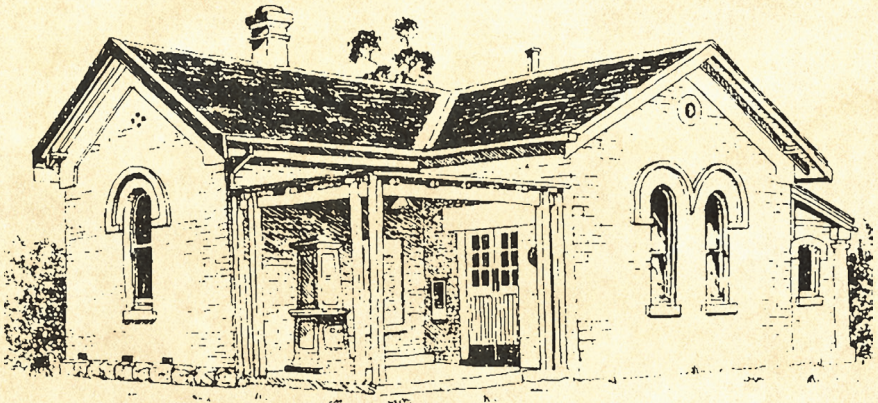


MORNINGTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC



Corner Main Street and Esplanade, Mornington 3931

NEWSLETTER

August 2021

Newsletter No. 292



President's Report

What a long 18 months it has been and we are still on the edge of our seats with all the uncertainty. We have been trying to get the Museum back together in between lockdowns and with all the disruptions, it has taken such a long time.

We have managed to meet up with you at coffee mornings which we have successfully done on a few occasions. If you were able to be with us at the last one when we had our treasures brought out, there were many ideas we could all use from putting your family history down in print for your descendants. Then there was Libby's idea she and her brother had after they had done the full history, to do a children's version with lots of photographs and simple text. Another beautiful idea of what to do with all those doilies and pieces of linen that are family heirlooms but you might be worried that they won't find a home amongst your family. Do as Helen Spicer has done during the lockdown and make a quilt as shown in the photograph. Brass rubbings and aboriginal bowls came out of the cupboards. Watch for next year's Treasures morning.

Of course, the Society has its own treasures and we were very pleased to give Janet Groves a well deserved Life Membership. She is the longest member of the Historical Society as her father Charlie Allchin who was the Treasurer at the time made her a member at the beginning of the Society operations. Since she has been retired, Janet has been an active member of the committee, serving as Treasurer for a number of years. This year she will have a very important birthday milestone and look at how fit and healthy she is.

I am sure you will love Val's story of her lovely home. Anyone else with a short story to tell would be a welcome contribution to our newsletter. Please send it to me at redhillsouth@icloud.com

Our September meeting is our Annual General Meeting as you will see. Please consider joining us by nominating for the committee. We need a variety of opinions to make sure we are doing what our members need from belonging. Please contact me on 0403 077 053 if you wish to ask any questions.

One of the real downsides of being closed for so long has been that we have had no money come in at all except for a couple of book sales through the website. We need to make sure that all our members are financial, so if you have not paid your membership fees yet, there is a reminder with this newsletter.

We hope to be able to open the Museum later this month and if any of you are interested in being on duty on a Sunday afternoon, please contact David on 0418 752 093. You would be together with a committee person so would not need to feel 'all at sea' as it were. It is always lovely to meet the visitors to Mornington.

In October, we are hoping to have a number of events to celebrate the reopening of the Museum, the annual Cemetery Walk and our Leslie Moorhead Lecture.

Diane White



Janet holding her Life Membership



**Helen with her new hand made quilt.
Now an heirloom of heirlooms.**

House at 13 Kent Street Mornington.

The house at 13 Kent Street looked a sad unhappy sight when we finally arrived to take occupancy, a house I suspected that had been used and abused by the transient population of Mornington more than once. It glowered at us from under its drooping guttering as the furniture removal van pulled up. It seemed to be saying “Who have we got now”, I looked at it for the first time and thought “Dear God”.

This was in August 1968, we had left Mornington to live in Lilydale where Frank had been transferred to a new S.E.C. (State Electricity Commission) construction job, now two years later he had left the construction gang to take a permanent TSO job at the Mornington S.E.C. office. Much to the kids delight we were on the move again, back to Mornington.

Only problem was there was no housing at the time, no rental properties available unless you wanted a view of the water, which would have been lovely, all this at a price we couldn't pay.

Except there was one, the agent had phoned to say with some hesitation, that it may do until something else comes along. All of this was happening in the most traumatic time of my life, my mother had died suddenly at the age of 54 years leaving all the family shattered with grief. My father and my grandfather, were not coping and I was not much better. My husband Frank was the rock on whom we all leaned.

I had three children to care for, I had to find somewhere to live in Mornington and also help organize a funeral and be there for the rest of the family. They were terrible days, so when the estate agent rang to tell me there was one house available, I said we would take it, sight unseen. This at least would solve one problem, a roof over our heads and the kids back in school.

With the funeral now behind us we finally had to make plans to shift to Mornington, where Frank was due to take up his job. Dad and Pop, came over to Lilydale to help. Keeping busy was one way of shutting out the black cloud of sadness and despair that hovered over all us.

Then we were off, a parade of furniture van and two cars. When we pulled up outside 13 Kent Street and got out of the cars, the looks on everyone's faces was memorable, except for the kids, who were beside themselves with joy to be back in town.

The day was as grey as we were and the house which looked as if it was supposed to be white looked grey too. It had old bottle green trim on the windows, but was anything but trim. Ti tree covered the front yard. The fences seemed to consist of the remains of old wire fencing and bushes, the overgrown backyard contained a bungalow, an old laundry and even older toilet. With relief I found that a porch had been tacked onto the back of the house and it contained a toilet, at least we wouldn't have to go outside at night time.

Nothing for it but to pull up your socks, walk inside and have a look. I have to laugh now when I hear of rental agreements, end of lease cleaning and inspection days.

What you saw is what you got at 13 Kent Street Mornington.

The inside of the house was no better. Linoleum covered the floors; heating consisted of two open fireplaces that had seldom been cleaned. The bathroom had a claw foot bath and a rusty shower over it.

On the bright side it had 10ft ceilings and two stained glass windows that tried vainly to sparkle amongst the gloom.



The stained glass windows in Val's lounge room.

Words could not begin to describe it, at the same time I almost felt sorry for the

house, I think it hung its head under the grey skies, ashamed that its better days were behind it and that it had not had proper care.

My grandfather said, we'll get the beds made up and light a fire, "things will look better then".

Dear soul that he was, I don't think they did.

Those first few months were chaotic, even if we were only staying until we found somewhere better; it at least had to be clean. Frank and the boys tackled the back yard; although I am sure the boys enjoyed the jungle to play in while it was there.

— continued next page.

One of the first things I did with the help of my seven year old daughter was to tackle the floors with the you beaut appliance of the day, a Hoover Scrubber, Polisher and it was with great excitement I ran outside to find Frank , “Frank, Frank, guess what, the lino in the lounge room has a pattern! Wow, Frank came in to help me finish the job, mopping after me as the wonder machine did its job.

Then after the floor dried, we were down on our hands and knees to apply Fishers floor wax and then the wonder machine once again restored order with its lamb’s wool pads bringing the floor to a lovely shine.

I think that was the turning point when house started to become home, sad, sorry, and poor that it was.

It was built in 1925 by the State Savings Bank as a house for one of its staff and it was a solid house, built with red cedar and a galvanised iron roof.

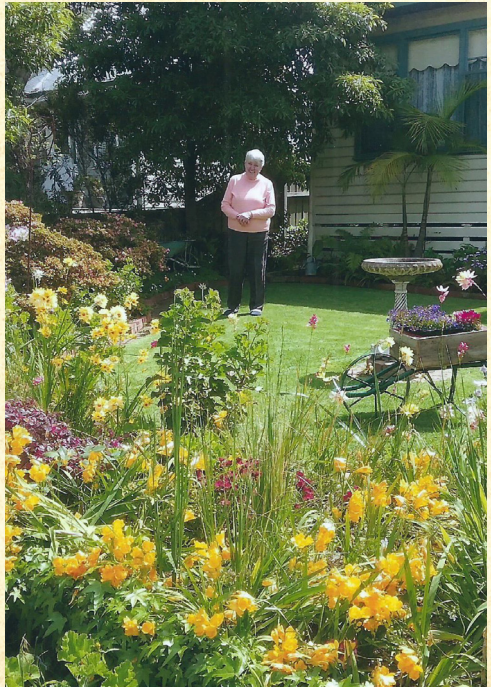
The following year after we moved in, the owner came to see us, I suspect we were the only tenants of recent times who had paid the rent on time, so in his mind, perhaps he thought we could be interested in his proposition. He had decided to sell the house and was giving us the first option to buy at the grand opening price of \$6000.

We would have been lucky to have had \$600, but said we would let him know. I had planted some polyanthus seedlings that were about to flower and so unbeknownst to me I had also planted my roots, I didn’t want to move.

Dad and my Grandfather came to our assistance to help us with the deposit and the wonderful SEC credit union did the rest.

We (and House) were on a 50 year plus journey.

Val Wilson OAM



Val in her lovely happy garden.

Heritage Update

VCAT recently handed down its decision refusing Ryman Healthcare's proposed development on the old James Grice's Moondah site Mt. Eliza, however they are submitting a new Application to Council for a smaller development.

You have probably received information from the Mornington Peninsula Shire in your letter box about proposed changes to the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme - Amendment C219morn.

The amendment proposes to implement the Housing and Settlement Strategy: Refresh 2020-2036 and Neighbourhood Character Study Guidelines by making substantial changes to zones, overlays and policies affecting the Shire's residential areas. We will be investigating how this could impact the historic character of our townships.

The Shire's website contains a Property Address search, so individual properties can be checked to see what impact this may have. Closing date for submissions is 24 September.

Vicky Sapkin

Stop Press

Vicky has had a call telling her that we have been successful in obtaining a grant from the Public Record Office of Victoria for display panels with key themes in the Museum. We are delighted as it will enhance the new paintwork the Council has done.

The Limited Edition Shawl

Please contact Diane 0403 077 053 if you wish to have a ticket in the Christmas Draw for the lovely shawl made by Libby as shown in the last newsletter.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Fiona Keenan and Norma Evans

We hope you enjoy your membership with us.

Dates To Remember

Because it is so hard to plan very far in advance when we don't know if we can have our meetings, please if you can, have a look at our website and our Facebook page to check what is happening.

**Monday 13th Sept
@ 9.30am - \$50pp**

Bus Trip To Cerberus Museum

Contact Libby to book and for details
0409 149 089. Lunch at own cost.
Museum entry included. Depart Main
St bus stop Cnr.Main & Queen Sts.

**Tuesday 14th Sept @ 10.30am
AGM @ RSL Rooms
(27 Virginia St. Mornington)**

Hear about what we have managed to
do over the last difficult year. If you wish
to have a proxy vote or to nominate for
the committee, please contact Dawn for
the form on 5977 0027

**Friday October 8th @ 10am - \$10
Leslie Moorhead Lecture @ RSL
Rooms (27 Virginia St. Mornington)**

**John Baker CEO Morn. Pen Shire
Heritage in England & Victoria.**

John has owned a heritage house
in England and he has observed
differences with our protection of
heritage places in Victoria.



**Please note the earlier start
time of 10.00am.**

**Tuesday October 12th @
10.30am - \$5**

COFFEE MORNING @ RSL Rooms

Rev. Tim Costello.

History of Gambling and our Casino.
You will all know that Tim has been
an outspoken critic of the gambling
industry.

**Saturday October 23rd
1.15 for 1.30pm walk - \$5 pp**

**Mornington Cemetery Walk
- Craigie Road, Mt. Martha**

Meet us at the main gates and Val will
guide us through the history of our
founding citizens and characters.

The walk takes about 1 1/2 hours with
a cuppa afterwards.

Please wear comfortable shoes and
prepare for the weather.

**November - Date TBA
COFFEE MORNING @ RSL rooms**

Claire Sandell - The Shire's archivist.
This event had to be postponed due to
COVID.

Thanks to the Mornington Peninsula Shire for their support.

Mornington & District Historical Society Inc. A00041916W
ABN 7515 1057 105 - PO Box 71 Mornington 3931
Museum: Corner Main Street and Esplanade
Open 1.30 - 4.30 Sundays or by appointment

Donations to the Historical Society of \$2 or more are tax deductible