

NEWSLETTER

Staley Gardens and Holeproof

With the advent of the new Costco store in Ringwood, between Bond and Seymour Streets, comes another turning of a chapter of Ringwood's history.

The development required the use of the Staley Gardens area, unfortunately making quite a mess with the plaques missing and the rotunda destroyed. We have been working with Council to not only restore the history of Staley Gardens but to make it a credit to local community circles.



Like most parts of Ringwood's history, the story started well before it arrived at the city.

Thomas Staley, son of Thomas Snr, went to Ayrshire on the west coast of Scotland in the 1780s, located just below Glasgow. He was a miner and no doubt he worked on the lead mines around Leadhills, where he married his wife, Mary. Despite being a small village, the Leadhills Miners' Library, founded in 1741 houses an extensive antiquarian book collection, local relics, mining records and minerals. The library is the oldest subscription library in Britain and is of significant historical and geological importance.

Thomas and Mary later moved to Muirkirk, about 20kms away. As the name implies, the village formed around the church and was a source of iron and coal, again probably occupying Thomas. They had five children, Margaret, Anne, Fortune, Jonathan and (another) Thomas. The three girls remained in the area. Thomas went to Orange Valley Estate in Jamaica, the area associated sugar plantations, but died at the young age of 21. Jonathan married Mary Goldie in 1820 and had twelve children. It was this family that migrated to

NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY 8PM, 25 JUNE 2013

Graeme Tamme, one of our archive specialists, is a man of many talents and knowledgeable about a range of different subjects. At the next meeting he will talk about the enchanting history of the Walhalla, the home of many of his relatives in the 1910/20s. He also wants to talk about Peter Clement, a Scottish immigrant who made his fortune on the goldfields, not from gold, but as a merchant. His daughter, Margaret, was the subject of the mystery "Lady of the Swamp".

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Victoria in 1853 on the ship *Reaper* to seek fortune on the goldfields. Thus establishing the Staley clan in Australia.



One of the sons was David Gray Staley, later became a store-keeper at Yandoit, which is half way between Castlemaine and Daylesford. One of his six children was David John, born in 1865 in Yandoit and died in 1912 in Malvern, whose son was Andrew Gray Staley, born in 1890 in Wilby and died in 1981 in Toorak.

Andrew Gray Staley started in the hosiery business with George Foletta in the company "Prestige" in 1920, leaving it in 1924 to form a rival hosiery firm, "Staley and Staley Ltd." with his uncle Dan Staley in new premises in Dods St Brunswick. This company grew from 10 employees in 1925 to over 300 by 1929, and over 1200 by 1932. Both Foletta and Staley were welfare-capitalists, with canteens, social activities and clubs for their employees. There was even company-organized community singing in Brunswick Town Hall during the Depression.

"A flamboyant super salesman," in 1929, with the financial help of his equally flamboyant Uncle Dan (youngest son of David Gray), he established "Holeproof (Australia)," which soon became a market leader with innovative strategies such as individually packaged and named nylon stockings, and eventually a large range of other garments, including business shirts, casual wear and pyjamas.

The small open area in central Ringwood (see map on page 1), later to become Staley Gardens, was at the back of a Holeproof hosiery factory, established there on Maroondah Highway in 1942. In 1968 Holeproof



The Pressing section, Holeproof Hosiery factory

Staley Gardens and Holeproof

was bought by Dunlop, which later became Pacific Dunlop and subsequently, Pacific Brands – the current parent company.

Eastern suburbs Holeproof factories were also established in Deepdene, Nunawading and Box Hill. The area of the current gardens was given to the Ringwood Council in 1969 by Staley, and is well-remembered by many as a popular location for touring circuses. Staley Gardens is a passive recreation area, a grassed oasis with some trees and paths, and surrounded by streets, shops and carparks. Major developments of landscaping, paving and the erection of covered shelters were carried out in 1982, financed jointly by the Ringwood Market, Myer, and the Ringwood Council. Controversial Council plans, in 2005, allowed part of it to be used as a skateboard park. In 2013, considerable development was in the area, with the Costco store.



Staley Gardens in 1982 (above) and the factory in 1940s (below)



News

Trevor Colin Horman son of Gwen Horman, one of our members, was awarded the Order of Australia, for significant service to North Territory, particularly through heritage preservation, the motor racing industry and the engineering profession, He now lives in Darwin. Trevor grew up and went to school in Ringwood and later attended University. He worked for the McGoldrick family and was friends with Pam's brothers very nice person. Thanks to Pam O'Connor for spying this.

Your committee has been particularly busy recently, as there have been a number of visits to the Council regarding archive space, Going Places promotion, Sherbrook Park opening, developing and restoring Staley Gardens and the Miner's Park.

The next committee meeting will be at the archives on 2nd July at 7:30pm. Anyone is welcome to attend.

Recent calls from Ian Flynn, Ringwood East Baptist Church in Dublin Road, enquiring about the history of the church plus numerous telephone calls and people dropping into the archives.

2013 Speaker Program

We have invited some interesting speakers for our meetings on the **4th Tuesday, at 8pm at room 4, Federation Estate, Greenwood Ave, Ringwood.** Visitors welcome, supper afterwards.

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| 25 June | Walhalla and Peter Clements (Graeme Tamme) |
| 23 July | Climate History and El Nino (Don Garden) |
| 27 August | The History of the Ringwood Mechanics Institute (Russ Haines) |

Archives & Volunteer Hours

Volunteer hours for the month of May 78 hours

Catalogued in Database

Photos - 2,678 Newspapers - 255 Artefacts - 479 Documents - 641

Thanks to all the volunteers for the time that they give freely. New volunteers are welcome.

Contact Us

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COMMITTEE Ian Austin, Lois Aders, Pam O'Connor, Steve McGoldrick, Terry Ahern

Supper Roster

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|------------------|--------------------------|
| June | Pam & Daniel McDowell |
| July | Russ Haines |
| August | Pam Baragwanath & Beryl |
| September | Bev & Lyndon McKeon |
| October | Peter Fry |
| November | Pat Guest & Sandra Smart |

Those on roster need to bring some milk and a couple of plates. Thanks to the various members who bring additional cakes or biscuits, or add to the raffle prizes.