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NEWSLETTER

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FROM THE EDITOR

The best news to start the new year with is that the Historical Society is now back in the History Room at the Yarra Glen Memorial Hall and open to the public on Wednesday afternoons. We have gained about 3 square metres, which does not sound much, but it has made a significant difference to the arrangement of our furniture and provided a better work area. If you cannot get along to our Sunday meetings, call in on a Wednesday and see the changes.

Our landscape has been changing constantly in the years since non-Indigenous people settled the district 175 years ago. Today buildings that do not seem very old are being demolished to make way for closer settlement: McKenzie's house in Anzac Avenue, Gerry Schreurs house in Yarraview Road are just a couple. It has been interesting to research the changes on just one block of land – no.1 Bell Street. I was surprised to find that its history goes even further back than the Grand Hotel. There has only been time and space to outline the history of the various shops and their owners, but there are many memories and stories of the people who worked and shopped there. If you have any to share please send them to the Editor of this Newsletter and we will compile them. Or maybe you would like to compile a history of another block of land in our district.

Helen

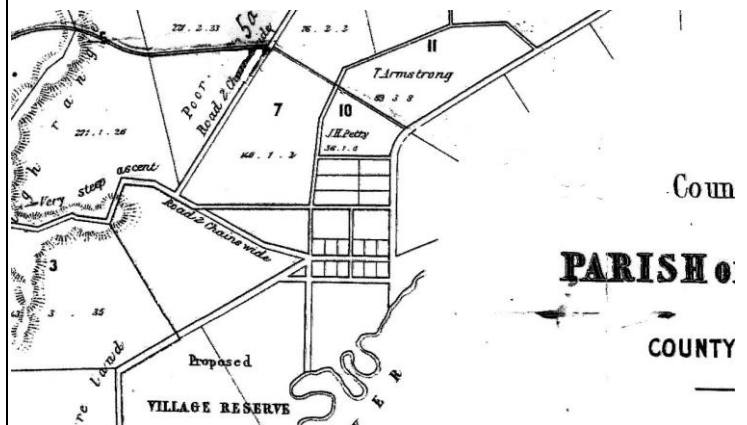
1 Bell Street Yarra Glen

The building at No.1 Bell Street was erected in 1972 by the State Savings Bank of Victoria. The Commonwealth Bank acquired the ailing State Savings Bank of Victoria in 1991 and has maintained its own branch in this building ever since.

At least three shops preceded the Bank on this site during the period since William Ryrie and John Dickson first settled the area in 1838.

The earliest surveyor maps describe the land between the Yarra River and the escarpment of Christmas Hills as lightly timbered with stringy bark. Creeks running down from the hills created swampy marshes, especially near the river. The quarter acre which is the subject of this article is on the rising land just above one of the drainage courses and the flood plain. (*The record flood of 1934 crossed Bell Street nearby, see photo on p.3*). Most of the time the site would have been a very pleasant spot near the river. It is also near one of the river crossings, probably used by the Aboriginal People before Ryrie. William Ryrie created a track from Breakneck to the river and was possibly following one of the paths developed by the Aboriginal People. No. 1 Bell Street also has a frontage to King Street which roughly follows the track created by Ryrie. The 1839 survey map of Thomas Nutt indicates that William Ryrie was using the area for sheep. The rising land would be better suited for this purpose than the flood prone Yering flats. The first sign of European habitation in the vicinity was the shepherd's hut visited by Andrew Ross in 1852.

The parish of Burgoyne was surveyed in 1858 and a town site in the area we now know as Yarra Glen was marked out.



Historical Society Monthly Meetings

Sundays commencing 1:30pm
at the History Room
Yarra Glen Memorial Hall

- 12 February:** Malcolm & Jane Calder – *Steels Creek History Through Stories Project*
- 11 March:** Frank Wood - *Yarra Glen*
- 15 April:** Stan Bone – *One Tree Hill Mine, Christmas Hills*
- 20 May:** Frank Orenshaw – *Local timber industry*

In the mid-1860s **William Herbert** (1830-1907) purchased from the Crown all the blocks in the area bounded by the roads now known as Bell, King and Sayle Streets and Anzac Avenue in the 1860s. He acquired the Title to Lot 7 on the corner of King and Bell Streets in 1867. It measured approximately 104 metres (King Street) by 228 metres (Bell Street).

At some point in time **Phillip Joseph Kiernan** bought an acre on the corner of King and Bell Street from William Herbert. Kiernan is listed in the 1868 and subsequent Trade Directories as a storekeeper in Yarra Glen. There is no evidence he was ever at another site and a notice in the paper in 1895 states that he was on the Bell Street site for 'upwards of 30 years'. On the 19th August 1887 he advertised in the *Evelyn Observer* that his 'Old Corner Store' was to be demolished and that his extensive stock of '*Drapery, Hosiery, Groceries, Ironmongery, Boots & Shoes, Crockery, Brushware and Sundries*' was being removed to the 'Old Cheese Factory' to be sold by auction on 26 August. Mr Kiernan stated that he was going to build a new store.

On the same acre of land there were other buildings which Kiernan leased out: the Colonial Bank rented one from 1886 and the Smedley brothers operated a wheelwright and blacksmith shop on King Street. They sold their business to Thomas and Charles Bath in March 1888. In November 1888 the auctioneers Gregory & Co advertised an auction under instruction from Mr Kiernan

...[a] valuable block of land, containing 1 acre, being part of Crown allotments 7 and 8, section 10, together with all the buildings thereon, consisting of W.B. building, of seven rooms, leased by the Colonial Bank of Australasia...a W.B. building of five rooms, carrying on a restaurant business; also a store of eleven rooms, a blacksmith's shop, and a dwelling house, all temporarily leased and rented at the rate of £175 per annum.

What happened after this to Mr Kiernan is a bit of a mystery and there is no evidence that he carried out his intention of replacing the old building or even that Gregory's auction sale was successful. Kiernan had been a local Registrar of Births and Deaths from the 1870s until 29 June 1887 when it was recorded in the Government Gazette that he was 'removed from office'. In an article of reminiscences in *The Age* (5 Jan 1935) 'W.N.' makes the statement: '*Mrs Kiernan's store at the junction in the township will bring back memories*' implying that Kiernan's wife was managing the store. The name Kiernan does not appear in the Trade Directory after 1889. In May 1890 another advertisement, this time by Robert Hart & Co, states that they are instructed by Messrs Gilmour & McGibbon, agents for the Trustees, to sell by public auction items from the assigned estate of P.J. Kiernan. It included horses, wagons, harness and tools. I wonder if Philip Kiernan suffered a mental illness. Mrs Thomasina Kiernan's death is recorded in 1912 but none has been positively identified as that of Phillip Kiernan – it is possibly the one recorded in 1904 of a Philip Kiernan aged 68 who died in East Melbourne with no identification of his parents or spouse.

The next person known to run the store was **George Rose** who appears in the Directory from 1893. The store was managed for him by Mr W. C. Andrade. In January 1895 an advertisement appeared for his 'first and final sale'. It was immediately taken over by Mr **Rene Yde**, who previously managed the Lilydale Cash Store. His tenure was also short-

lived. The following ad. appeared in the *Evelyn Observer* in April 1896.

TO LET, STORE, YARRA GLEN,
situated close Railway Station, occupied by Mr Kiernan for upwards 30 years, and now by Mr Yde. Possession 1st May. Apply to J. G. Jaunay, Yarra Glen, or T. Leach, 421 Bourke street, Melbourne.

Finally we come to the name that many recognise – **A. H. (Anthony Henry) Scott** (1868-1949). Anthony was the fifth child of John Scott and Margaret Walters. His grandfather Joseph Scott settled in Steels Creek in the 1860s but John and Margaret made their home in the Greensborough area. Anthony's maternal grandparents lived in Dixons Creek and he attended the Dixons Creek Primary School for a couple of years. In 1894 Anthony married Edith Bennetts of Daylesford and he was obviously looking to settle down in his own business when he bought into the store. An advertisement in the *Evelyn Observer* 22 May 1896 announced the new proprietor:

**Good News for All Sorts and Conditions
of Man, wherever this paper circulates**

**A. H. SCOTT,
Universal Provider**

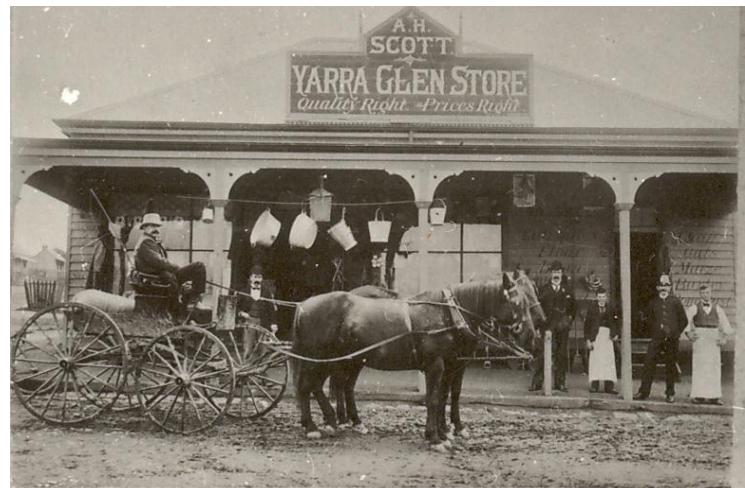
**(formerly a resident of the Township of Yarra
Glen),**

BEGS to notify as above that, having succeeded Mr. R. Yde in that old established store, Yarra Glen, he has opened out with a Superb Stock of Oilman's Stores, Groceries, Clothing, Boots and Shoes, Ironmongery, General Produce, Patent Medicines, Fancy Goods, and indeed all the paraphernalia of a first-class country store, from a needle to an anchor.

A.H.S. would wish it to be distinctly understood that he offers his wares at Absolutely Melbourne Quotations, no additional carriage being added to Melbourne prices, and as the proof of the pudding is said to be in the eating, call and satisfy yourself of the truth of the above.

P.S. I am a Cash Buyer of any amount of first-class Dairy Produce.

A. H. SCOTT
Clifton Hill and Yarra Glen



The new shop built by Anthony Scott in 1898

The immense stock of
General Merchandise at

SCOTT'S STORES

(New Buildings),
YARRA GLEN,

The first from the Railway Station
And opposite the Victoria Hall,
Will be found on inspection to be at once both unique and complete.

Call and see for yourselves.....
You will not be disappointed.....
Everything from a needle to an anchor.

The stock is so varied and so large that
enumeration is simply impossible within
the bounds of an advertisement.....

NOTE.—The Dressmaking and Millinery adjunct has been placed in the hands of
a fully qualified Costumer. Fit, style and quality can be assured.

Highest market price given for farm and dairy produce.

A. H. SCOTT,
THE PEOPLES' PROVIDER

This advertisement on 21 October 1898 announces Scott's new buildings and is evidence that Kiernan did not carry out his intention of erecting a new building

Anthony Scott employed **Samuel John Allen** (1867-1934) in the store. It is possible that Sam was related to Anthony's wife Edith whose mother was Catherine Allen. Both families came from Daylesford. Even if they were not related to start with, Anthony and Sam definitely were from 1899 when Sam married Anthony's cousin Alice Evelyn Scott (known as Nettie). By 1903 Sam had become a partner in the business and the store was known as Scott & Allen General Merchants.

Disaster struck on Saturday 8 February 1913 when the store and neighbouring buildings were destroyed by fire. Scott & Allen's store and its eight-roomed dwelling, Mrs Hubbard's confectionary shop and eleven-room boarding house, and Mr J. Reynold's eight-room boarding house were all affected. Mr Weller was the first to notice flames from a back room in Mrs Hubbard's house about 8:30pm. There was apparently no water supply in the town and the only equipment was buckets of water. The huge fire could be seen from Lilydale and Healesville. The bran, oats and chaff at the store burned for hours and baked onions and potatoes were

...strewn broadcast. When the fire reached the portion wherein the oils were kept, the flames leaped to tremendous height, and the scene was one long remembered...there were 50 cases of kerosene, petrol, turpentine, etc in stock...So fiercely did the fire burn, that within a single hour the three premises were razed to the ground. The stables at the rear of Scott & Allen's and the flower house were saved.

...Messrs Scott and Allen estimate their loss at about £2000, against which the place is insured for £1000.

Healesville Guardian 14 Feb 1913

For the next couple of years Scott & Allen conducted their business in Lilydale, firstly in a building on the corner of Main and Clarke Streets Lilydale, and then they moved to the corner of Main and Hutchinson Streets. This business was purchased by R. Oliver and Son early in 1915 and Scott and Allen resumed trading in Yarra Glen. The Scott and Allen partnership continued until 1923 when Anthony Scott left the business.

Sam Allen died in September 1934 but his daughter **Doris Myrtle Clarke** (1900-1977) remained associated with the business until the late 1940s. The picture below displays the

initials of Sam's son **Norman Allen** (1903-1963) who took over but chose not to keep the business. **Albert Woodroffe** (1883-1955) bought the store about 1935.



The 1934 flood

There were several changes of ownership during the next fifteen years:

Eric Thomas (d.1989) owned the store in the early 1950s. His sister and brother-in-law Lauris and Tom Fisher owned the General Store at the corner of Bell Street and Herbert Lane from 1949 to 1953.

Many people still remember **Charlie Papworth** (1891-1966) who worked at the store during this period.

Lyle Minns (1920-1982), is said to have once been a detective before he became a store keeper at Yarra Glen. He taught the local boys boxing in the Presbyterian Church Hall.

Ivan Cazaly had the store from about 1955 until the 1960s.

Other names from the period since Sam Allen's ownership include C. Southall, W. Clayton and B. Clark.

This General Store was never modernized for self-service like the one at the other end of town. It was used for a while for temporary purposes until another fire gutted it on 28 June 1964.

SHOP AND HOUSE GO IN FIERCE YARRA GLEN BLAZE

Plate glass was exploded across the full width of the main road in Yarra Glen early Sunday morning when an unoccupied shop and dwelling were destroyed by fire...the fire roared through the old weatherboard building of the dwelling.

Pine lining boards and stored paint added to the intensity of the blaze... firemen concentrated on saving the adjoining buildings of the old bakehouse and Mr. Col Smith's milk bar and store...

The fire began at the rear of the building and spread rapidly...the brick walls of the shop were all that remained standing...On Tuesday Healesville Council ordered demolition of these walls.

The cause of the fire is unknown.

The building was owned by Mr. Dominico D'Andrea, of Caulfield. The shop has been unoccupied for several years and the dwelling had been vacant since the Kennedy family moved out a little more than a fortnight ago.

Healesville News 1 July 1964

Yarra Glen Roads & Streets

a series about their history

Bell Street & Symons Street (Part 2*)

The following item appeared in the *Evelyn Observer* 2nd October 1885. It reveals that, even though the roads and streets of the town were surveyed in 1858, they were not named until many years later. The article also confirms that Symons Street was named after George Symons and that the correct spelling is 'Symons'. I also suggest that the correct pronunciation is 'simmons': I have found references to the street in Shire Council reports and other sources where it is spelt 'Simmonds' or 'Simmons' which reflects the way the writer has heard the name spoken.

Mr Thomas Armstrong was a Councillor in 1885, representing the East Riding in the Eltham Shire Council.

YARRA FLATS

THE MAIDEN LAND SALE OF THE FUTURE CITY

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT)

Messrs Mates, Bennett, and Hart held their quarterly sale at Farrell's Hotel, Yarra Flats, on Friday last, September 25th, 1885. There was a good attendance of buyers from different parts of the country. Store bullocks fetched from £3.10s to £6.10s; ...

They also sold for Mr. T. Armstrong five half-acre allotments of land, fronting Farrell's Hotel (Yarra Flats Hotel), up to £77 the lot, and six half-acre allotments, adjoining the State school fronting the main road leading to the Big Hill, and convenient to Farrell's Hotel, up to £34 the lot.... Mr Armstrong named the road between Farrell's Hotel and the allotments sold Bell street, after the late Mr. Wm. Bell, who was his partner in the Gulf Station. The road facing the allotments adjoining the State school is called Symons street, after Mr. Symons of View Hill, who was his neighbour upwards of 35 years ago. At the conclusion of the sale Mr. Armstrong expressed himself as well satisfied with the prices the land had fetched. The windup of the sale was an invitation from Mr. Armstrong for all present to join him in the hotel, and have a refresher and confirm the christening of the new streets, which request was acceded to, accompanied with success to the future city whose beginning was formed that day.

* The first articles about these two streets appeared in Newsletters no.15 (Feb 2005) and no.16 (May 2005) respectively.

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IN THE LOCAL PRESS 100 YEARS AGO

Healesville & Yarra Glen Guardian 2 February 1912

YARRA GLEN (From Our Own Correspondent).

The much-talked-of tennis tournament is over at last, much to the disgust of some of our players and the delight of others. The players in the final were Miss F. Herbert and Mr V. Albert, and Mr and Mrs T. J. Albert, the latter pair being victorious. Tennis seems to be a favorite pastime and recreation in our town, and the court is very well patronised. It is a regrettable fact that our tennis club, like some country clubs and associations, seem to forget that the whole beauty of good fellowship exists in the ability to lose or win with equal cheerfulness. Life at best is only a game of give and take, and it behoves us to cultivate this ability, and be able to take a beating as well as wear the laurels of success. If our club would broaden their ideas and take in this thought, sufficiently to act upon it, it would go very far towards rendering the club more popular, even to onlookers, and if those who think they can play would exercise a little more friendly and good natured criticism towards the new beginners, play with, and help them along, how much pleasanter an evening spent with our tennis players might become. In a short time these new beginners probably will be able to play better than the old timers, and we must ever remember that everyone can learn something; if only he gets up early in the morning.

On Saturday night a fire broke out at 'Narnargoon,' Christmas Hills, a well known and popular holiday resort. The house, which has a wooden building consisting of about 33 rooms, was totally destroyed. Several visitors were staying at the house, and received a great shock, as well as losing a lot of their belongings. The house and furniture were insured, still great sympathy is felt for Mrs Walker and family.

On Wednesday week a wedding took place in Melbourne, when Mr Charles Ellis, son of Mr Nathaniel Ellis, Dixon's Creek, and Miss Mary Smith, daughter of Mrs and the late Mr W. B. Smith, of Yarra Glen, were united in the holy bonds of matrimony. The marriage and breakfast took place at the residence of the bride's sister, after which the bridal party journeyed to Yarra Glen by train, and were met at the station by showers of rice and confetti. Mrs Smith gave a welcome home dance in the Victoria Hall the same evening; after which Mr and Mrs Ellis proceeded to their future home at Dixon's Creek, where they held a reception on Saturday evening.

On Wednesday last, a dreadful bush fire raged on Christmas Hills. Several of the residents narrowly escaped being burnt out, but by hard work and the help of willing townspeople, they managed to save their homes and belongings.

The annual state school excursion to Mordialloc took place yesterday, and passed off successfully, considering the excessive heat, your correspondent thinks it was about 500 in the shade!

An audience of about 200 assembled at the Hall on Friday last to hear an address from Mr Menzies, agent of the People's Liberal Party. After listening to a powerful speech, a local branch of the League was formed, and about 40 members gave in their names, Mr Scott was made president, and Mr Williamson secretary. At the conclusion of the political part of the meeting, a musical programme was presented...