

Dandenong & District Historical Society

Headquarters and Resource Centre: Houlahan Community Centre

186 Foster Street East, Dandenong - P.O. Box 8029, Dandenong 3175

Ph. 03 9794 8967 Email addresses dandhist@internode.on.net + dandhist@yahoo.com.au
Website: ddhs.com.au

Life Members

Muriel Norris, Jenny Ferguson, Ray Carter, Carmen Powell

Chief Sponsor

Our society acknowledges with thanks the assistance of The City of Greater Dandenong in allowing us the use of the Houlahan Community Centre, and for their continuing monetary assistance.

Sponsor

A special thank you to our loyal sponsor
The Dandenong Club

Contacts

Note: Please leave a message on our answering machine and we will endeavour to get back to you within the week. **Ph:9794 8967**

Our rooms are open Wednesdays 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Magazine Editor

Chris Keys
Chris Ware
Jenny Ferguson
Ken Masters
Carmen Powell ph: 9796 2456

Written contributions are always welcome!

Gipps-Land Gate

Gipps-Land Gate

Twice-yearly Journal of the Dandenong & District Historical Society

Vol. 43 No.1
April 2016

\$5
ISSN 1321-5035



Obituary: Volunteer Janice Asher

History of floods in Dandenong.

The Carrum Swamp south-west of Dandenong By Ray Carter

The Dandenong Creek at Dandenong By Ray Carter

Other flooding in Dandenong By Ray Carter

Retarding basins and flood plains. By Ray Carter

The 1934 floods By Ray Carter

Drownings in the Dandenong Creek By Ray Carter

Dandenong Panoramic Drive-in Theatre [Lunar Dandenong]

By Ray Carter

Usually, volunteer Jan Asher rang first thing Wednesday mornings if she was unable to come in to the Society's research rooms. She had been unwell with shingles but even so had turned up each week to help. On Wednesday 28th October 2015 she did not come in and she did not ring us. This was not like her at all and we were mildly concerned. Late afternoon that same day I was rung by a tearful DDHS volunteer and good friend of Jan's, Bev Pursell, to tell me that Jan had died the previous evening. Of course this was a dreadful shock to us all to lose our much loved mate so unexpectedly. But little did we know how deeply we would miss her contribution to our Society so unassumingly given.

We have learned a great lesson. We took for granted how much work Jan did for us each week and her death has made us appreciate more the contributions that all our other volunteers give so generously.

In February 2004 Jan herself visited our society to research her own family history and returned the following week to work with us as a volunteer. She quickly learned about our collection and was soon assisting other researchers with their enquiries. She collected newspaper listings and stories about local people who have recently died. Her obituary folders are now bulging at the seams. She then entered the names and dates into our computer records. It was with a heavy heart that her own name was added to her own list. Jan typed hand written family histories into our collection. She transcribed tapes onto the computer. She worked on every mail-out that we sent to our members. She organised the name tags for each general meeting and worked on any raffles organised for our Annual Luncheons and made sure we had not forgotten anything. She took her turn on the roster for the Annual Dandenong Show.

She not only worked for our society, she was a dedicated supporter of her church. She was a devoted sister, wife, mother, Grandma and friend to many. Wherever she went she was loved and respected by all. Each week at our rooms you will hear someone mutter; "Jan where are you?"

We still all miss you so badly.

Carmen.

My congratulations go to DDHS President Chris Keys for her months of tireless research carried out to commemorate the 100th anniversary since WWI. Chris produced not only a comprehensive record of the many fine young Dandenong men who enlisted to fight in the Great War, she also gave them a voice through their letters, photos, diary entries, newspaper articles and military archives. You brought them back to life. Thank you Chris. . . Ed.

History of floods at Dandenong

Ray Carter, Jan 2015

This article was inspired by the article "*History of the Carrum Swamp*" by Alan Hood, 2004. Some information from that article is used here.

The magnificent Trove website has made this article possible. Two Trove "Lists" were established: "Dandenong Floods" and "Dandenong Creek drownings".

Google search results, mostly of information posted this century, were also used.

More information is also obtained in the books *Reminiscences of early Dandenong* and *A History of the City of Springvale* and *Chronicles of Dandenong*.

Where there is a doubt about timing of various events, the newspaper date is preferred if it is "today's news".

Images are from the Dandenong & District Historical Society's collection, unless otherwise stated.

Introduction

From the very start of its existence, the town of Dandenong has been subject to flooding. This is the story of when floods occurred, and the steps taken to reduce the damage caused by them. It is an epic story that has not been completely solved: the 150 year problem!

Some of Dandenong's floods were caused by rain events that occurred over a wider area. The great flood of 1863 was probably the largest since the beginning of European settlement, but those of 1891 and 1934 were almost as large and caused massive damage¹. There were floods at Dandenong in 1863, 1891 and 1934. There may well be other instances of Dandenong floods being part of a wider flood event.

Our story involves the Dandenong Creek, beginning upstream of the township of Dandenong and ending at Port Phillip Bay.

From 1873 to 1920, the Shire of Dandenong extended to Port Phillip Bay, so there was direct Council interest in the Dandenong Creek, the lower reaches of the Eumemmerring Creek and the Carrum Swamp.

This article describes various aspects of flooding in Dandenong: the Carrum Swamp, the Dandenong Creek as it runs through Dandenong, other flooding in Dandenong, retarding basins and flood plains, the 1934 flood, and drownings in the Dandenong Creek at Dandenong and downstream.

Gipps-Land Gate

The Carrum Swamp south-west of Dandenong

Very early in white man's settlements there was a perceived need to be near waterways for easy access to water. Areas that were subject to occasional flooding were thought to be ideal for agriculture because flooding would provide water and sometimes silt to replenish the soil quality. Soon after Victoria separated from New South Wales, a Land Act designated the Carrum Swamp as a location for agriculture.

The Dandenong Creek briefly heads west and then south after Dandenong, emptying into the Carrum Swamp. The Eumemmerring Creek, initially further east than the Dandenong Creek, joins it at the head of the swamp. At the other side of the swamp, the Mordialloc and Kananook creeks flow from the Carrum Swamp out to sea at Mordialloc and Frankston respectively. (See map on p20.)

The Land Acts of 1862 and 1865 allowed for very cheap land, but there were a couple of catches: the landowners had to mark out their boundaries, and they had to live on-site. It turned out that in the period immediately after settlers had moved onto their properties coincided with almost continual flooding that forced the authorities to waive the conditions. There were floods in 1862, 1863 (worst flood in the 19th Century), and 1864.

In 1869, a survey by Hodgkinson and Couchman(of the Lands Department) proposed the cutting of two main channels through the swamp to carry the waters of the Dandenong and Eumemmerring creeks, with a main drain along the lowest contour of the swamp².Despite more floods in 1869 and 1870 the swamp was opened for selection in 1871. William Keys was drowned in the 1872 flood³.

A group of selectors met in 1872 and offered to contribute to a levee known as the Drainage Fund of the Carrum Swamp Land to have the creeks joined together as suggested in 1868. The council agreed, and the connections of the creeks were completed in 1875. So began the struggle to overcome flooding of the area, flooding that was originally part of the reason for designating this area for agriculture in the first place!

In December 1873 a deputation from the Dandenong and Berwick shire councils to the Minister of Public Works (Mr Fraser) requested that funds be placed on Estimates towards the cost of a channel to carry off the storm water from their shires to the sea⁴.Mr. Fraser declined to promise anything except that he would inquire into the matter if further particulars were sent to him.

There was, however, disquiet expressed from other places to this request. A Mr John Fletcher objected to the Dandenong Council about the proposal in September 1877⁵, claiming that settlers at Frankston relied on the water supply and that a partial clearance of the Kananook Creek would be sufficient. This objection was refused.

In October 1878 a much more substantial objection was made by a deputation to the Commissioner of Public Works (now Mr JB Patterson) by Mr. Purves MLA⁶. Kananook Creek was said to be the only permanent source of water to the Frankston neighbourhood, and such water storage was allowed for in the Hodgkinson and Couchman survey.

Objectors claimed that the proposed drain would become stagnant and offensive, besides depriving Frankston of fresh water. The creek was a boat harbour and a well-known breeding place for fish. It would be less expensive to widen the creek than make a drain. Furthermore, the property owners would have the right to obtain an injunction in the Court of Equity to restrain them from proceeding with the work. Mr Patterson agreed to delay action until he was satisfied that it was the correct course to pursue, and would send a practical surveyor from the office to inspect the locality.

After his review, he recommended the action. The cut began in January 1879, and was completed in August that year. It was a substantial enterprise: a quarter of a mile (400m) long, 23ft (7m) at its deepest point, and 72ft (22m) at its widest point. At the end of March, as soon as the cut had passed the Point Nepean road, construction of a road bridge over the cut was begun⁷.

The cut gave some relief, but the flood problem was still not solved. The cut itself was damaged by flooding from the sea in November 1879, being widened from its original 9m to about 90m at its entrance. Another flood in September 1880, this time from the land, destroyed the bridge over the Patterson cut⁸.

In February 1880, Council opened tenders for a drain 5ft (1.5m) wide by 2ft (.6m) deep and 130 chains (2.6km) long, from the cut to Beilby's drain⁹. This was preliminary to a larger drain to be subsequently constructed. Beilby's land is marked 122 on the Shire map.

In 1886, an Irrigation Act was passed that provided for the creation of Irrigation and Water Supply, with the promise of loans to carry out works. The Carrum Trust was formed in 1889 and received a £27,000 grant for irrigation works and flood control. The Trust program seemed successful. To provide further control of flood water, two weirs were built on the higher reaches of the two creeks where the steep slope allowed the water to rush down too fast. Culcheth also proposed a reservoir. (See page 21 to see *Culcheth's reservoir plan*.)

In about 1905 control of the Carrum Swamp passed from local control to the State Government. The Department of Water Supply proposed the enlargement of the Eumemmerring, McColls and Eel Race drains. The State Rivers and Water Supply Commission was formed in 1910 and took over responsibility. After further floods, the Government enlarged the Dandenong and Eumemmerring drains, built a main outfall from Pillars Bridge to the Patterson Outlet at Carrum and

constructed a contour drain on the east side to intercept the drainage from the hills around Cranbourne.

Around 1925, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission purchased a large area of land in the Hallam and Narre Warren district. Drainage and road works were carried out and much of the land was settled. However, settlers in the Carrum Swamp area complained that water from that area damaged their properties, because levee banks 9ft (2.7m) high along the drain prevented their properties from being drained by the creek¹⁰.

At the Royal Commission on Water Supply arising from the devastating November 1934 floods, claims were made that land in the Carrum Swamp area was still unusable for cultivation or grazing 18 months after the flood¹¹. After the October 1937 floods, the chairman of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (Mr East) claimed that the flood protection works in the area, even though not completed, were effective in almost entirely confining the flood within the constructed floodways¹². Bangholme residents were not in agreement! They met in Dandenong, and claimed that the drainage works had resulted in a concentration of water at Bangholme and created a death trap near Mr Fraser Pillar's property¹³. The shire council agreed to arrange for a deputation to the Minister for Water Supply. The deputation included representatives of Chelsea and adjoining area, who complained that occupants of 7,000 homes were living in permanent dread of floods¹⁴.

The State Rivers and Water Supply Commission responded by approving funding for further works, including the installation of flood gates, raising the level of levee banks of the main outfall at low places, and some widening of the main outfall channel¹⁵. In 1940, Mr East claimed that the most important work carried out in the Carrum district was a large concrete floodgate to control the admittance of flood waters into the Dandenong Creek outfall¹⁶.

A flood in 1952, caused by a depression outside the catchment area but emptying into the Carrum swamp, could not make its way to the sea. A breach in the right bank of the main outfall allowed access to the main drain, saving many surrounding properties from major damage. There was a suspicion that the breach was man-made. Outfalls were enlarged again and pumping equipment was improved in 1953.

Recent road works on Worsley Road raised the road level and were the cause of a flood east of Worsley Road as the result of a 1996 rain event¹⁷.

Once levee banks became established and made higher over the years anew problem arose. Although the swamp was protected from the creek waters, new separate drainage schemes for the swamp were required to drain the water that fell directly on the land.

The Dandenong Creek at Dandenong

Here is a description of Dandenong in flood according to George Fenton Roulston in his 1934 book, *Reminiscences of Early Dandenong*:

The contour of the creek overflow can readily be imagined, and, roughly speaking, there was a sheet of water at flood time from, say, the harrow factory at the end of Pickett Street, around the railway station and Bridge Hotel, up to the town hall, following the hill in Langhorne and Pultney streets, around the foot of the Presbyterian church property, and so on to the creek, near the site of the old sawmill, or, in these days, the cricket ground in the park. From these boundaries there was a sheet of water in some places over a mile wide and many miles in length, and more than once I have seen a lake from the foot of the watch house to the Diamond hill (the rise just over the railway crossing on the South Gippsland Highway).

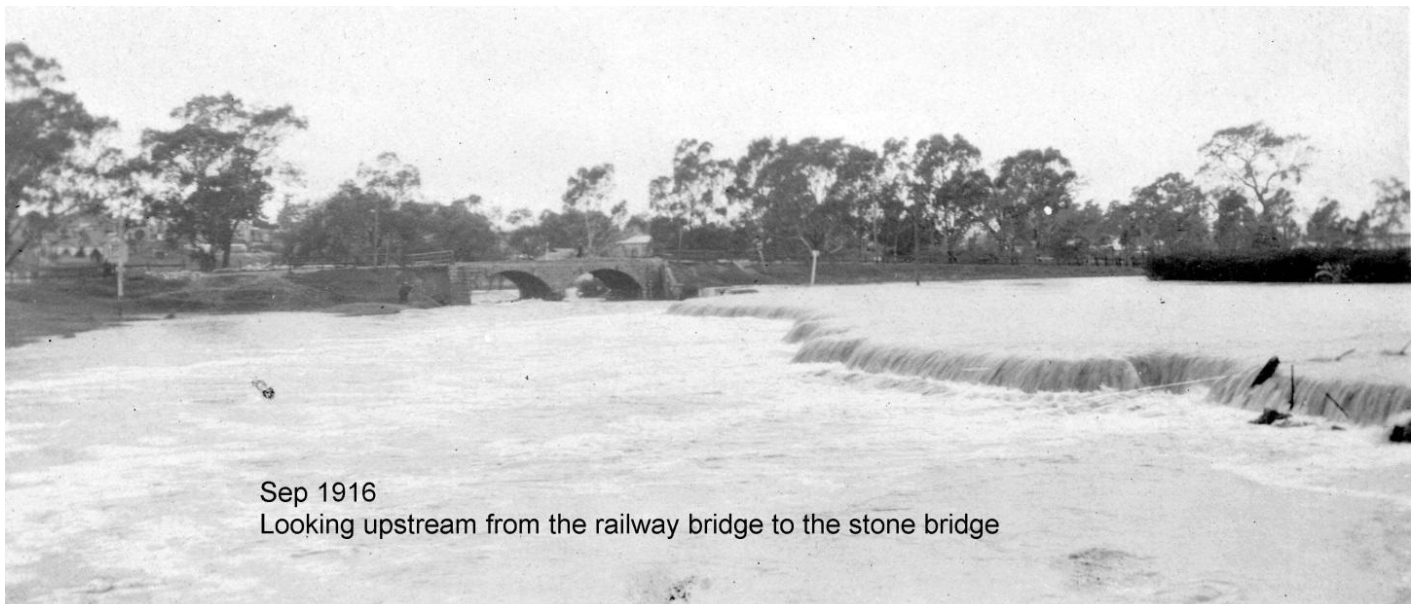
The sight of water across Lonsdale Street between the creek and Foster Street must have been quite common.



As early as 1851, a traveller arriving at Melbourne from Western Port reported that the whole country was completely inundated by rain, the old bridge at Dandenong entirely overflowed, and the roads nearly impassable due to being literally swamped by seas of mud¹⁸.

In June 1874, the *Gippsland Times* reported¹⁹ that “the country between here and Melbourne is certainly in a very wet state, in fact, the flood at Dandenong was the largest known for years, and at Springvale the road was washed away”. The “Springvale” that we are talking about here is today’s Springvale North.

In 1877 the Sale to Melbourne railway reached Oakleigh, with a station at Dandenong. The railway encouraged a surge in Dandenong’s population, and was blamed for making the floods at Dandenong worse than they had been previously. The railway was set on an embankment, the shape of which resembled the path of the creek, so that overflows of the creek could not spread over the flood plain south of the township, but were held back between the creek and the railway line, and caused a “Niagara Falls” effect at the creek where the concentrated overflow returned to it. Flood levels were claimed to be up to 6ft (1.8m) higher here than at the rest of the flood plain. (See map on page 21.)



An example of the “Niagara Falls” effect.

The spectacular effect of this type first occurred in the September 1880 flood.

The flood was the highest ever known to have occurred. When the people rose in the morning, they were astounded at the immense sheet of water into which the ordinarily uninteresting creek had developed²⁰.

All of the dwellings near the township on both sides of the main road leading towards Berwick were submerged, some of them to the extent of 5ft.²¹

These were probably houses that would not have been flooded before the railway embankment had been made. The homes referred to were evacuated. As the flood worsened, homes “in the township” were also evacuated.

In numerous instances people who did not dream of the water coming in such force remained in their dwellings until they found it rather difficult to get away,

*and then they were compelled to leave their goods and chattels at the mercy of the swift currents passing over them.*²²

Despite repeated attempts by the Dandenong Council to force the Railways to make cuts in their embankment to reduce this effect, none were ever carried out.

The articles also blamed an incomplete cleaning out of the creek as another cause of the flood severity: the creek was cleared a few years earlier, except for about half a mile at the place where the creek ended and spread out over the country. This appears to be the first time that a connection had been made between township and swamp flooding.

*We understand that a motion will be made at the next meeting of the Dandenong Shire Council to the effect that a boat be procured for the township, so as to be ready, in case other floods should occur, to remove people living on low-lying land from their houses.*²³

That motion must have failed, because later flood reports in 1888²⁴, 1891^{25,26}, 1934²⁷ and 1952²⁸ mention the use of boats being brought in to rescue people from their homes.

The 1880 flood had damaged the old stone bridge²⁹.

The work of repairing the Dandenong bridge seems to have become a work of some magnitude, and will probably cost a lot of money. A deep bed of concrete has been laid under the arch which gave way and two rows of Brunswick brick (known as clinkers) are being laid on top of that, and a brick wall backed with cement will be built on the upper side of the abutment. It is intended also to cut off an angle of the creek embankment above the bridge, which should never have been permitted to remain as it must have in a great measure caused the wash in the abutment which has given way.

An old man, Thomas Jones, was drowned in the 1880 flood.³⁰

The July 1891 flood was the second worst flood of the 19th century. It completely submerged the lower parts of Dandenong, and the bowling green was 7ft underwater. A raft was made, fastened on empty drums and 4 men tried to rescue some families on the roofs of their houses. A telegram was sent to Melbourne for a boat, and one arrived promptly by special train. The earthwork of the railway embankment was washed away for a good distance, the rails hanging together. Timber floated out of the timber yards, and the bridge over the Mile Creek swept away³¹. The water was up to the back of the newly built town hall. At a public meeting in the Assembly Room of the Mechanics' Institute a committee was formed to collect funds³². The editor of the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal* offered to receive donations and acknowledge them in the Journal.

In 1894 results of the tenders for the straightening and widening of the Dandenong Creek between the rail bridge to a point near Kirkham's corner (about

1.66km) were announced³³. The total distance was arrived at from information about the length of the 11 sections of the creek sent to tender for modification. The railway department agreed to contribute £250 towards the cost. With 2 sections still to be received, the total of the successful tenders was £315/7/-.

The works were well-intentioned but turned out to be somewhat misguided because serious erosion occurred in the creek soon afterwards.

For example;

(1897) ..the wash of the Carrum channel reached within 2 miles of Dandenong over the previous 3 to 4 years, and was increased by 28ft by the latest flood³⁴.

(1911) For some days the water from the hills coursed along the creek bed (and over the banks) in a raging torrent. Many thousands of cubic yards of earth were torn from the banks of the creek and sent along with the swirling waters to the sea.³⁵



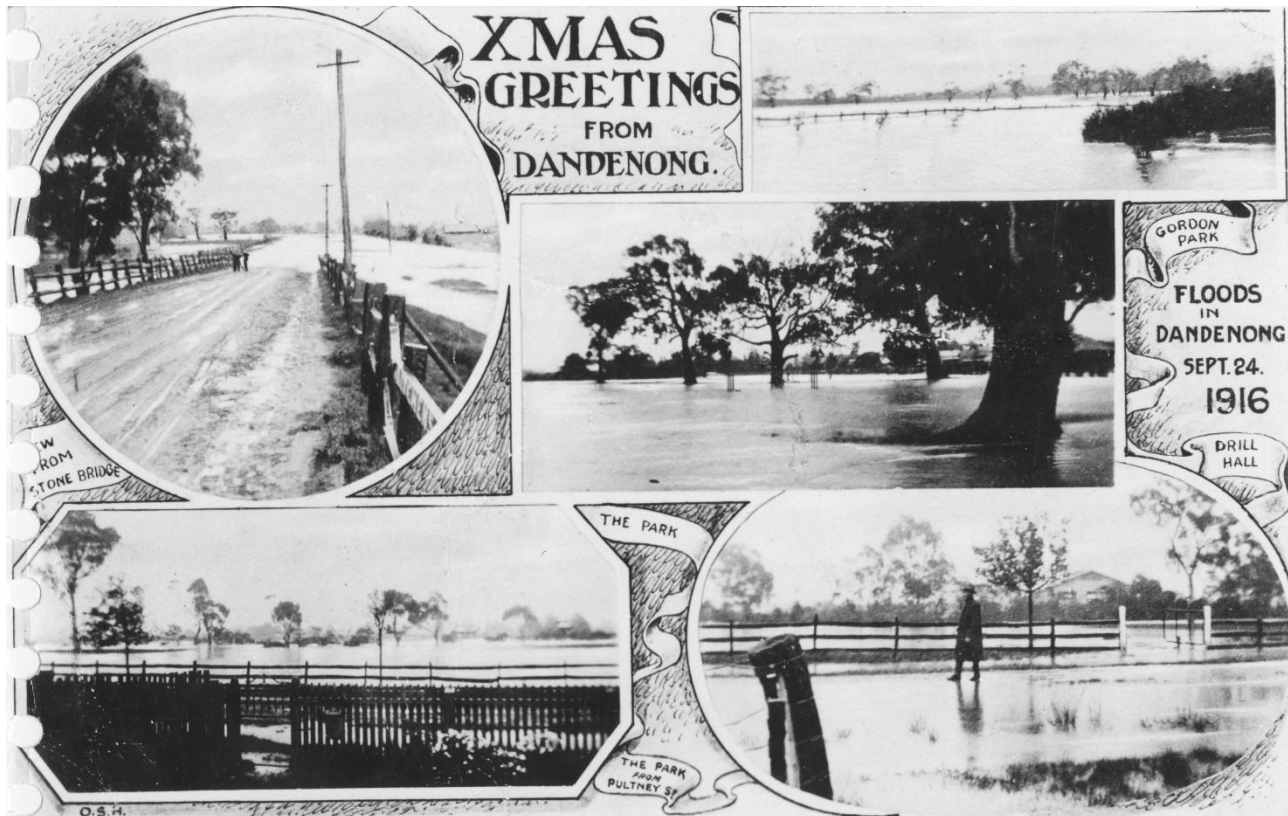
Inspecting the scouring of Dandenong Creek after the 1911 flood.

(1916)But the work has proved an expensive one, as the erosion in the creek has been very decided as in some places the chasm is 30ft deep and 60 yards wide. One would not credit the scour that has occurred, but an inspection reveals the state of affairs to an alarming degree. When the erosion commenced, away down Keysborough, and a massive weir was put in the creek to stop its progress, a heavy flood came along, and the flood gates and weir were washed away down to Mordialloc. Later, the erosion

crept up to the Hammond road bridge, and that disappeared. The railway bridge stood the shock, but had to be fortified by a small train load of boulders, but the force of the waters and the fall of earth let most of the stone down below the bridge. Still the piles are driven right down to what appears to be rock, and they are not likely to shift. The falls are now gradually approaching the stone bridge on the Gippsland road....³⁶

In June 1911 a deputation led by Mr W S Keast MLA to the Acting Minister for Public Works requested £2,000 for repairs and building of bridges, of which £500 was requested for repairs to the Hammond Road bridge. The sum of £150 was granted, provided that Council paid at least an additional £150³⁷. It is not clear that the funds were spent.

In 1910 the State Rivers & Water Supply Commission was formed by the Victorian government and took over responsibility for large scale drainage throughout Victoria. The Commission developed a plan to straighten and dredge the Dandenong Creek in 1933, but the Dandenong and Berwick councils and the flood affected landowners agreed to oppose the dredging of the creek in favour of snagging³⁸ (probably recalling the damage caused by the previous attempt to do a similar thing) .



The 1916 flood was big enough to provide an impressive "Niagara Falls" effect, but that scene was missing from this Christmas card featuring the September flood.



The view along Pultney Street during the 1916 flood.

Chas. Hammond photo

The Dandenong Valley Authority was formed in 1963 with the realisation that all councils along the Dandenong and Eumemmerring Creeks needed to play their part in providing a solution to the flood problem that had been made worse by housing and industrial development along the creeks.

A review was carried out, and the first major work was the conversion of the Dandenong Creek into a widened drain, straight where possible with a minimum of curves as it passed through the Dandenong township, with a concrete base and sloping grassed overflows to replace the smelly, stagnant waterway frequented by rats. After heavy rain in November 1971, the Authority claimed that without the re-designed drain the water would not have been contained. Since then, Lonsdale Street at the Dandenong Creek has not been flooded.



**Looking downstream to the Lonsdale Street Bridge during the 2011 flood event.
Water is held comfortably within the banks of the Dandenong Creek.**

Other flooding in Dandenong

The Dandenong Market precinct

A shallow valley in McCrae Street has its lowest point near the Dimmeys store.

In the late 19th century a large open drain lined with bricks was constructed to allow the water to escape to the Dandenong Creek. It began just north of Clow Street, and culverts across Clow Street, McCrae Street, Walker Street between Langhorne and Lonsdale Street, and Lonsdale Street provided a route to the creek just downstream from the Lonsdale Street bridge.

In 1950 a torrential rain event caused a severe flash flood at the Dandenong Market. Wooden stalls floated away in three feet of water, and one stall-holder lost £200 in notes when his coat was washed away. Some time later, a Council worker recovered the coat, which was snagged under Crump's store, with money intact!³⁹

In about the 1970s the drain was converted to a large underground barrel drain and re-routed to an exit just upstream from the Lonsdale Street bridge. Almost immediately a torrential downpour caused flooding in the new Waltons Store via its McCrae Street entrance. The Council advised Waltons that the downpour was a 1-in-a-hundred year event. After a similar event a very short time later the drain was made even larger. Legend has it that children have been known to ride their bikes inside the drain, penetrating a fairly long way into the CBD.

Despite the improvements, the Dimmeys Store that occupies the ex-Waltons building was flooded in the February 2011 rain event.

Heatherton Road, east of Dandenong

There are two ways to mitigate flood waters: speed them up by digging bigger and better drains, or slow them down by building retarding basins or dams. The 1868 survey by Hodgkinson and Couchman considered both of these methods.

Their survey included a dam upstream from the township of Dandenong. It would have flooded Heatherton Road and also Stud Road, as indicated in the map below (See page 21). The dam was never built, but large drains were dug on both sides of Heatherton Road to drain water from the flood plain into the creek.

High traffic levels caused by vehicles from the new suburb of Endeavour Hills required an increase of the road width to two lanes each way. The old road became one way, and the new one way road to the north was constructed at a higher level in the hope of staying dry during and after rain events, but to no avail.

Twenty first century flood events have blocked both halves of the road for a period of about a week. Under these circumstances, traffic from Endeavour Hills was forced to use the Monash Freeway to cross the flood plain.



**Heatherton Road, looking east, during the Feb 2011 flood.
The flooded east-borne lanes are at the left edge.**

The Dandenong Creek at Stud Road

Records of flood in this area are rare compared to records of the floods at the Carrum Swamp and Lonsdale Street. Below is a September 1916 report from the *Dandenong Advertiser*⁴⁰:

At Dandenong the Dandenong creek expanded itself for miles above the town. Its chief breaking of distinction was where it spread out across the police paddock flats, crossing the Fern Tree Gully-Dandenong road, north of the Dandenong creek bridge. As usual there was a big wash of spreading water here, and the officer in charge, Senior-Constable Downs, had police horses removed to the hill pastures. All the low lying lands below this point were inundated on both sides of the creek, and much hardship was occasioned in many instances.

A 1933 *Argus* story⁴¹ referred to levees in the Police Paddocks:

At a conference between the Ferntree Gully and Dandenong shire councils indignation was expressed at the position of the Government with regard to the levees built by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission at the police paddocks which is said to be the cause of the flooding of Stud road and the possibility of washing away the bridge over Dandenong Creek connecting the two Shires.

During the 1934 flood, a jinker almost failed in its' attempt to cross the floodwaters en route to Murray House with a pregnant woman⁴²:

...the yet to be born George (Gill) and his parents were lucky to survive the rushed trip from Rowville to Dandenong in the family jinker and the story of their brush with death has become part of the Gill family folklore. As Tess the pony pulled the jinker along into deeper and deeper water while crossing the flats towards Dandenong Creek in the fading twilight, Reg, George's father, lost sight of the road and shortly afterwards he couldn't even make out the

tops of the submerged fence posts. When they reached the dip just before the bridge the jinker started to float and it was only Tess's strength and surefootedness that saved them from being swept away in the torrent of floodwater.

Other floods at this site were reported in 1939⁴³ and 2011

Willow Lodge village

The Willow Lodge village is located on the west side of the Frankston-Dandenong Road, with the Eumemmerring Creek immediately to the north and west, and a drain immediately to the south. It was probably the worst affected residential area in Dandenong during the 2011 flood.



These Willow Lodge houses were inundated by the 2011 flood. Picture: Theo Hatsis

Carlton Road– Fair Crescent & David Street – Ross Street precincts

Flash floods occur in these precincts because they are local small valleys. There seems to be little or no attempt to mediate these. Drainage from these areas is slow: flood events take a day or two to be drained away.



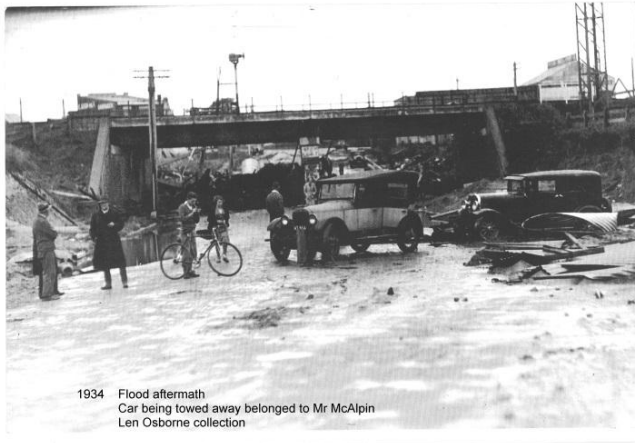
2005 Flash flood in Fair Crescent



2011 Flash flood in Ross Street. The "Give Way" sign is at David Street.

Cheltenham Road underpass

Still subjected to flooding today because it is a low point, the flooding is at a lower level because it is no longer flooded from the creek.



1934



2011

Retarding basins and flood plains

In recent times there has been much activity in the construction of retarding basins, which restrict the water flow rate to a designed maximum. The need for basins to limit downstream flow must be balanced against the need to prevent an upstream flood.



Part of the Police Road retarding basin, showing creek outlet (about 8m wide) at lower right, to control downstream flow. Water ran over the 70m wide spillway during the 2011 flood event. The wall is about 380m wide. Unlike dams, basins are usually dry.

From Google maps

The very large retardation basins north of Dandenong at Police Road and Stud Road help to reduce the creek flow rate to a level low enough to hold the water within the creek banks as it passes through Dandenong.

They are assisted by the flood plains between these basins and the Dandenong township. The water slows down as it disperses across the plains and eventually returns to the creek, providing an effect similar to, but less effective than, that of a retarding basin.

Had the dam proposed by Culcheth been built, permanent flooding would have resulted in permanent flooding of those low lying lands. Today, they are still flood plains, but a basketball/volleyball stadium has been built. Clever drainage design for the flood plain has allowed the facility to escape flooding.



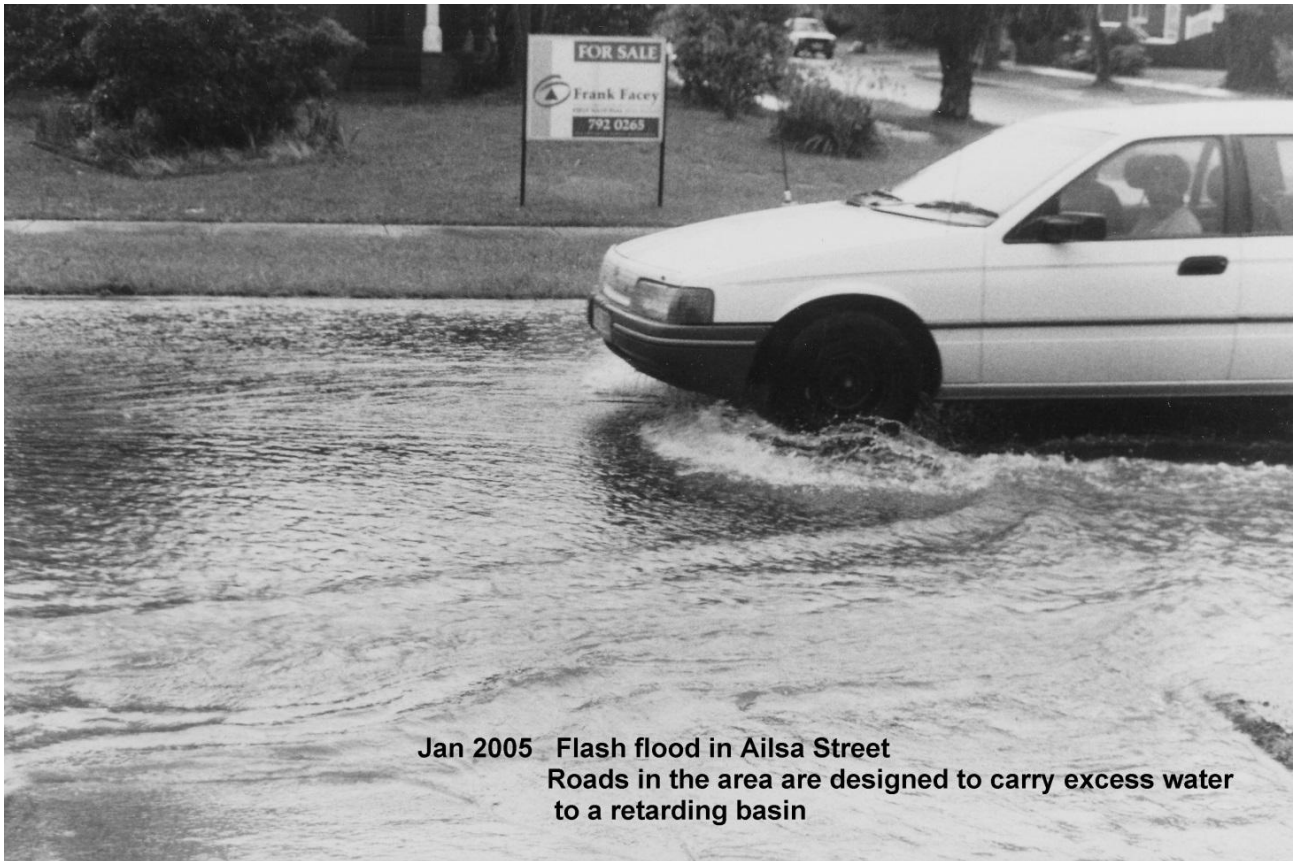
2005: water running off the flood plain near basketball stadium.

The gently-sloping land surface delivers water from the flood plain to a new large grass-covered drain in front of the stadium which carries water back to the creek. The drain is parallel to Stud Road. A bike track is to the left, and the Dandenong Club may be seen in the background.

The much smaller Carlton Road retarding basin in the Lois Twohig Reserve controls drainage within an existing drainage system. During torrential rain events, the drainage in the streets uphill from it is overwhelmed. The streets are designed to carry the overflow to Carlton Road where a dip in the kerb and channel directs it to the retarding basin.

The basin also receives water from an inlet drain pipe. The outlet pipe is smaller than the inlet pipe and controls the water flow downstream from the basin, protecting the streets downhill from flooding.

Gipps-Land Gate



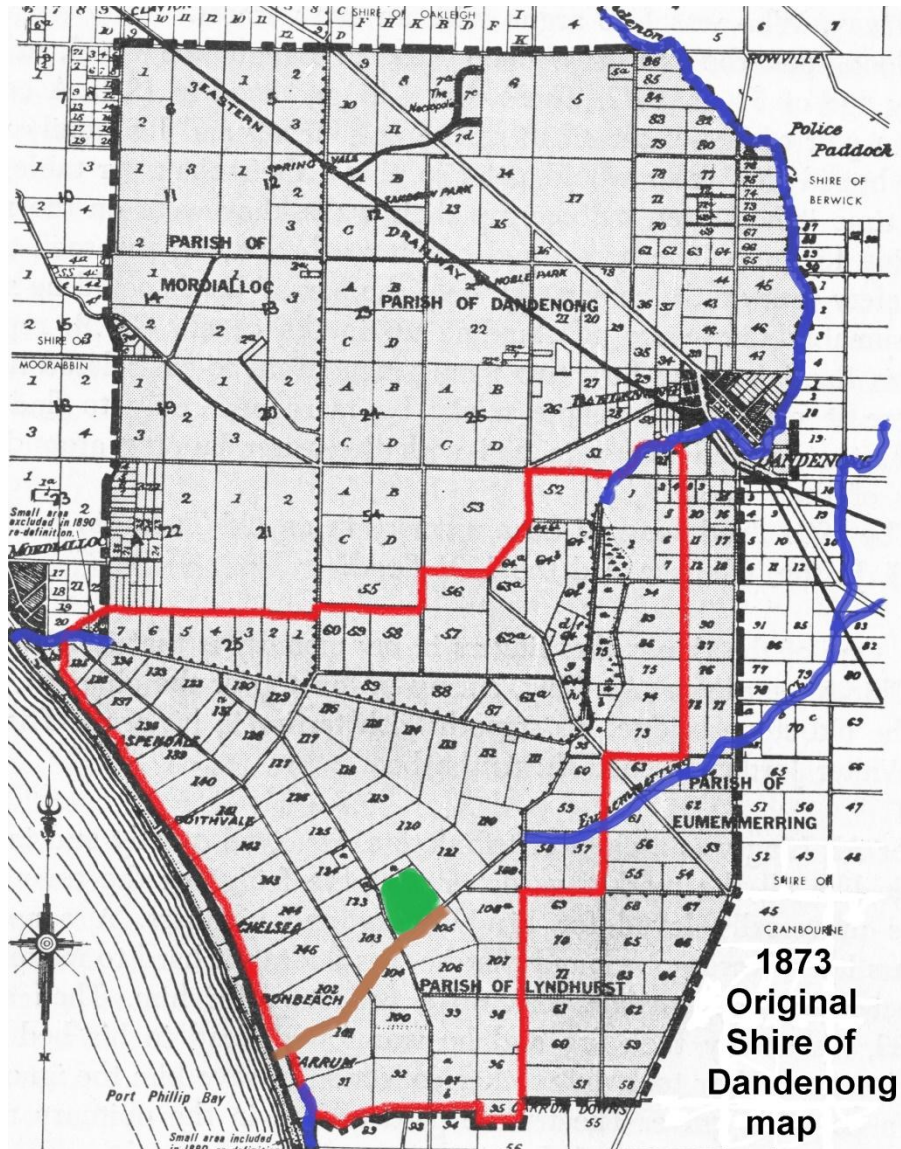
Ailsa Street is one of several designed to carry excess water to the Carlton Road retarding basin when the formal drainage system has been overwhelmed.



**Cage enclosing inlet (right) and exit (left) pipes of the Carlton Road retarding basin.
The size of the exit pipe controls the exit flow rate.**

Map section

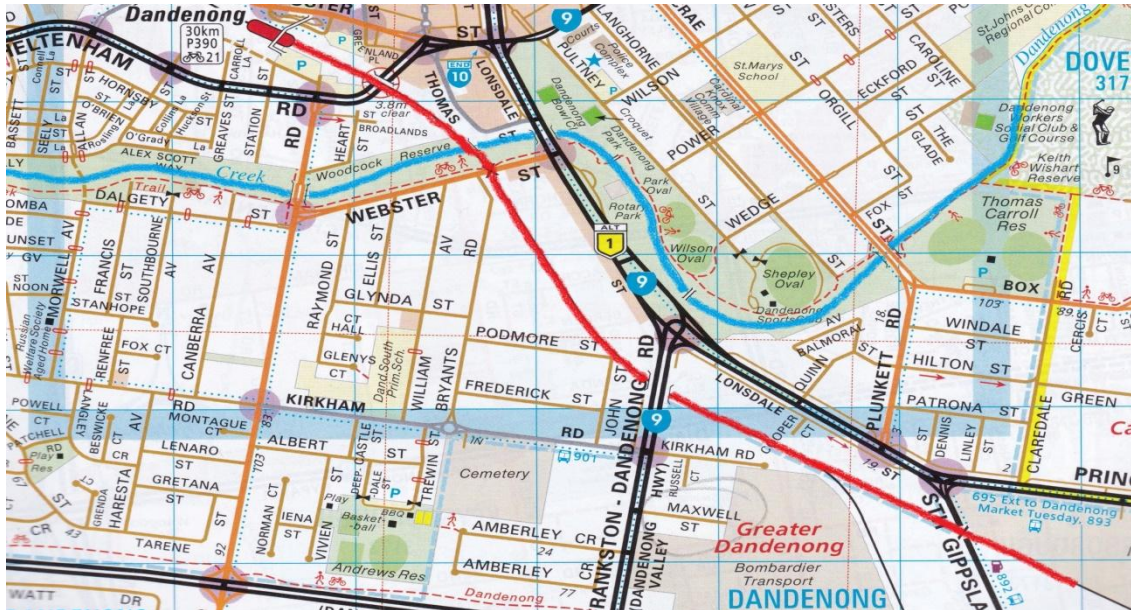
1873 Original Shire of Dandenong map



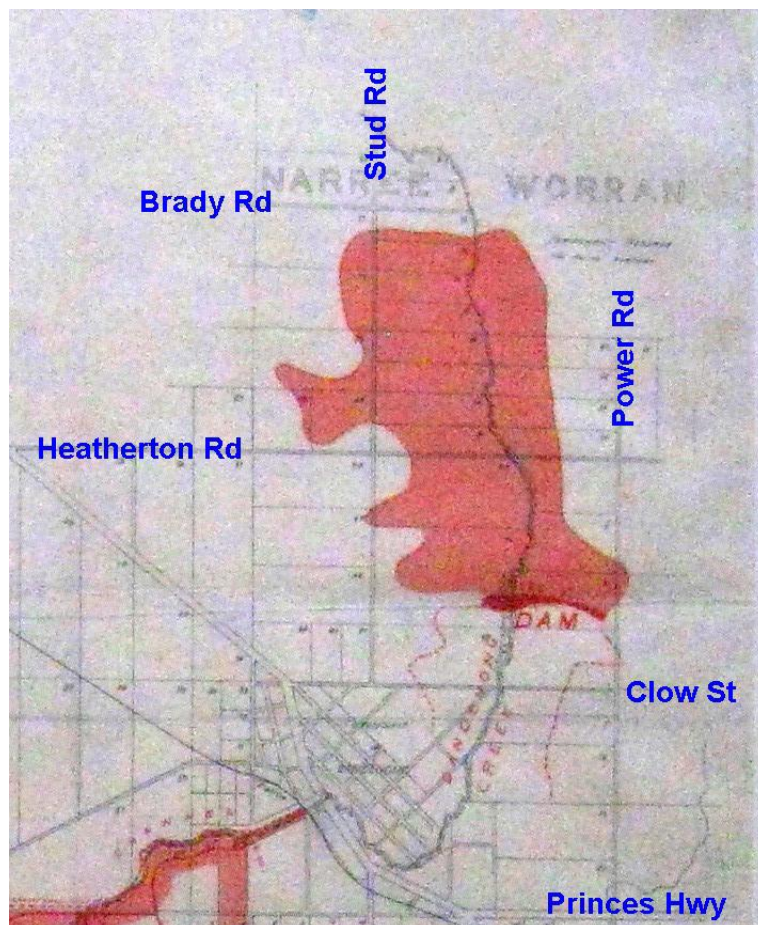
Added Features

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Red | Boundary of the Carrum Swamp irrigation area |
| Blue | From top: Dandenong Creek |
| | From right: Eumemmerring Creek |
| | To sea at left: Mordialloc Creek |
| | To sea at bottom: Kananook Creek |
| Green | Beilby's property |
| Brown | At the sea: Site of the Patterson Cut |
| | Line: Drain from Beilby's property to the sea. |

Gipps-Land Gate



1880 The Dandenong Creek (blue) and new railway embankment (red) converge, preventing flood water from being released into the flood plain to the south.
Melway Greater Melbourne Street Directory, 2013 edition: modified portion of map 90.



1889 Portion of the 1889 Culcheth drainage plan showing the proposed dam for the Dandenong Creek. Road names were added after comparison with modern maps.

Gipps-Land Gate



Devices like this hump in a side street keep flood water in Carlton Road



Main wall of Carlton Road retarding basin at McFees Road showing slope

The 1934 flood

This tiny summary is puny compared to the very detailed, magnificent story that appeared in the 6th December 1934 edition of the Dandenong Journal.

This was the largest flood in Victoria during the 20th century. More than 7000 people were declared as homeless and temporarily destitute: there were initially 2,500 from Abbotsford, 2,500 from Mordialloc and district, 800 from Richmond, 500 from Kensington, and later 700 from Chelsea and district.



The park, from the front yard of a Pultney Street house

At Dandenong and Kooweerup alone there were about 1,000 refugees. Everything was done to provide relief, but supplies soon ran out. Food and blankets were sent by truck from Melbourne.

Rain began to fall continuously at about 3:30pm on Thursday 29th November and was at times torrential. By 1pm on Friday the water level in Dandenong breached the creek bank near the Cranbourne turn-off. Only 2 hours later the road was well underwater beyond Foster Street and the “Niagara Falls” effect had begun. The railway viaduct filled to a depth of 15ft (4.5m) in a few minutes.

The police worked hard all day, warning householders to leave before the flood, and afterwards putting their lives at risk to benefit others.

Many responded when the fire bell rang at 6pm in a call for volunteers.

Hospital and Railways staff were also commended on for their kindness during the crisis. At Kooweerup, the telephonist and postmistress stayed on duty until the last hope of getting messages through had faded.

By midnight on Friday news came of 200 refugees beyond Dandenong on Hammond Road, towards Frankston, and others on the Princes Highway, whose lives were in peril.

Later, hundreds of people were brought to Dandenong and accommodated as best as possible. In addition to assistance from hotels and private homes, the shire hall and scout hall were made available, and beds and bedding soon arrived from the State Relief Committee. Many Kooweerup residents were brought to Dandenong by the railways: 60 accommodated at Dandenong House, and others were cared for in the town.



Severe damage at the timber yard in Cheltenham Road near the underpass

There were huge business losses, the most obvious to the casual eye being the Gippsland Timber Mills, next to the railway underpass, where vast quantities of choice timber had been washed away.

The flood waters gathered strength in the vicinity of the Police Paddocks and rushed headlong within and overflowing from the creek through Dandenong, almost as far as the eye could see, extending south-westward in one unbroken lake into Elmsford, Keysborough and the Carrum area.

Arrangements had been made by the council for accommodation at the shire hall, and more than 36 sufferers from Dandenong were provided with shelter and meals. Donated clothing was distributed. The women and children slept in the Magistrate's room, and the men in the court room.

There is a section of the article that deserves to be fully reproduced here.

Men and women of varied type came to Dandenong, on Saturday night, as the water was entering this town. They were citizens of the world, and of cosmopolitan order, such as are always welcomed here. Most of them were acquainted with Dandenong and its people. Their homes, at Kooweerup, had been flooded, and that had caused the people here to gather in strength and to welcome them in the hope that they would find that rest which the elements at home had denied. Thus they were made most welcome. Quite 200 men, women and children, whose ages varied from a few days to years reaching 95, were among them.

How the men and women here, whose hearts were large, laboured to comfort and to care for them is an epic as yet to be written. They who have worked hard for them, and have toiled unceasingly, seek no praise, since it was love for their fellows which spurred them on, and kept them active never to relax whilst it was within their power to aid.

Varied was the time of stay here. After Monday the numbers had increased to well up to 300. Quarters were provided for the men at the Scout Hall. Several of the women were made very comfortable at the High School, whilst others were gladly invited to the homes of others, where they have been made most welcome. Then others - about 50 - came, and they were received in heartiness.

To the Scout Hall had come many men, and there they were provided with beds, bedding and general comforts. With remarkable speed the place was regulated, so that in the morning the women and children might gather there to partake of their meals, which were supplied throughout the day by many generous souls. With commendable precision the Colonial Gas Company had provided the gas coppers needed, and they did other things to make it possible for the women to carry on this work. Others aided also, and the splendid generosity of the Bacon Company, which kept them supplied with various wholesome foods, must stand to the town's credit.

In all there was nothing lacking, since those who aided saw to it their help was the outcome of whole-hearted sincerity, and they express their warm gratitude to the many noble women and generous men who did all within their power to cheer.

Nearly all the men have returned. Gradually the waters are clearing, and thus there is much to do for the men. They will require to tidy up, to cleanse the houses, which will be subjected to fumigation, so necessary to ensure that disease, even in embryo, is not lurking there. When all is ready the women will be sent for, and the hope is this experience may never be repeated.

At a public meeting on the following Tuesday night attended by 150 people there was a telegram from the Shire Presidents of Cranbourne and Berwick:

The residents of the Kooweerup Swamp are now greatly appreciative of the prompt and efficient action taken by your Council and citizens who rendered assistance to us in our recent disaster."

The motion "That our profound sympathy be expressed to all who have suffered and that our thanks be given to those who have so graciously rendered assistance" was carried unanimously.

Drownings in the Dandenong Creek at or below Dandenong

As my Trove research into Dandenong floods continued I began to see stories of drownings in the Dandenong Creek. Many of the stories were records of inquests held into the drownings. Eventually I searched for drownings, and made a second Trove List, called "Dandenong Creek drownings", easily found by Googling that phrase. Drownings not actually in the creek or upstream from Dandenong were removed, leaving a list of over 30 deaths caused by drowning at, or downstream from, Dandenong. The list may not be complete.

A small boy (Ishmael Bacqaie) drowned during my research. Previous victims included adults and children, murders and suicides, some by accidental entry into creek waters, and one in the creek swimming hole used as a public baths.

Dandenong Creek drownings

c. 1840	John Beswicke	
1853	young female	p5, <i>The Argus</i> , Wed 12 Oct 1853
1856	Patrick Bourke, 24	p6, <i>The Argus</i> , Tue 15 Jan 1856
1862	Thomas Dargan, about 50	p4, <i>The Age</i> , Tue 20 May 1862
1871	Frederick Watts, about 36	p3, <i>The Argus</i> , 1 Sep 1871
1872	William Keys, about 52	p7, <i>The Age</i> , 31 Aug 1872
1874	William Alves, about 25	p9, <i>The Argus</i> , Sat 4 July 1874
1877	John Evans, 56	p5, <i>The Argus</i> , Mon 27 Aug 1877
1879	Unidentified man	p3, <i>The Age</i> , Wed 1 Oct 1879
1880	Thomas (Tommy) Jones, about 76	p2, <i>SB&MJ</i> , 6 Oct 1880
1885	female infant, mother confesses	p2, <i>SB&MJ</i> , Wed 9 Sep 1885
1887	Jno. Irvine, about 50	p3, <i>SB&MJ</i> , Wed 3 Aug 1887
1888	Gregory Keighrey, age 60, shoemaker	p6, <i>The Age</i> , 6 Jan 1888
1894	respectable woman, found drowned 3ft water	p5, <i>The Argus</i> , 21 Dec 1894

Gipps-Land Gate

1899	Mr Barry Young, reasons not clear	p3, <i>SB&MJ</i> , 3 May, 1899
1906	Philip Tulau, 13	p3, <i>SB&MJ</i> , 19 Sep 1906
1909	John Hayes, 82	p6, <i>The Age</i> , 14 Sep 1909
1911	Alfred Mosig, about 50	p3, <i>SB&MJ</i> , 1 Jun 1911
1916	John Cripps, 28	p2, <i>Dand. Advertiser</i> , Thur 13 Jan 1916
1923	Albert (or Herbert) Waddell, 10	p6, <i>The Argus</i> , Mon 24 Dec 1923
1924	Archie Mouat, 9	p19, <i>The Age</i> , 27 Aug 1924
1934	George Richards, 64	p4, <i>Dand. Journal</i> , 18 Jan 1934
1934	Thomas Johnson, 14	p4, <i>Dand. Journal</i> , 8 Feb 1934
1934	Well-dressed man, about 50	p30, <i>The Argus</i> , 8 Dec 1934
1957	2 boys, Alexander Ziwiak, Jan Dudek	p3, <i>Canberra Times</i> , Sat 7 Sep 1957
1962	Neil (?) Pettigrove, 3 Gary Carson, 5	p1, <i>The Age</i> , Oct 17, 1962
1975	Anthony Bennett, 9	p3, <i>Canberra Times</i> , 8 Sep 1975
2003	man, KuongWong, 17	<i>The Age</i> , Nov 5, 2003
2008	boy, 12 (name not stated)	<i>Herald-Sun</i> , 10 Mar 2008
2012	man	
2014	Ishmael Baqaie (3 years old)	News broadcasts
2016	Male cyclist (forties),	<i>D. Journal</i> , 25 Jan 2016

I have been interested in the Dandenong Park for many years, and on one occasion found two shafts, one near the footpath, with their manhole covers removed and missing. There were several other issues about the park south of the creek that I wanted to raise with council officers at the time, and the then Senior Manager of the City of Greater Dandenong, Mr Tim Tamlin, kindly agreed to meet me on site to discuss them.

One of the issues that I raised with him was that of safety regarding the lack of fencing surrounding the Dandenong Creek as it passed through Dandenong. He advised me that the creek was the responsibility of Melbourne Water. Pressing the issue further, I said that at the very least Council should write to Melbourne Water, stating that whilst the creek usually looked quite calm it became a raging torrent after rain and required fencing that could not easily be climbed and several warning signs clearly warning of the creek's danger. Should there be further drownings, Council could at least state that it had tried to arrange precautions.

My research on drownings showed that this concern was not new. At the inquest into the drowning of William Alves in 1874⁴⁴, the jury made a recommendation as follows:

The jury returned a verdict of found drowned and added that they desired to call the attention of the Dandenong Shire Council to the highly dangerous condition of the Dandenong Creek where it approaches the main Gipps Land road and that in their opinion it should be fenced.

Many lives would have been saved if the fence and warning signs had been erected at that time!

By erecting attractive facilities near the creek, such as playgrounds and picnic areas, but not providing safe fencing and warning signs, Council runs the risk of being sued for neglecting its duty of care toward its citizens.

References (“SB&MJ” is the *South Bourke & Mornington Journal*)

*How to find the full text of references from your computer.

Most references have an F or a D in the List column. They relate to Lists on the Trove website at trove.nla.gov.au. Click on “lists”. Search for “Dandenong Floods” for the Dandenong Floods List (references marked with an “F”). Search for “Dandenong Creek drownings” for the Dandenong Creek drownings List (references marked with a “D”).

Ref. List*

No.

- 1 From www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00588b.htm
- 2 F *The Argus*, 9 Dec 1869, p5, para. 6
- 3 D *The Argus*, 31 Aug 1872, p7 Inquests
- 4 F *The Argus*, 10 Dec 1873, p4, col. 7, para. 6
- 5 F SB&MJ, 26 Sep 1877, p3 Dandenong Shire Council
- 6 F SB&MJ, 9 Oct 1878, p2 Local Intelligence
- 7 F SB&MJ, 26 Mar 1879, p3 Carrum Swamp Outlet
- 8 F SB&MJ, 15 Sep 1880, p3 The Floods
- 9 F SB&MJ, 25 Feb 1880, p2 Local Intelligence
- 10 F *The Argus*, 21 May 1929, p16 Hallam-Narre Warren Land
- 11 F *The Argus*, 27 Mar 1936, p3 Drainage rating
- 12 F *The Argus*, 21 Oct 1937, p3 Protective works
- 13 F *The Argus*, 26 Oct 1937, p13 Flood damage discussed
- 14 F *The Argus*, 18 Nov 1937, p23 Flood fears
- 15 F *The Argus*, 5 Mar 1938, p5 Carrum Works
- 16 F *The Argus*, 2 Jan 1940, p7 Flood relief works
- 17 A. Hood, *History of the Carrum Swamp Floods*, 2004
- 18 F *The Argus*, 17 Sep 1851, p2 Domestic Intelligence
- 19 F *The Gippsland Times*, 27 Jun 1874, p3, col. 2, para. 2
- 20 F SB&MJ, 15 Sep 1880, p3 The Floods
- 21 F SB&MJ, 15 Sep 1880, p2 editorial
- 22 F SB&MJ, 15 Sep 1880, p3 The floods
- 23 F SB&MJ, 15 Sep 1880, p2 Local Intelligence
- 24 F referenced in *Dandenong Advertiser*, 5 Sep 1918, but not found in 1888
- 25 F *The Argus*, 13 Jul 1891, p5 Great flood in Melbourne
- 26 F *The Argus*, 13 Jul 1891, p5 Serious flood at Dandenong
- 27 F *Dand. Journal*, 6 Dec 1934 Greatest flood on record
- 28 F *The Age*, 14 Jul 1952, p1 Suburbs awash...
- 29 F SB&MJ, 19 Jan 1881, p2 Local Intelligence
- 30 D SB&MJ, 6 Oct 1880, p2 Death by drowning
- 31 F *The Argus*, 13 Jul 1891, p5 Serious flooding at Dandenong
- 32 F SB&MJ, 22 Jul 1891, p2
- 33 F SB&MJ, 15 Aug 1894, p3 Improvement of the Dandenong Creek
- 34 F SB&MJ, 1 Sep 1897, p2 Notes of the week
- 35 F SB&MJ, 30 Mar 1911, p3 The flood at Dandenong
- 36 F *Dandenong Advertiser*, 23 Nov 1916, p2, Dandenong Creek erosion

- 37 F *SB&MJ*, 29 Jun 1911, p2 Dandenong Shire affairs
 - 38 F *The Argus*, 30 Jun 1933, p3 Dandenong Creek flooding
 - 39 Recollected by Jim Snell in the *Gipps-Land Gate*, Sep 2001, p7
 - 40 F *Dandenong Advertiser*, 28 Sep 1916, p2 Heavy floods
 - 41 F *The Argus*, 5 Sep 1933, p15 Ferntree Gully Council
 - 42 *Rowville-Lysterfield Community News*, 9 Feb 2014
 - 43 F *The Argus*, 6 Jun 1939, Yarra & Goulburn...
 - 44 D *The Argus*, 4 Jul 1874, p9
-

Dandenong

Panoramic (Lunar Dandenong) Drive-in Theatre

This article was given to me by society member Ray Carter. Ray downloaded the information from the Drive-in's own web page. To my surprise the Dandenong Drive-in Theatre is alive and well in February 2016. It has four massive steel screens and features the latest block-busters...Ed.

The Lunar Dandenong opened on May 4, 1956 as the Dandenong Panoramic Drive-in Theatre with a single wooden screen and spaces for 650 cars. It was Melbourne's Olympic year and television was still six months away. It was one of the first ten drive-in theatres built in Australia; the excitement generated by these early pre-television drive-in theatres was enormous. Cars lined up for miles in an attempt to get into one of two sessions per evening. The opening film was the B grade action film *Assignment Paris*. The food on offer boasted barbeques, fish grills and service par excellence.

Only a few months later *Village* opened a drive-in on Stud Road, Rowville and called it the Dandenong drive-in. Competition was hot between the two Dandenong drive-ins, but confusion reigned for years until *Village* bought out the Panoramic in the early 1960s and finally changed the name of the Stud Road drive-in to *Village Rowville*. The now Village Dandenong Drive-in installed a large illuminated sign on Cranbourne Road - as South Gippsland Highway was then called - and the drive-in continued to trade well throughout the next two decades. The capacity was increased to almost 900 cars and the drive-in was one of the few to possess a walk-in. Patrons without cars could walk to the drive-in and sit in a large room with speakers and a large glass viewing window. It also housed a second food area where barbeques and grills were served. The walk-in still remains today but is now used as the maintenance shed.

In the early 1980s the introduction of the VCR caused many drive-ins to suffer. Dandenong was one of 22 Melbourne drive-ins sharing an ever diminishing market. Little was re-invested; screen images were often dull; sound was mono Cine-Fi AM at best and many remained as single screen venues. The R rated sex double *Sweet Savage* plus *Terror Eyes* closed the drive-in in 1984 and summed up how the films and the patrons had changed over the years. Upon closure the site was bought by Trash and Treasure and used as a Sunday market site.

After years of careful planning, the Lunar Drive-in team re-built and re-opened the drive-in on September 19, 2002. Two new massive steel screens were erected (and later were joined by screens three and four). The old snack bar was rebuilt as the Lunar Cafe, a brand new projection block was constructed and the entire site refreshed. Thousands of cars turned out in the opening week to see Austin Powers in *Goldmember*, as well as *Lilo and Stitch* and *Stuart Little 2*.

Today it is the largest drive-in in Australia; serves up award-winning food and offers the best value - first release blockbuster films - in Melbourne. It is the oldest drive-in theatre still operating in Australia, yet offers state of the art picture and sound presentation on all three screens. Live commentary informs patrons of giveaways and upcoming events and classic old drive-in snack bar film clips run with many films.

The largest screens around deliver bright and sharp images and crisp Dolby Stereo SR soundtracks are delivered to your car from our FM transmitters.

The Kilderry Brothers and their dedicated staff delight in new customers discovering the fun of the drive-in, so make sure you spread the word by telling your family and friends that you've been to the drive-in. Every week more and more people are discovering the great fun and atmosphere enjoyed by watching movies in their cars at the Lunar Drive-in Theatre Dandenong. It is the coming together of the two greatest icons of the twentieth century, the automobile and the motion picture. Enjoy your night!

Congratulations to society member, Mary Colquhoun, who celebrated her 100th birthday on 29th January 2016. Sadly her identical twin sister Alice died in 2013 but over 100 family and friends celebrated this amazing achievement with Mary at the Dandenong Club where she is a member.

PHOTO:

HARKING BACK 73 YEARS

By volunteer Bev Pursell

Extracts from the Dandenong Journal with grammar and spelling preserved.

6 June 1943

P. T. Heywood Passes - A Great Sportsman and Citizen

Mr. P. T. Heywood, for many years one of Australia's most famous racing trainers and a leading resident of Dandenong for 40 years, during which time he was twice president of the Dandenong Council, died on December 23, at his home, Hawk's View, near Albury. This grand old sportsman was 86 years of age and there are many in Dandenong who recall with considerable pleasure, the close association they had with him when he owned Orleigh Park and was one of the district's leading men. Public-spirited, generous and friendly, he was a fine citizen, whose departure from the district in 1919 did not sever the many friendships he formed while here.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Taking a bad turn on Saturday last Mr. Dave Trewin, of Lonsdale Street, had to be admitted to Murray House the following day. We are pleased to report that he is now improving.

Friends of Dr. Oldham will be sorry to hear his Mother passed away recently in Tasmania.

SYMPATHY is also extended to Dr. Frank Langley, another Dandenong medico, in the loss of his brother, Mr Aylmer John Langley, who passed away at Arcadia last Friday. Aged 70, he was associated with banks as a land expert for many years. He was also a keen golfer and captained Riversdale for some time. He served with the A.I.F. in last war.

THE RECENT Heatherton carnival was an outstanding success, a profit of approximately £140 resulting. Half the proceeds were for the Comforts Fund.

DANDENONG FIREMEN DO WELL AT CARNIVAL

Dandenong firemen acquitted themselves very well at the district fire brigade demonstration on December 28, winning one event, and gaining three seconds and a third in others, and a third in the aggregate. Their placing were: Won [the] Worthington Simpson Pump Event, second and third in One Man Marshal, second in the Four Hose and Reel, second in the Ladder Race.

Jan 13 1943

DANDENONG WEST MOTION ASKS COUNCILORS FOR PUBLIC MEETING IN MONTH, OR RESIGNATIONS

Councillors Questioned Over Dandenong West Streets and Drainage Scheme.

ATTENDED by about 60 persons, many of whom refrained from voting, last Monday night's public meeting at Dandenong West, after discussing Dandenong Council affairs for 2½ hours, carried a resolution by 13 votes to 7, calling on Councillors for a public meeting to disclose the recent special audit, failing which they be asked to resign.

CR. W. TITCHER, who was present, with Cr. H. L. Leber, gave it as his opinion, that a few resignations were only means of bringing about rehabilitation. He is quite prepared to resign and re-request his seat, he said. He maintained the shire's loan position was the major cause of its present financial difficulties.

ALL THE WAY FROM ENGLAND

THE SUM of £2 has been received by the Noble Park Patriot Fund from Mrs. Richards, of Dorset (England), who is a sister of Mrs. Maunder, of Lawn road, Noble Park. Although Mrs. Richards has to work and has been bombed out of her home, she said she was grateful to Australia for all the wonderful help given to Britain, that she felt she would just like to make this gesture of appreciation. Her thoughtful action is to be greatly admired and her interest is certainly deeply appreciated by Noble Park patriotic workers.

ARCADIANS to Hand Another £350 To Hospital

AS a result of their recent activities, capped by the New Year's Eve Ball, those good friends of Dandenong District Hospital, the Arcadians, are

handing over a cheque for £350 to the Hospital Committee next Friday night. This will bring their total gifts to the hospital to £732, and will leave them only £100 short of achieving their ambition to equip the operating theatre. As they have still more money to pay over later on in February, they will no doubt, realise their objective by then. We take off our hats to a grand body of workers - The ARCADIANs.

SWIMMER SEIZED WITH CRAMP

While a large crowd of bathers were enjoying themselves at the Dandenong baths last Wednesday night, cries for help came from a girl swimmer up the deep end. Snr. Lifesavers Mrs. Lewis and Claude Quist immediately went to her assistance. She was quite near the edge of the baths but could not make the last few feet because of a severe cramp. Lifesaver Quist helped her from the bank of the baths and when she was out of the water both life-savers worked on her cramped leg for 20 minutes before it responded to treatment. The girl was Barbara Pavey, 16, of Hammond road, Dandenong, who is a constant attendant at the baths and a strong all-round swimmer, herself holding awards for life-saving. The incident just goes to show that cramp can be dangerous even to experienced swimmers, and also emphasises the value of the constant watch exercised over swimmers at the baths by members of the Life Saving Club.

Jan 20 1943

WITH THE BOYS IN UNIFORM

Back From The Middle East, Sgt Jimmy Ellis, formerly of "Westwood," 70 Walker street, Dandenong, was in town today looking up old friends. He expects to be sent to New Guinea, where his brother, S/Sgt Keith Ellis, has been for some time. Keith went to Milne Bay after coming back from the Middle East.

GEOFF WALKER, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dave Walker, of Close street, is one of the local RAAF, boys who is being given an opportunity to go to more advanced training. Knowing how well Geoff has done to date we know he'll acquit himself well wherever his training takes him.

Takes the cake!

Mrs. Armstrong, well known ACF Worker at Dandenong, recently had a note from her son who is in New Guinea with the AIF., to say that a Xmas cake which she sent to him in the Middle East for Xmas 1941, reached him safely for Xmas 1942. Despite its trip half way around the globe he reckoned it was "good oh" when it finally tracked him down 12 months later.

Dandenong Council To Seek Subsidy for Pre-school Teacher's Salary

Although not in a position to extend any financial aid from municipal funds, Dandenong Shire Council is wholeheartedly behind the move for the establishment of a pre-school Kindergarten at the Dandenong Truby King Centre, and has agreed to a request from the Committee to arrange a deputation and approach the Government for a £ to £ subsidy toward the teacher's salary.

Jan 27 1943

Sgt-Pilot Bob Swords Killed in Air Accident

Tragic News From England - Was One Of Our Best Known Boys

Few tragedies have caused such profound and universal sorrow in this district as the sad news, received in Dandenong late on Saturday that Sgt Pilot Robert Swords (RAAF), had been killed in an air accident in England. The civic flag, flown at half-mast over the weekend was a symbol of this district's sadness at the loss of a very popular young man, and there is hardly a home in Dandenong that does not share the deep grief of his mother, brother's and sister's. Bob was born here, of one of the district's fine old families, was brought up here, and by his splendid citizenship, friendliness and genial companionship won for himself a niche in the hearts of everybody, not only in Dandenong, but for many miles around. He was only 30.

WEDDING BELLS

Bridegroom's Uncle Marries Popular Keysborough Couple

Well known District Families United

When Ella Joyce, eldest daughter of Mrs. Villiers and the late Mr. J. Villiers, of Brighton road, Keysborough, was married by the bridegroom's uncle, Rev. H. Trebilco, to Clifford Charles, youngest son of Mr. W. Trebilco and the late Mrs. Trebilco, of Elmsford, Keysborough, at the Methodist Church, Keysborough, on Saturday, January 16, two very old and greatly honoured district families were linked together.

Jan 27 1943

Potato Diggers Boarded Wrong Train: Drowned Their Sorrow

Frank Burke and Thomas Lyons, two potato diggers who were bound from Colac to dig "murphies" at Neerim, made a bad mistake when they boarded the wrong train at Flinders street on Saturday. They wound up at Dandenong and consoled themselves for their mistake by imbibing not wisely but too well. Board and lodging presented no difficulties for they spent the week-end as guests of His Majesty.

Bus For Berwick

Sir, - What about the Berwick bus?

Does anyone know how the High School children are to get to school when the schools open next week? The morning train is far too early and the evening train is crowded and not safe for children standing, to say nothing of the comfort of older travellers. Things seem to be going back instead of forward. On Sundays when the young men must get back to work they have to go out on the highway and look for some kind motorist to give them a lift – or walk. “ONE OF THE TIRED ONES” (Berwick).

Cr. Bowman Tackles Cr. Leber Over West Meeting Statement

Accuses Him of Sheltering Behind Town Hall Committee Over Hall-Keeper's Dismissal.

The recent Public Meeting over at Dandenong West had repercussions at the council table on Monday when Cr. A. W. Bowman tackled Cr. H. L. Leber over a statement he made that the dismissal of the town hall-keeper had been dealt with by the town hall committee and was the result of a recommendation from the body. He charged Cr. Leber with trying to shelter behind the town hall committee and said he wanted the people to know the facts.

Feb 3 1943

SON OF LYNDHURST FAMILY MAKES SUPREME SACRIFICE IN NEW GUINEA

Lieut. Ivor K. Allison Killed In Action

THE HAPPINESS which the arrival on leave of their son, Keith, caused in the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Allison, of “Paroo”, Lyndhurst, was sadly shattered last week by grave news of their other boy, Lieut. Ivor Kenneth Allison, who was in action against the Japs in New Guinea. Their first disturbing news was that he was missing. On top of this notification came the more hopeful tidings that he had been found and was lying wounded in hospital. Then on January 6th came the tragic news that Ivor had died of his wounds.

Another New Factory For Springvale

On top of last week's announcement of a new £10,000 factory for Springvale, comes the news that an early start is to be made with the erection of a new generator factory for Messrs. Kelly and Lewis. The new building, which we understand is to be about 75 feet, will face Spring Vale road. This further development of Spring Vale as a manufacturing centre

will be a source of satisfaction to those who have always had faith in the town's progress.

March 3 1943

Letters To Prisoners Of War

Following the lead by the "Sun" and other city bodies in offering to type letters to prisoners of war in the hands of the Japs, so as to facilitate their passage through the censors, two Dandenong typists called up the Journal Office and offered to perform a similar service for anybody in this district, free of charge. Anybody wishing to avail themselves of this generous offer may leave their letters at this office and collect them again later. The two volunteers prefer to remain anonymous, but the writers of the letters can rest assured that the contents of their letters will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Former Dandenong Lad Becomes Doctor

Bernie Botterill's many friends in Dandenong will be delighted to hear that on Saturday he received the glad tidings that he had got through his medical finals and is now fully qualified as a doctor. Cr. Warren Titcher, for whose late dad, Bernie's father, worked for 21 years, received the good news on Saturday. Bernie himself was employed at Titcher's Pharmacy for 4 years. This lad's success is all the more pleasing, because he got through on his "own bat", earning enough himself, to pay for his long course. Where ever he hangs out his plate he is assured of the good wishes of many in the town.

April 7 1943

NEW R.S.L. Soldiers' Rest Hut Opened Free Of Debt

Dandenong Branch's Excellent Achievement

Built by Voluntary Labor and cosily furnished and outfitted with a billiard table and kitchen, the new servicemen's hut at the corner of Walker and Langhorne streets, Dandenong, was opened free of debt last Saturday afternoon, Cr. J. C. Mills, the shire president, performing the ceremony. Ill-health prevented Mr. Roy McLean being associated with him in this ceremony, which was performed in the presence of Mr. George Holland, Victorian State President of the RSSILA, and a representative gathering of citizens. Because of counter attractions few soldiers were present, but they should find the hut a real haven while on leave. Visitors from R.S.L. headquarters did not come empty-handed, bringing with them a mantel-radio set with which to equip the hut.

Cr. Titcher Tackles Colleagues Over “Pulling Down” Working Men’s Wages

Two applications were received for the position of dog registrar and pound keeper and council decided to recommend the appointment of Mr. V. E. A. Nash to the Manpower authorities. Cr. Titcher attacked councillors for reducing the remuneration of the dog registrar and charged them with trying to make the budget balance by pulling down the wages of the working man.

May 5 1943

Rodeo Takings Approx. £250

The spectacular Rodeo presented by Major Speirs in association with the Rowville–Lysterfield Gymkhana Club, at Dandenong, last Saturday drew a crowd of over 2000 despite the many counter attractions, and it is estimated that the total takings for the day will be in the vicinity of £250. The profits are to be divided equally between the Red Cross, ACF., and the Dandenong and District Hospital and each organisation should receive a tidy cheque as a result of the day’s work.

Mrs. Joe Ordish Reaches Ambulance Objective - £750

Gathering around her small band of willing workers, Mrs Joe Ordish, about a year ago, decided to launch an appeal to equip the district served by the Dandenong and District Hospital with an ambulance. Her first objective was £500, but when this was reached, it was found that the ambulance was going to cost more. Undeterred, Mrs. Ordish and her committee carried on and today were able to announce that their final objective, £750, had been achieved. The appeal has therefore been closed. Mrs. Ordish and her active helpers are to be congratulated on a magnificent achievement.

June 2 1943

Dandenong C. W. A. Celebrates Tenth Birthday

Dandenong Branch of the Country Women’s Association celebrated its 10th birthday on Friday, May28, when the special birthday meeting was largely attended. The meeting opened with the National Anthem, followed by one minute’s silence for our fighting forces, after which the president repeated the CWA collect. The President (Mrs. V. Tharle) then welcomed all visitors, including Miss. V. Brunet, who was a loyal member of the branch in the past.

Dandenong Company’s Record Turnover Of Half-a-million Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Co Has Excellent Year

Has Now Handled over a Million Pigs

The Gippsland Co-operative Bacon Curing Co., passed an important milestone in its history this year when, in March, the number of pigs it has handled since its formation, reached the 1,000,000 mark.

In the year ended April 30, the sales turnover of this Dandenong Company reached the record figure of £502,047, and the profit of £6046 was almost double that of last year. The comparative profits are: 1942-1943 £6046; 1941-42 £3257; 1940-41 £2112. Turnover was £502,047, this year compared with £402,327 in 1941-42 and £409,319 in 1940-41.

OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF CGD ARCHIVE FACILITY



Cutting the cake to launch the opening of the CGD Archive Facility at 66 Hammond Road, Dandenong. L-R: Colin Robinson, President Springvale Historical Society, Chris Keys, President Dandenong Historical Society and CGD Mayor Heang Tak. Photo by DDHS member Ray Carter.

Dates for your diary - 2016:

Sunday 17th April	2pm at Agricultural Society's rooms at Greaves Reserve. Guest Speaker Laurie McCoy of Norden Body Works.
Saturday 18th June	12.30 Annual Luncheon at Dandenong Club - cnr Stud & Heatherton Roads. Guest speaker Father Jean Mawal, CGD Citizen of the Year. Topic: Dealing with Family Violence.
Sunday 21st August	2pm at Agricultural Society's rooms at Greaves Reserve. Guest speaker not yet finalized.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Chris Keys

We all returned to the DDHS Rooms in the first week of February feeling refreshed, although it was sad to think that our dear friend Jan Asher would not be joining us this year. Every week we come across examples of Jan's work in the rooms. She did a wonderful job.

The Civic & Historical Societies Future Directions Committee

This committee has now achieved its purpose, to provide adequate storage facilities for the CGD Civic Collection, the Springvale & District Historical Society and our own DDHS catalogued items.

On the 25th February a number of our members attended the official launch and opening of the Hammond Road Archive Storage Facility officiated by the Mayor Cr Heang Tak.

Congratulations must be extended to this committee for achieving their project on time. The Civic Collection is currently shifting in, as are the volunteers selected to scan and catalogue the collection.

More work will need to be done to ensure that all three collections can be accommodated and provision is made for future growth.

Dandenong Market 150th Celebrations

I am honoured to represent the Society on a committee formulating the celebrations for the Dandenong Market's 150th year. This committee has representatives from the Board and Officers of the Dandenong Market along with Local Traders, Multicultural Arts Victoria, Melbourne Food & Wine, Tourism Victoria and the City of Greater Dandenong including Cr John Kelly.

After my first meeting I think this will be an exciting celebration throughout 2016. Keep a watch out for upcoming events.

Art Work - Walker Street Car Park

During December, January and February I have been delighted to meet with members of the community collected by Jenny Pemberton-Webb to workshop a proposal for Art Work on the East Wall of the Walker Street Car Park. This is another exciting project which I am sure you will appreciate as you drive through the area.

The Drum Theatre

The Drum theatre is celebrating its 10th year in operation. We were asked to help provide historical images of the Grand Old Lady and this exhibition is currently in the foyer of the Drum.

It was my very great pleasure to conduct a seminar in the old rooms of the Town Hall portraying it's History from 1890-2003 on the evening of Wednesday 24th February as part of the celebrations.

Dandenong Show 13-15 November 2015

This year we had a man with a van which proved a great asset in shifting material from the rooms to the showgrounds and back again. Thanks Ted Doran as well as the other 13 volunteers who manned our stall over the two days. The volunteers manned the display in four-hour shifts, and we greatly appreciate the time they all gave to the Society.

Dandenong U3A

Once again we provided lectures on local history to the Dandenong U3A during February 2016.

Ray Carter spoke on how to preserve your family history; Carmen Powell on Growing up in Dandenong 1939-1959 and Chris Keys did a three-part lecture on WW1 in Dandenong.

Member Meetings

Since the last Gippsland Gate we have had three member meetings:

October : Annual General Meeting, which provided no surprises, All officers were returned without an election. The Annual return to the Justice Department was registered within the month. Carmen Powell spoke with empathy on the effect of the 1930's depression in the Dandenong district.

December: Christmas Lunch

Forty members and their friends enjoyed the traditional Christmas Lunch at the Dandenong Club. Food and cheer were enjoyed by all.

February:

February was advertised as a presentation by Sarah Dugdale from the City of Greater Dandenong on the Arts & Heritage Strategy that the City of Greater Dandenong is about to commence. Unfortunately at the last moment Sarah could not be with us so Chris Keys gave a presentation on Dandenong Soldiers who won honours and awards during the 1915-18 War.

Trove

We are delighted to report that Trove (digitised newspapers sponsored by the National Library) has now uploaded The Dandenong Journal from 1927 to 1954 and it is available to the general public.



Above: Archive storage for framed paintings and photographs.

Left: DDHS President Chris Keys congratulating CGD for their vision for Greater Dandenong's future along with Carmen Powell and Christine Ware who faithfully came with ideas and enthusiasm to all the meetings of the Future Directions Committee.

Photos by Ray Carter

We need your help!

The Dandenong and District Historical Society was formed in 1963 to gather and preserve information about Dandenong's history for the benefit of future citizens.

Therefore, we ask the people of Dandenong to donate documents, photographs, items of ephemera etc to the society. The items may be family, business, or community-group based. They may be one or one hundred years old.

If the historical value of such items is in doubt, please contact the Society before disposing of them.

We encourage businesses, clubs and groups to take photographs, keep minute books, and record their own histories.

BECOME A MEMBER NOW!

For an annual membership fee of just **\$25** (individual) **\$34** (family) **\$20** (subscriber)

- You can enjoy the following benefits:
- Two free copies of the Gipps-Land Gate magazine
- Access to our research library
- A rich program of interesting activities

Contact us now for more information