

Mundaring & Hills Historical Society Inc

Newsletter Winter 2022



Belle-View Farm

BELLE-VIEW

The area takes its name from Edward Robinson's farm, which in its day was considered to be a model farm. Robinson built his homestead in 1887, calling it Belle View. The bricks for the house were made on site from the local clay deposits. This natural resource led to commercial brickmaking in the area in the mid 1890s with the largest concentration of brickyards in WA. With over 5 brickyards in the area.

Another significant person in the development of Bellevue was Joseph Hesketh. Hesketh also established brickworks. Hesketh was a benevolent man and provided land in Bellevue to build a community hall. The first meeting of the Greenmount Road Board was held at the hall in 1903. Hesketh was one of the 8 councillors on the new Road Board. The Greenmount Road Board was the forerunner of the Shire of Mundaring.

The hall was a substantial brick building built from bricks from the Hesketh Brickworks. It was intended as a community meeting place for the people of Bellevue where they could meet and have social gatherings. Hesketh provided books, games, periodicals and magazines for the enjoyment of the people.

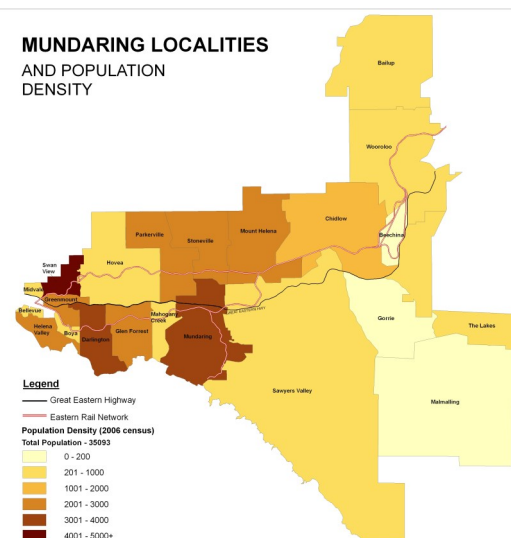
The Helena Vale Race Club was incorporated in 1897 and a racecourse and facilities were opened in 1900. After Joseph Hesketh's Brickworks were established in the area, another 4 were also established. These facilitated busy brick production from 1900 to 1914. Weighbridges and sidings were installed to provide handling of the bricks. Brick production declined after the First World War.

Thomas Wilkins built the Bellevue Hotel in 1901, it included 10 bedrooms, 2 sitting rooms and bar areas. The Licence was transferred to Thomas Sayer in 1903. In 1924, the Hotel lost its licence, like many others due to an oversupply of hotels per head of population.

During WWII, the military took over the building and it was used as a collection house by Army Units from Victoria. The code name was "Wendy House".

The building was demolished in 1943 and the rubble and mortar from the demolition site was offered to the Council for footpaths and road construction.

MUNDARING LOCALITIES AND POPULATION DENSITY



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are on, the Whadjuk and Ballardong Noongar people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this region.

From the Curator's Desk

Recently the Ashton family in Darlington donated many items belonging to Phyllis Browning-Ashton (née Browning-Turner), including certificates, diaries, letters, postcard, fans, and other personal items. Adding significant memorabilia to our collection.

Phyllis was born in Boulder, Western Australia in 1913; she trained as a teacher then went onto a stellar career as an opera singer. Phyllis initially won a two-year scholarship to the Academy of Music in London; it was extended to four years and then she became a sub-professor. She studied under Henry Beauchamp and was able to pay her own expenses by teaching, competing in eisteddfods, and other competitions. Phyllis kept meticulous records of her expenses, incomings, and outgoings, as we see in her account book.

She performed for the then future King and Queen, and Princess Elizabeth – now Queen Elizabeth II. Phyllis was the only non-Welsh member of the Royal Welsh Ladies' Choir and sang in the 1928 Royal Command Performance at Windsor Castle.

Whilst studying in London, Phyllis met Harold Ashton (Hal), the brother of a fellow student at the Royal Academy. Phyllis and Hal married in Perth and then travelled to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where Hal was engaged in many engineering projects. Phyllis continued with her music career with broadcasting, recitals, and the conductorship of the Colombo Singers.

Phyllis returned to Perth in December 1928 due to her father's illness. Sadly, he did not recover. She remained in Perth and taught music in private schools for five years, generously tithing her salary to assist music students to further their careers.

When Japan entered WWII, the headquarters of the South-East Asia Military Command was moved to Ceylon and Phyllis entertained members of the armed forces with regular concerts until she was forced to evacuate with her son Leslie.

The journey to Australia was deemed too dangerous and they subsequently travelled to South Africa; Hal

joined the armed forces and remained in Ceylon. Phyllis worked in the censorship department of the Cape Town Post Office. During her two years in the city, she was invited to sing on the radio and with the Cape Town Orchestra.

She returned to Ceylon after the war and remained there until 1951 when she came back to Western Australia, settling in Darlington. Her husband retired and joined her two years later but unfortunately died in 1955.

Phyllis returned to teaching at Guildford Grammar School, Helena School, and Swanleigh Hostel, as well as teaching private students at her home in Darlington. She taught singing, piano, and the art of speech. Music was at the core of Phyllis' life; she followed her passion and travelled all over the world on music tours.

She remained a resident of Darlington until her death on 31 October 1983.

More photos on our website.



Phyllis aged between 1 and 2 years old

President's Report

During Heritage Week a group of staff and volunteers enjoyed a wonderful evening at the Parkerville Tavern. It was a dinner/performance event. The story, 'Through The Eyes Of Alice', tells the story of the murder of Alice's husband, by her daughter. Alice who was the licensee, takes a tour of the historic building as she tells her tale. A must see event. A grant from Lotterywest financed the event. Thank you Trish and Jan.

It does not appear likely that Council will support MHHS's request for inclusion for a Heritage Strategy in the 2022/23 Budget. This despite the Cultural Advisory Group and MHHS requesting this action for the past six years. Preservation of Mundaring's heritage has suffered from lack of protection a strategy would provide. I'm sure you are aware of a number of inappropriate 'improvements' which have taken place on buildings and places listed on the Heritage List. Council does have a Heritage Policy but this is not binding and discretion can be used to bypass the policy. Policies are only guidelines and can be varied. A strategy is a binding document. It is hoped a subcommittee can be formed in CAG to drive formation at least for a Heritage Advisory Group to progress to a Heritage Strategy.

Funds are still coming in via the Cash for Cans scheme. Please leave your containers at the Station Master's House any Monday, Wednesday or Friday.

The redevelopment of the Mundaring Cemetery has been delayed until after July.

The subcommittee which includes members of MHHS has been very patient.

Our new logo design is progressing well. COVID restrictions have hampered discussions of the designs but we'll get there soon. Despite COVID restrictions I have attended a number of meetings with the Darlington History Group. DHG is preparing to lodge an application to register the railway reserve between Bellevue and Chidlow, with State Heritage. This a combined effort between MHHS, DHG and Midland & Districts Historical Soc. There is still much more research required for the project.

Jan's new display at the Museum 'Re- Made In Mundaring' revisits a previous exhibition with more treasures from our collection. Be sure to visit the Museum soon.

The redevelopment of John Forrest National Park has caused concern in Council. The new plans may impact on residents on the eastern boundary of the park. The lack of a replacement bridge over Jane Brook at the Hovea Falls has led to environmental damage, safety concerns and lack of awareness of heritage matters. Council is requesting both council and community consultation before redevelopment takes place.

I will be away enjoying Central Australia during June and July. I leave MHHS in Diana's safe hands and see you again in August.

Jenny Johnson

Vale—Bob Smith

Bob passed away on the 31st May 2022. He was dedicated volunteer for the Society in the early 2000s. He was wonderful at conservation work and restoring objects that needed a little TLC. Sympathy to Bob's family and friends.

Upcoming Events 2022

DATE/TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
25th May	NEW EXHIBITION OPENED "Re-Made in Mundaring"	Mundaring District Museum 7225 Great Eastern Hwy MUNDARING
18 June 2pm	General Meeting	Boya Community Centre Scott Street BOYA
18 June 3pm	Talk Troops, Tents and Training Bob Sheppard	Boya Community Centre Scott Street BOYA
July 4pm	Executive Meeting	Mundaring Stationmasters House 3060 Jacoby St MUNDARING
20 August 2pm	Annual General Meeting	Boya Community Centre Scott Street BOYA
20 August 2.30pm	General Meeting	Boya Community Centre Scott Street BOYA



KATHARINE STREET

This street winds from CLAYTON STREET, Bellevue in the west to CLAYTON ROAD, Helena Valley (near Boya), through land originally part of Clayton Farm. Henry Camfield took up his Helena River Grant in 1830, later selling it to Richard and Mary Smith in 1853. Richard built a 2 storey house and family members lived there until 1906.

The property was then purchased by Mrs Katharine Samson, wife of the owner of Lionel Samson & Son in Fremantle. Katharine immediately subdivided the land to sell as small orchard blocks. Her first name has been given to the road passing through the old farm, and the driveway to the house built by Richard Smith is now via a side road named Samson Street.



**PLEASE NOTE FEES
ARE NOW DUE**



MUNDARING STATION MASTER'S HOUSE

3060 Jacoby Street, Mundaring
(PO Box 334, Mundaring WA 6073)
MONDAY AND FRIDAY: 9.30am - 4pm
WEDNESDAY: 9.30am - 1.30pm

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Senior/pensioner: \$15 (Couple \$20)
Single: \$25 (Couple \$30)
Company/Institution: \$35
Account: Mundaring & Hills Historical Society
BSB 633-000 Acc No 122609431
Please quote your surname reference

MUNDARING DISTRICT MUSEUM

7225 GT Eastern Highway Mundaring
(Inside the Visitor Centre)
MONDAY - SATURDAY: 9.30am - 4pm
SUNDAY: 10am—2.30pm