



The Society and its Members acknowledge the traditional landowners, the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nations and their Elders Past and Present.

Plenty News & Views

Volume 3, No: 11

July 2022

President: Kerry Fitzmaurice

Vice President: Helen Zull

Secretary: Annemarie Webb

Treasurer: Alan Pearce

**Committee Member—Newsletter:
Kerry Jones**

Next Meeting

Sunday 24 July 2022

As members of Plenty Historical Society we are invited to visit Ellis Cottage—Barn, Ellis Cottage Reserve, off Main Hurstbridge Road, Diamond Creek from 2pm—4pm.

There will be several presentations (details on page 2) followed by afternoon tea.

A note from our President...

We started the year a little late with our first meeting on Sunday 3rd April. It was wonderful to see everyone again and to be able to use our lovely new home – the Plenty Historic Church. This was a relaxed meeting to allow members to catch up. We wandered over to the Plentiful Store and café for afternoon tea (see picture).

The owners were delighted to get an influx of customers in the quieter part of the afternoon and for many of us it was lovely to reminisce and share stories of the old Plenty Store. Following afternoon tea, we returned to the Church for a show and tell where members shared an item of historical interest to their family and the associated story. Just amazing the range of very interesting



Members enjoying afternoon tea at the Plentiful Store & Café at the last meeting

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 24 July: Visit to Ellis Cottage



Nillumbik Historical Society invites members of Local History Groups across Nillumbik to visit Ellis Cottage in Diamond Creek.

There will be talks by:

- Jean Verso, President Nillumbik Historical Society
- Liz Pidgeon, Local & Family History Librarian, Yarra Plenty Regional Library
- Jim Connor, President Eltham District Historical Society

These talks will be followed by afternoon tea. (Bring a plate to share)

If you would like to attend please respond to: elliscottate@gmail.com or leave a message on 9438 5719

September—Date to be confirmed:

Details to be announced.

Sunday 13 November—10am

Remembrance Day Service and Dedication of WW1 Soldier Memorial Panels to be held at Ellis Cottage Lone Pine Memorial Garden, Ellis Cottage Reserve Diamond Creek. We would normally have a service at the Plenty War Memorial Gates on this Sunday however, it seems more appropriate for this year to join with Nillumbik and a wider community for this special dedication. More information will come closer to the date.

President's Report continued...

items and stories, an activity to repeat in the future.

Unfortunately, our May meeting had to be postponed however, we were able to have an unplanned open day on election day 21st May. As the Plenty Community Hall was a polling booth, Executive felt it was a great opportunity to open up the Church and display some of our photos and documents. We had our Plenty Historical Society banner displayed on the Church and also put a notice on the Plenty 3090 Facebook page.

Helen Zull, our Vice President, had prepared an interesting series of display books with history and pictures from the Plenty State School archives. The CFA Captain kindly provided a great poster series depicting the history of the Plenty CFA. We were also able to display history and photos of the church and plans of the early subdivisions. All of these displays proved very popular with visitors. Many thanks to members who assisted on the day. It was great to see the Heritage Park as a hub again for locals to meet and chat as people came in to vote and then wandered around the church and over to Plentiful for refreshments. Hopefully a glimpse of the potential for this eastern section of the Heritage Park once the old CFA building is demolished.

C-Built the company that undertook the wonderful restoration work on the Historic Church very generously approached the Society indicating they would like to provide a small replica bell of the one likely to have been on the original Methodist church. We had planned to have a ceremony to place the bell on the Church including a talk from Cameron Cummings on the process undertaken to restore the Church. Unfortunately, the bell was not ready in time, However, the bell has been installed (see photos) and the planned meeting and talk will be scheduled later in the year. This was a very generous gesture from C-Built and indicates the personal interest and care they took in this restoration.



The Bell provided by C-Built

President's Report Continued...

The Society has also been lucky enough to obtain a display cabinet. This has been a great example of the cooperation between local history and heritage groups and a benefit of the Yarra Plenty Heritage Groups forum. The Andrew Ross Museum at Kangaroo Ground are undertaking some updating and restoration work and no longer required the display cabinet but wanted to see it go to good use rather than throw it away. One man's trash is another man's treasure as the saying goes and in this case the display cabinet was just what we needed. There was no cost for the cabinet just the cost of removal. The cabinet needs a bit of paint and a few minor repairs and then we will have a lovely glass top cabinet that blends well with the Church to display photos and records. We will be looking for some volunteers for our next working bee to help with the painting and minor repairs.

On the topic of working bees, a small but enthusiastic group met to tidy up the grounds of the Historical Church and the Memorial Gardens before the open day – many thanks to all involved. Another of our members has volunteered to scan photos of the school to go into our electronic photo archive. Now that we have a home and hopefully life post COVID is resuming we will look to member support for the occasional working bee through the year and it would be great to have some interested members help with sorting the documents we have in our collection and to continue the photo scanning project. If you have a particular interest – gardening, photography, computers or some handyman skills please let a member of Executive know (Helen Zull, Annemarie Webb, Alan Pearce, Kerry Jones or myself). Please consider supporting your Society to help us build our collections and display the heritage of Plenty for the wider community.

Behind the scenes: A quick update of some local issues.

What is happening with the old CFA building and regeneration of the site?

The old CFA building can not be demolished until the new building is operational. However, some preparation is happening the time capsule put together by the children of the Plenty State School which was relocated to the CFA grounds when the school was closed has been removed and is currently being held in the Church until the old CFA site is redeveloped. After the initial consultation when Council agreed to demolish the old CFA building Council also decided to undertake further community consultation as to the use of the re-vegetated land.

The timeline for this extends to the latter part of this year. At the June Council meeting the former CFA Plenty Building Open Space Enhancement project was included for funding through the Growing Suburbs Fund subject to meeting grant criteria. This was one of 6 projects proposed for support.



The old CFA building which will be demolished.

Nilumbik Neighbourhood Character Strategy – results of first community consultation are available on the Council website and the first draft of the strategy will be presented to the August Council meeting.

Members might also like to keep up to date with the Solar Farm which will be developed on the old landfill tip site at 290 Yan Yean Road Plenty. Information is available from the Council website Participate Nilumbik page.



Photo taken from Nilumbik Council website on the

Looking forward to seeing you all at the combined meeting at Ellis Cottage on 24th July as per our separate meeting notice.

Kerry

Kerry Fitzmaurice

President

ACKNOWLEDGING WURUNDJERI- WOIWURRING CULTURE

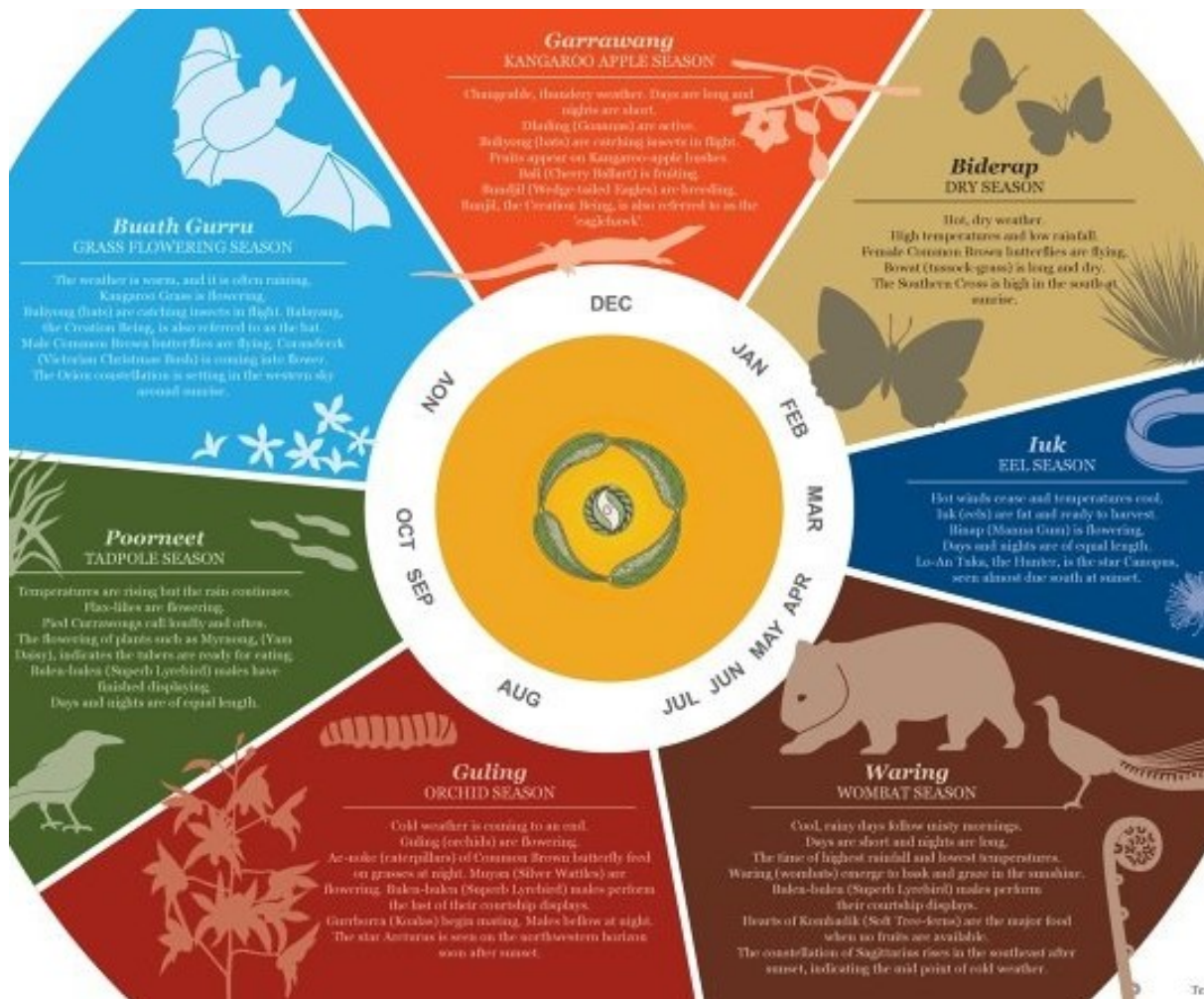
Coming off the back of Reconciliation Week (May 27th – June 3rd) and currently being in NAIDOC Week, I thought it timely to perhaps put in an article about Wurundjeri Culture. It is actually due to the Plenty Historical Society that my interest was piqued in this area many years ago when Jim Poulter visited the society and shared his knowledge and books. From this time, I have been constantly reading and adding to my knowledge about the Woiwurrung – Wurundjeri People and have been lucky enough to attend many professional development sessions in my capacity as school environmental sustainability coordinator.

As I constantly remark to the students at school, “isn’t it amazing that we live in a country that has the oldest continuous living culture IN THE WORLD! Older than the Egyptian Pyramids or the last ice age!” We still have much to learn yet I do feel a positive change is occurring in education circles, especially early years (kindergarten) and primary schools where children

readily participate in Acknowledgement of Countries and share dreaming stories, such as the Creation of Country by Bunjil the Eagle and Waa the Raven.

Understanding the importance of caring for Country goes hand in hand with schools trying to become caretakers of their local environments. Understanding the local indigenous culture and beliefs also assists us in knowing how to read the environment around us and help improve the biodiversity in each area.

At this year’s Reconciliation school assembly, I had some of my year 4 boys share the story of Pemulwuy – a Bidjigal warrior from Eora Country (NSW) who witnessed the landing of the First Fleet in 1788 and led a vicious and somewhat successful campaign against the British settlers for many years, resulting in many military campaigns being launched against him and his fighters. He was thought to have magical powers, making him immune to the muskets and pellets,



ACKNOWLEDGING WURUNDJERI- WOIWURRING CULTURE

Continued ...

but through an ambush was finally killed on the 2nd June 1802 and his head was severed and sent to England, preserved in a jar to be displayed in a museum. During the bombing of London in WW2 it was taken off display and to this day, its whereabouts are still unknown. Students found this story captivating and were taken with the idea of hearing about the colonisation of New South Wales from an indigenous perspective.

Students, and staff, are also interested to learn about the seven seasons of the Wurundjeri-Woiwurrung Country—which makes much more sense than the four

seasons that have been transported over here from the northern hemisphere. Currently we are in the Waring – Wombat Season – marked by cold west winds making it a good time for sitting around and doing little except preparing for the warmer spring months, marked by the first flowering of silver wattles.

The motto of this year's Reconciliation Week was 'Be Brave. Make Change.' and I believe with continual dialogue and learning, we are doing so in the education sphere.

Stay warm and well.

Wominjeka. Annemarie Webb

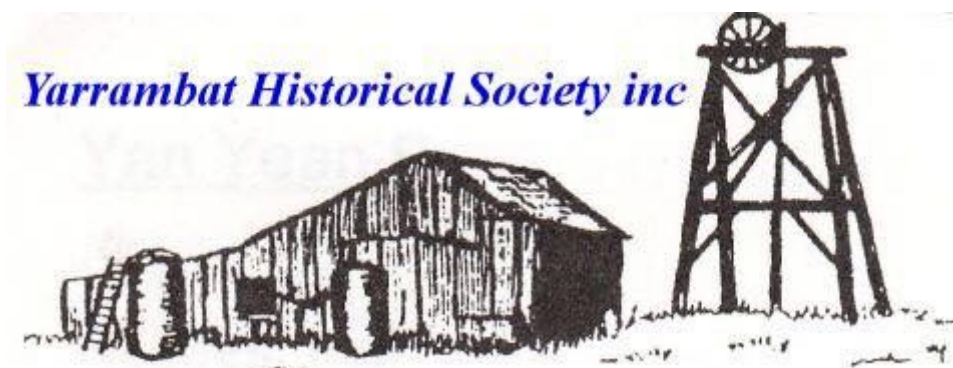
Local History Society News

Congratulations to Vi Stuchbery on being presented with a Royal Historical Society of Victoria Award of Merit.

Vi was nominated for the award by Yarrambat Historical Society for her outstanding contribution to the Yarrambat community and the Yarrambat Historical Society.

Vi and her late husband Walter Stuchbery are well known Yarrambat residents but Vi was also a long standing Plenty resident before her marriage to Walter. Vi and Walter were married in the Plenty Methodist Church where the Stuchbery family were well known members of the congregation. Vi is also a member of the Plenty Historical Society. She is a passionate historian and community member and it is terrific to see her recognized with this Award.

Kerry Fitzmaurice



Family History

'If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance.'
– **George Bernard Shaw**

My passion for family history began the day that my father passed away. I was just 22. When the funeral director was taking down the details for his death certificate, there were some revelations about his life that made me stop and think. I suddenly realised that I knew nothing about Dad's side of the family at all and I had never met any of his relatives. Dad had been born in Tasmania and brought up by his grandparents but that was as much as I knew. My journey had begun.

Back in those days, one needed to write (by snail mail) to Births, Deaths and Marriages to obtain any documentation and unless you had the exact details, that is the correct names and dates, they just took your money and sent you back a letter saying 'No Record Found'. Each request seemed to take several weeks, and each request that I sent came back saying 'No Record Found'.

It took me six years and numerous attempts before I finally obtained my father's birth certificate, which was far from what I had been expecting. But along the way, I became hooked. I was hooked, on the elusive trail of my ancestors. And I have been researching off and on ever since.

Fortunately with the advent of technology the resources to research have become more accessible and almost instantaneous. There are many websites that will help you begin your family history journey. Whilst most of them require you to pay a subscription there are ways around this. The Yarra Plenty Library gives members free access to 'Ancestry' and 'Find My Past'. 'Family Search' which is the enormous data base run by the Church of the Latter Day Saints is free for anyone to use.

There is a huge range of other resources such as the website from the Public Record Office of Victoria and Trove, the huge collection of digitised newspapers which is available on the National Library of Australia website.

The best place to start when researching your family tree, is with yourself, and to work backwards. If you know the names of your parents and grandparents, searching for them on any of the family history databases is a good place to begin.

Everyone's ancestors have a story. Do you have a convict or a nobleman in your family tree? Are you descended from an early settler in Australia? Is there a tale just waiting to be told? Why not begin the search, you may be amazed by what you discover. And like me, you may be hooked for life!

Kerry Jones



**Ellen Crowley
Earl Grey 1850**

***My Great Great Grandmother who was transported to
Tasmania in 1850.***

CONTRIBUTIONS:

If you would like to make a contribution to a future edition of 'Plenty News and Views', I can be contacted on:

kerry@jones.id.au or 0414861557

Thank you,

Kerry Jones—Newsletter Editor

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support and financial assistance received from Nillumbik Shire Council in the production of this newsletter.



Note: The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Plenty Historical Society or its members.