated that he walked from Melbourne to Cairns every year, always carrying 110 lb (50 kg) bags on his shoulders! This was not literally true, of course, but he figured he carried fuel 5000 miles (~8000 km) each year on the job. He certainly worked hard!

Of course the name Sebire is associated more with the Wandin area than here. A huge number of Sebires are listed in the Wandin-Silvan pioneers website. Merv grew up in the beautiful Mont De Lancey homestead, now a historic home, built in 1886, which can be explored (slab kitchen, museum, smithy, gardens etc) https://montdelancey.org.au/explore/ - see below.







Arcare Mt Waverley To Open Soon

Since the amalgamation of the two Uniting Churches in Mt Waverley, it has not taken long for the demolition of High St Rd Uniting (formerly Methodist) Church building to occur, and the new retirement facility to be built. Here we see the Uniting church just over a year ago, then steady progress over the months of this year, and finally the artist's impression on the finished facilty, planned for July 2026.









Some Buildings Hardly Change...

This simple building has barely changed since it was built in June 62 years ago. Apart from the tree in the front garden maturing, annual photographs could form a "Spot the Difference" quiz. The grass is always neatly mown. The windows are always clean with blinds drawn, and no litter or junk mail accumulates around it. The white AC unit was added early. The cars might change a little (it has no garage to hide them), but even the moss on the roof tiles stays much the same, year after year, decade after decade.

Some might be surprised that this "house" was the Glen Waverley Police Station, until the new larger one was built on Ferntree Gully Rd. From 1970, discussions about the need for a 24-hour police station in Glen Waverley dominated the *Waverley Gazette*. Finally the news came in 1979 that the state government had agreed to buy land near the fire station in Brandon Park for a larger police presence in the area. It still took five more years before the new station was operational.

The old one had been residential with the sergeant in charge the main occupant, in the days of septic tanks, strip heaters, two small bedrooms, a kitchen-dinette: very basic conveniences. Thus it was from 1964 to 1984. The building still houses a police function, the Accident Investigation Section of Traffic Operations. Let's hope facilities have been upgraded for those who work there now!



2026 WHS ANZAC Day Commemoration and Wreath Laying



On Saturday 25th April, Waverley Historical Society laid a wreath to honour those who paid the ultimate price for the freedoms Australia enjoys. Thank you to Virginia for organising the lovely wreath, which was tied to one of the posts of the WWI Avenue of Honour Centenary Memorial sign. The ANZAC *Ode to the Fallen* was also read.

Virginia's and Ralph's composite photo shows Virginia B, Alfred K, Catherine T, Norma S, Colin S and Ralph Bartlett, WHS President.



EastLink Comes of Age

Melbourne's EastLink toll road opened to traffic on June 29, 2008. This means it turned **18 years** old this June. Construction on the 39-kilometer motorway officially began in March 2005, connecting the Eastern Freeway in Mitcham with the Frankston Freeway in Melbourne's southeast.

Though many cars in 2005 bore stickers saying, "We won't be tolled" in objection to the fees, apparently more agree that a faster road is "Time better spent" as the promotion says.

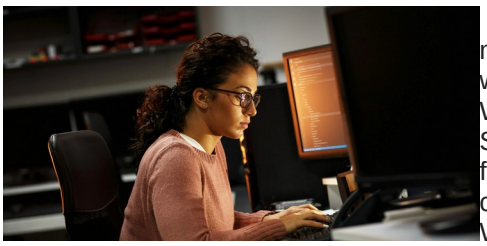
For fun, compare *Road Tolls – Boroughs, Shires and Road Districts, 1866* (Thanks Betty H for these):

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    Sheep, lamb, pig or goat                ¼d. Each
    Ox or head of neat cattle               1d. Each
    Horse, mare, ass or mule                3d. Each
    Gig, chaise, coach, chariot drawn by one animal
                                            6d. Each
        by 2 horses or other animals        1/- Each
        by 3 horses or other animals        1/6 Each.
        6d. each additional.
Farm Vehicle Tolls - wheel width: 6"  6-9"      Over 9"
    Wagons, carts, drays or wains drawn by one animal
                                  1/-   6d        3d
    By 2 horses or other animals 1/6    9d        4½d
    By 6 horses or other animals 3/6   1/9       11d.
Tolls payable one way only for
going and returning on same day.
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Incidentally, here is what a farthing (payable to take a pig to market) looked like. This is a 1902 Edward VII British farthing, used as legal tender in Australia until 1956.

WHS EXTENDED HOURS



In order to accommodate people who would like to use Waverley Historical Society's research facilities, but cannot come during our usual Wednesday afternoon time slot (1pm to 4pm), we can now offer evening appointments on set dates. The next such date is **14th October 2026**. Other dates might be arranged in the intervening months if forward notice is given. Research time is 5:30 to 6:30pm on those dates. We request that interested people email forward notice of the topic so that their time is not wasted. Waverleyhsvic@gmail.com

Plas Yollen Virtual Walk (walking shoes not needed)



Anyone who missed the March walk in Syndal North, featuring the old Peck homestead, and even those who attended, might be interested to know we will present it as a virtual walk in September.



Glenbrook Avenue Clayton:



a private driveway that became a street. In 1945 the house had its address in Clayton Rd, but access to Ian A. Neil's market garden was via Dandenong Rd. In 1949 Glenbrook Ave was created and it used the old farm drive. This often occurs because the road is weatherproof and solid.

Please Help – Lost Waverley

In October, we are asking members to share one or more things they loved about the Waverley of years gone by, but are now gone. Can you think of several things straight away? We hope so.

Is it old buildings, personalities, services, or views? Whether it has disappeared reently or a long time ago, please let us know.

Please email your suggestions to waverleyhsvic.gmail.com any time from now on, and we will seek out old photos of them to share on the night. Of course if you own photographs of such places we would love to see them too!



Waverley Historical Society – Benefits of Membership

Enclosed please find your membership renewal for 2026-27. We are maintaining membership rates at the same low annual fee of $25 per household as they have been for many years. For this you get four full-colour informative newsletters, ten varied general meetings (speakers, events, walks, displays), and free access to our huge collection of maps, images, and information. NEW: You will also receive *History Monash* (previously Oakleigh & District Historical Society) journal by email, so you can keep up with the history of Waverley's 'big town.' Most importantly you continue supporting the preservation of Monash's history for the decades to come. Even if you cannot attend meetings, please consider supporting the work of the Society.

This is also official notice of our Annual General Meeting on 30th August 2026.

Exhibition

HISTORY MONASH

Discover the story of local migration after World War II until late 1970s through photographs, artefacts and personal accounts of those who settled in the Oakleigh area. This exhibition captures an era of transformation, celebrating the resilience and contributions of migrant communities which shaped modern Australia.

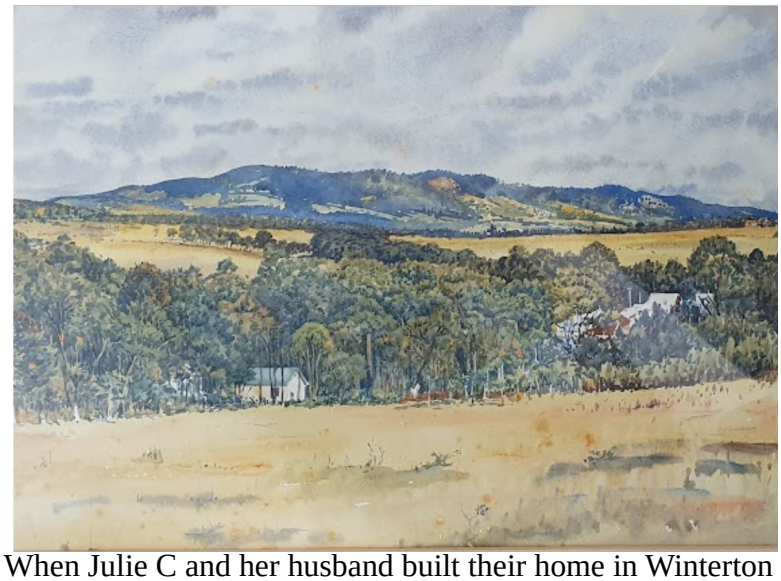


Details: https://www.historymonash.org.au/exhibition



For comparison - Taroona in 2019. See Page 7

Wheelers Hill 1972



When Julie C and her husband built their home in Winterton Drive Wheelers Hill in 1974, her Aunt Linda Dean gave her this painting. It is of Wheelers Hill, facing east across Dandenong Creek and towards Mount Dandenong.

They bought the block for $7,500 in 1972 and at the time, Winterton Drive was very short and unmade with just two houses on it. The rest of what is now that street was just rolling fields all the way to the creek.

She has now donated the painting to Waverley Historical Society for all to enjoy.

FUTURE Glen Waverley Library

Glen Waverley Library as we know it will soon be gone, its services shifted to temporary quarters, while a new state-of-the-art facility is built.

An Express library will open in Coleman Parade, and a Children's Library in the old school, Black Flat Community Centre. Some niche collections will move to other branches for the duration.

The new building will feature modern and flexible shared spaces to support learning, creativity and community connection. Notice the Monash "M" in the pavement.



Artist's impression of the future library

Graeme (Shirley) Strachan

Graeme Ronald Strachan, professionally known as Shirley or Shirl, was an Australian singer, songwriter, radio and television presenter and carpenter. Strachan (2 January 1952 – 29 August 2001) was born in Malvern but grew up in Mt Waverley, attending Mt Waverley High before following his father into carpentry. An avid surfer, he was given the nickname Shirley due to his very curly sunbleached hair (after Shirley Temple).



He was the lead singer 1973-78 of the rock group *Skyhooks*, a pioneering Australian rock band famous for revolutionizing the local music scene with 1970s Australia-centric lyrics, theatrical costumes, and meteoric success. He simultaneously pursued a solo singing career with some success.

After leaving *Skyhooks* Shirl worked as a radio and television presenter. He became known to a new generation as the host of children's television series *Shirl's Neighbourhood* in the early 1980s. In the 1990s he was a regular presenter on home makeover program *Our House* where he resurrected his carpentry skills. Over this time he studied to become a pilot, and was instrumental in several *Skyhooks* reformations. Strachan moved to Queensland in 1993 and married in 1995. He co-presented a breakfast radio show on the Brisbane radio station 4MMM in the 1990s, but left Triple M in 1999 following a pay dispute.

Just two years later, Strachan was killed near Mount Archer when the helicopter he was flying ran into mountain turbulence which caused the rotor to sever the tailboom. After a beachside funeral his ashes were scattered into the sea from a helicopter by his wife, Sue. Coincidentally, the documentary *Long Way To The Top* featuring *Skyhooks* was to be broadcast on the day of his death.

Further coincidence - Graeme's mother Joyce passed away on 4th June in her 99th year. This article was already in place by then.

Quiz Photograph

No prizes for recognising the location of this recently acquired photo – that should be obvious to Waverley residents. However, can you estimate the year it was taken?



Taroona is For Sale!



The old Cotter home is looking terrific despite its 112 years! Its address has been Breakneck Rd, Waverley Rd, 276-8 Lawrence Rd, and is now 7 Legacy Court. It was built by John Quarry Cotter after his father of the same name settled in Breakneck Rd, Black Flat, in the 1850s and immediately began holding (Methodist) Cottage Meetings in his home. Later he donated land for the Methodist Church, and became a famed lay preacher. The whole Cotter family were centred on this area, with several of the boys owning and farming land nearby. George Sackville Cotter ran a general store and the Cheshire Cheese Hotel nearby in the 1890s, and also served on the Mulgrave Shire Council. John Quarry Cotter Jnr, market gardener, completed this house in 1914 after having lived and farmed nearby since 1895. A long driveway from Waverley Rd went right around the house, which featured a lookout on the middle of the roof. This and the long drive have not survived. However the house looks a million dollars (actually more like 2.5M!) and is worth a look.









See inside buildings that are not usually open to the public!



Fri.-Sun., 24–26 July 2026

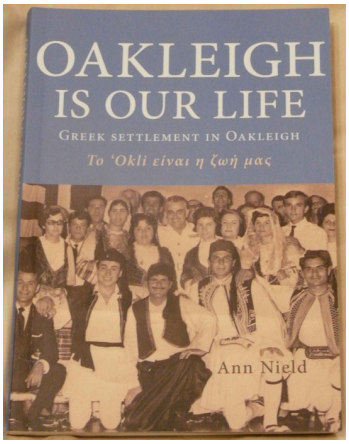
Bookings are essential but are not open yet. We will email the link when it opens.

For details so far please refer to

https://openhousemelbourne.org/the-weekend/

Annual General Meeting & Talk

Sunday, 30 August 2026 at 2:00 pm



Speaker: Author, Ann Nield, Secretary, History Monash, Oakleigh.

ALL WELCOME

Venue: Wav. Hist. Soc. Rooms

Above Mt. Waverley Branch Library
41 Miller Crescent, Mt. Waverley

For idea of attendance numbers, please email
waverleyhsvic@gmail.com

Plas Yollen – Virtual Walk



Sunday, 27 September 2026 at 2:00 pm

From the comfort of our Rooms, explore a part of Monash that was largely orchards, including the coolstore, an old homestead tucked away in "the best street in Waverley," site of Syndal Motors, Syndal State School, Ireland's dairy and more.

Presented by MarJo Angelico

ALL WELCOME

Venue: Wav. Hist. Soc. Rooms

Above Mt. Waverley Branch Library
41 Miller Crescent, Mt. Waverley

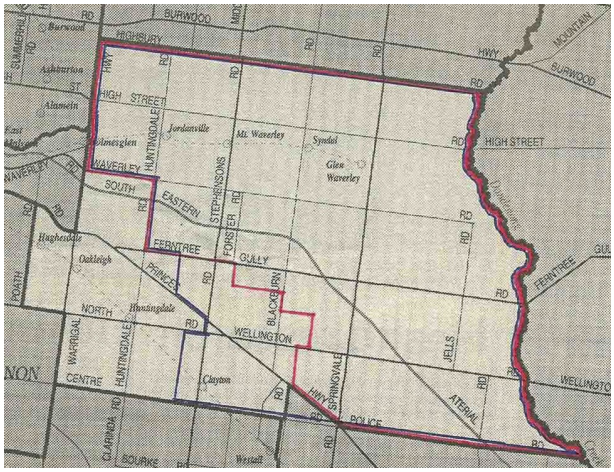
For idea of attendee's number, please email:
waverleyhsvic@gmail.com

Remembering Lost Waverley

Member's Memories

Sunday, 25 October 2026 at 2:00 pm

Led by MarJo Angelico



ALL WELCOME

Venue: Wav. Hist. Soc. Rooms

Above Mt. Waverley Branch Library
41 Miller Crescent, Mt. Waverley

What do YOU miss? Tell us on:
waverleyhsvic@gmail.com