



Balwyn Historical Society Newsletter

July 2015

Meetings

Thursday 9 July 2015 – 8pm

Speaker: Associate Professor Don Garden

Topic: Water, Rolling Countryside & Fresh Air

Assoc. Professor Don Garden, President of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, will speak about how the environment shaped Boroondara and Balwyn

Thursday 13 August 2015 – 8pm

Speaker: Gerry Robinson

Topic: Historic Canterbury Road

Gerry Robinson is a member of the Heathmont History Group which has researched and published a number of local history booklets

Thursday 10 September 2015 – 8pm

Speaker: Bruce Postle

Topic: History through Photographs

Bruce Postle is one of Australia's most highly regarded photographers. His career spanned over 50 years including 29 years as an *Age* photographer. In October last year his name was included on the Melbourne Press Club's Victorian Hall of Fame Honour Board.

**All meetings are held at the Balwyn Evergreen Centre,
45 Talbot Avenue, Balwyn**

Email: balwynhistory@gmail.com website: www.vicnet.net.au/~balwynhs

Recent Speaker – Janis Sheldrick

Janis Sheldrick's encounters with disintegrating stone cottages in rural South Australia and a conversation about Goyder's Line some years later led her to undertake extensive research into the remarkable George Goyder and the line he established.

As Surveyor General of South Australia, Goyder laid out many small towns in South Australia. He was also responsible for the selection of the site and the laying out of Darwin (then Palmerston). His many exploratory forays into the outback of South Australia during times of flood and in times of drought provided him with an intimate knowledge of the countryside. The line he established was one indicating the zone of reliable rainfall and climate variability

beyond which agricultural pursuits such as wheat farming had little chance of success. Although Goyder's ideas were ridiculed at first, they were eventually accepted.

In many ways he was a visionary, an environmentalist who established forestry and the protection of native forests as well as the drainage of the South East. He was also the first explorer to appreciate the beauty of the Flinders Ranges.

Janis also spoke of Goyder's background and family life and the way that this impacted on his ideas and his work. Janis' book *Nature's Line* is a wonderful tribute to a remarkable man.

BHS Membership 2015-2016

Thanks to those members who have already paid their 2015-16 membership.

Membership fees were due on July 1.

The fee remains the same for the 2015-2016 financial year.

\$25 - single membership

\$35 - joint membership i.e. 2 adults at the same address.

For those who still wish to re-join a renewal form accompanies this newsletter.

You may renew your membership at the next meeting by cash or cheque (payable to *Balwyn Historical Society*). It would be helpful if you could place your payment in an envelope marked with your name(s). Otherwise please send the completed renewal form together with a cheque to **The BHS Treasurer, Balwyn Evergreen Centre, 45 Talbot Ave, Balwyn 3103.**

For membership enquires contact Barbara Russell – 9857-6416

Balwyn Historical Society - Contact details

Balwyn Historical Society is a program of the Balwyn Evergreen Centre.

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The Kaleno Estate – Part 2 .

During the Second World War *Kaleno* once again had a name change with Rand's house becoming for a time *Windsor Lodge*. When the RAAF took over Melbourne Girls Grammar School for its use some of the senior girls boarding at the school were moved out to Balwyn to *Windsor Lodge*, others were housed at *The Grange* (now *St. Catherine's Aged Care Home*). From there they were bussed each day to lessons in a temporary school at the Doncaster Eastern Golf Club.

Once the war was over the boarders returned to their former school and *Windsor Lodge* awaited new tenants. The 14 roomed house at that time stood on 3.2 acres of land with extensive gardens, stables and outbuildings. In 1946 *The Age* reported that *Windsor Lodge* had recently been purchased by the Committee of *Yooralla* and that it was to be used as a hostel for 14 disabled children. The *Yooralla* Committee also approached the Education Department suggesting it might purchase some additional land next door to the house for a special school – which it later did. The house now the *Yooralla Hostel* existed on the site until it was sold in 1991 and later

demolished. The school still exists as the *Belmore School* catering for children aged between 5 – 18 who have physical disabilities and or significant health impairments.

Meanwhile the land sub-divided in 1922 as Stroud, Ruby, Hilda had remained undeveloped. A 1945 areial map shows what appears to be a single house with several outbuildings sitting among large paddocks criss-crossed by several tracks.

However, it was not to stay as paddocks for long. With the end of the Second World War the housing situation was critical as few homes had been built during the war years. The newly set up Housing Commission of Victoria, on the look-out for suitable land for development, turned to Balwyn and North Balwyn. It was reported in 1946 that the Housing Commission would recommend the acquisition of 2500 building lots north of Belmore Road for a Housing Commission development. This recommendation was subject to much political controversy and protest and was not accepted by the government of the day.

Premier Checks Housing Commission **Portion Of Balwyn Estate** **Not To Be Acquired**

MR CAIN, Premier, said last night that he had decided not to permit the Housing Commission to acquire the portion of the North Balwyn estate west of Balwyn rd.

After having seen the area, he was of the opinion that the number of houses at present being erected there was sufficient to justify leaving the area to private enterprise to develop.

Regarding the portion east of Balwyn rd, reaching to Grey-

thorn rd on the east, and south of Madden st, he was still considering the advisability of allowing the commission to acquire it.

The area might prove quite suitable for Housing Commission needs. At present there seemed to be very little movement in this section.

Source: *The Age* 11/4/1947

However, the Commission did purchase what remained of the 1922 *Kaleno Estate* renaming it the *Kaleno Park Estate*. Houses, some free standing others semi-detached, soon began appearing in Stroud Street, then Hilda Street, Ruby Street and Belmore Road. While initially all 123 of these two-roomed, compact, brick commission houses were rented, tenants were later given the opportunity to purchase them.



Ex Housing Commission house – Stroud Street

Once again this area of Balwyn is rapidly changing. Over the past ten or so years many of these commission houses have been demolished and replaced with the ubiquitous McMansions. All that remains to remind us of George Rand's *Kaleno* (Foden's *Gawsworth*, *Windsor Lodge* and the *Yooralla Hostel*) is a small court named *Kaleno View*.



Sources: The *Kaleno Estate* – Parts 1 & 2

The Age 3/6/46, 19/6/46, 11/4/47
The Argus 29/7/10, 1/3/41, 21/3/41, 10/4/42
 Births Deaths and Marriages records
 McWilliam, Gwen: *A Balwyn Survey*, McWilliam Enterprises, Hawthorn, 2010
 PROV – Wills
Melbourne 1945 (Digital Map)
 Sands & McDougall Directories
Table Talk 10/12/14
 Photos: P. O'Dwyer

(Patricia O'Dwyer)

Collection of house photos

Because Balwyn and Balwyn North are being redeveloped so rapidly with original houses disappearing almost daily, we are keen to keep a photographic record of early houses. We have been collecting real estate agents brochures and photographs of local houses for some years. Our archivist Pam Herrington, along with the help of Lynette and Deirdre Woolley, has organized and listed this now extensive collection. We welcome donations of house photos to add to our collection.