

**YARRA GLEN & DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.
FOUNDED 1973**

NEWSLETTER

June 2000. Published December, March, June & September. Issue No:7.
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Here we are again. Newsletter No. 7 already, late again, but doesn't time fly when you are having fun. I quite enjoy writing these notes, though sometimes its hard getting started. The general idea when this Newsletter was first proposed was that other people would make contributions. Is there anybody out there ?

Some of you will know that Ev. Smith, our President is having another spell in hospital, but the latest news is that she should be home shortly and knowing Ev. it wont be long before she is back to all her usual activities. I am sure you will all join me in wishing her well and a speedy recovery.

Welcome to our new member, Alan McKirdy. Alan is now running "WATSONS" and consequently is very interested in the history of the former bank building. Sundays are Alan's busy days so he will find it difficult to get to our meetings. Hopefully he will get along occassionally.

FIRE - FIRE - FIRE - FIRE - FIRE - FIRE

Yarra Glen and district seems to have had more than its fair share of fires. It seems that just about every flammable building in the district has burnt down, some twice.

HEALESVILLE GUARDIAN.

14th February 1913

**DISASTROUS FIRE
AT YARRA GLEN,
THREE BUILDINGS TOTALLY DESTROYED.**

So began a long article. However there was an equally interesting, though short article, describing in painful detail how the correspondent of the paper set off from Healesville on his bicycle to cover the fire. Unfortunately he didn't get far as the front fork collapsed precipitating the reporter to the road causing some nasty and painful injuries.

But back to our story. " A most disastrous fire occurred at Yarra Glen on Saturday evening, about 8.30, when one of the principal shops in the main street and two boarding houses were utterly demolished, viz:- Scott and Allen's store, and eight roomed dwelling. Mrs. Hubbard's confectionary shop, and boarding house consisting of eleven rooms.

Mr J. Reynolds' boarding house of eight rooms.

The whole township, as a result was thrown into a scene of utter confusion and excitement. Mr Weller who lives close to the scene, was the first to notice flames issuing from a back room in Mrs Hubbard's boarding house in the main street. Within a few minutes the street was crowded with people who worked like Trojans in the endeavours to rescue belongings. Absolutely nothing was saved from Mrs Hubbard's

Many willing hands were at work removing stock, etc. from Scott & Allen's store, the adjoining building. On the other side Mr Reynold's boarding houses adjoined Hubbards, and that being last to become ignited, most of the furniture was saved.

It was not long before the fire caught Scott & Allen's store, and within minutes the place was a mass of flames. Mr Reynolds house was the last to go, the fire leaping to a huge pine tree between the latter's and Mrs Hubbard's, and soon the flames reached the building and thus the three were burning simultaneously. the effect was one not easily forgotten."

Apparently the fire was so bright that the flames could be seen at Tarrawarra and Lilydale and even Healesville could see the glow in the sky. As there was no reticulated water supply in the town it was impossible to do much to combat the fire. The Victoria Hall was in danger and Charlie Bath removed all his vehicles from the livery so threatening was the danger.

Scott & Allen estimated their loss at about £ 2000.

51 years later we had a repeat performance, though this time the building was unoccupied. The "HEALESVILLE NEWS" of 1st July 1964 carried this headline:-

"SHOP AND HOUSE GO IN FIERCE BLAZE"

The building stood at the corner of Bell St., & King St., (site of the Commonwealth Bank) and was presumably the replacement to Scott & Allen's. Even though the local Fire Brigade and two units from Coldstream were on the scene they could not save the old weatherboard building. The article does say that the shop was of brick

Has anyone got a photo of this building ?

"THERE IS MORE"

The Healesville Guardian of 3rd October 1914 reported that the Yarra Glen Railway Station burned to the ground. A report of 24th April 1915 stated that the "new" Yarra Glen Station was nearing completion.

Then of course there was the more recent fire at the station, August 1998.

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