

# COLLINGWOOD REMEMBERED

Arthur Towers was born in Hoddle St, Abbotsford in 1889. 'In 1893 my parents shifted to Emerald in the Dandenongs. My father was working the creeks in the district for gold. After two years they shifted to a crown land settlement at Ferny Creek. I had my schooling at the One Tree Hill State School. After 15 years in the Dandenongs we came to Abbott Grove, Clifton Hill. By that time there were nine children in the family. The following year my brother Ernest

was born, in 1908. My father died when the baby was three weeks old. I got a job in a boot factory in Collingwood which was the home of boot manufacturers in Australia.' In 1915 Mr Towers married Lilian Mitchell and set up his home in Abbott Grove: 'I've spent 73 years in Abbott Grove.' Lilian Towers (nee Mitchell) was born in Spensley St, Clifton Hill in 1895. 'My mother had ten children and three of

them died. She had twins and so she had three children within a year.' Mrs Towers' links with the area where she has lived all her life are very strong. 'Five generations of my family went to Spensley St State School.' Ellen Don was born in 1889. She lived a few miles from Ballarat and remembers walking seven miles to school and seven miles back. 'My father was a builder and we moved to Geelong, and from Geelong I went to



ROSKA SOCIAL CLUB OUTING c.1920s (G. N. RAYMAN'S BOOT FACTORY WORKERS)

WEDDING, c.1930s (COURTESY MRS GLAD SMITH)





Melbourne for three years and finished my education. When I went back home I couldn't settle down.' Mrs Don married at 19 but was soon widowed with two young children to rear. She eventually obtained a job in the boot trade in Collingwood and has lived in Clifton Hill ever since.

Eileen Tyrrell was born in Tasmania in 1890 and came to Victoria aged four — first to Fitzroy and then to Collingwood. She was one of a family of seven. Her father worked in the boot trade, as she later did herself.

Maggie Henry (nee Vickers) was born in 1891 at Corop West near Elmore, Victoria. 'I went to school at Corop West and came to Melbourne at the age of about 17 and worked as a general help in different places. I've been here in Clifton Hill for 55 years.'

Lily Willis (nee Smith) was born in 1890. 'I know I was born in Collingwood somewhere but at four and five years old I was living in Johnston St, opposite the tram sheds. I remember that plainly because I had a pram with a magpie on top of the cover and I used to watch the families coming out to the trams, the cable trams. I was only a little girl then and then we shifted to Clifton Hill. Mum was born in Keele St, Collingwood. We had a lot of relatives down in Collingwood. My Grandma lived in Keele St, and my other dear old Grandma had a lolly shop in Johnston St for years and years — her and Grandpa.' Mrs Willis lived in Roseneath St, Clifton Hill. 'When I was married we lived in this street and I've lived here ever since.'

Violet Mayes, Mrs Willis' sister, was born in Dally St, Clifton Hill in 1896 and still lives in the same street. Their lifelong friend, Miss Myrtle Lord, also born in 1896, lives in the house in Roseneath St in which she was born.

Irene Pizer (nee Atkinson) was born in Gold St, Collingwood, in 1895, one of a family of eight. 'We were very well known in the district at the time. Anybody wanting to know anything from an older man — they'd go and see my father.' Her brother, Mr Harold Atkinson, was born in 1900 in Gold St. Their mother died in 1902, their father in 1913, and Harold moved to Fairfield

to live with an older brother. Later he moved to the country. Irene stayed in Abbotsford with relatives and returned to live in Gold St when she married.

Irene Ruthven (nee White) was born about 1896. She grew up in The Esplanade, Clifton Hill. After she married, she left the area but returned with her husband to Clifton Hill for some years. Her husband was Mayor of Collingwood from 1945 to 1946.

Mary Cain was born in Wright St, Clifton Hill in 1895. Her family had a dairy of 40 cows in Clifton Hill. She worked in the boot trade and in the tobacco industry. Mrs Cain has been a leader of the Collingwood Elderly Citizens' Club for a number of years.

Ellen O'Loughlin was born at Monroe in Gippsland in 1899. 'I went to state school at Monroe and we had quite a long walk to school. Later, I boarded in a convent in Sale and I did my nursing training at the Gippsland Hospital. I was married in 1933 and that's when I came to Clifton Hill. We leased the Normanby Hotel. We had it until 1961.'

Nan Bramwell was born in Alexandra Parade, Clifton Hill in 1902 and has lived in Clifton Hill all her life.

Barbara Jell was born in Hoddle St, Abbotsford in 1905 and lived in Collingwood until she married. 'My mother had nine of us. She was married in Collingwood and my father lived there before her, and his father before him.' Having left Collingwood when she married, she and her husband soon returned to live in Clifton Hill. Mr Jell was Mayor of Collingwood in 1975.

Jim Hocking was born in 1906 and his sister, Grace Hocking in 1916, in Silver St, Collingwood. Silver St, off Langridge St, is a small street with only two houses. They later lived in Cromwell St, Collingwood, and in recent years have moved to Rosanna.

Ruth Haynes was born in 1908 in Keele St, Collingwood. The house was pulled down for the widening of Hoddle St. She has lived in Collingwood 'all but 11 years when I lived in Kew after I was married, then I came back to Clifton Hill.'

Tom Mayberry was born in Belfast, Ireland, in 1908. 'My father died in Ireland when I was one. I came out here when I was two and was taken to Tasmania with my mother for 12 months. Then we went to live with my mother's brother in Launceston and came over here when I was about three, and the first place we lived in was in Church St, Abbotsford, down near the Abbotsford brewery. After living there for about two years we shifted while the war was on — the 1914-18 war — into Cromwell St, Collingwood, and when I was about five I started at the old Vere St State School. Unfortunately, the people we were boarding with were Germans and at that time they were sent to an internment camp and it broke up the house and we had to move to a little place up in Islington St. My mother was a machinist at the big Foy & Gibson's factory up in Oxford St and we got this house off a Mr Berglin who was a big identity and property owner in Collingwood in those days. It was 9/- a week, the rent, and I think my mother was lucky if she was getting 25/- a week in wages in those times.' Mr Mayberry has lived in Turner St, Abbotsford, since he married in 1936.

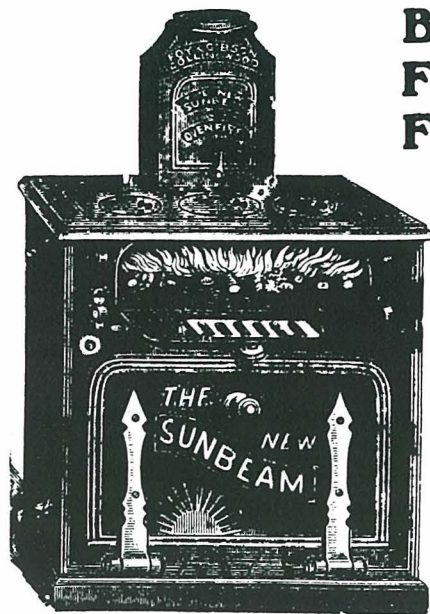
Mrs Fallon. I've lived 72 years in Collingwood. That's a long while, isn't it? And to be truthful I wouldn't live anywhere else.' As a child Mrs Fallon lived at the Abbotsford brewery. She left school to study music. 'I've got three certificates in music. Well, then I married and came up here to live in Clifton Hill.'

Myrtle Bayne was born in 1917 'at Noone Street, Clifton Hill, where we lived until I was five. Then we went to Cromwell Street to live. I married, then went to a flat to live for about eight months then I came up to this house in Clifton Hill and I've been here for 34 years.'

Other residents include one who was born in 1901 and came to Collingwood as a baby and has lived here all his life except for six years in the 1920s; and his wife who came to Melbourne from the country at the age of 19. Another resident was born in Geelong, came to Melbourne to live, married and moved to Clifton Hill over 50 years ago. Another was born in 1919 and has lived in Collingwood all her life.



## Better Cooking Comes From the Kitchen Fitted with One of These.

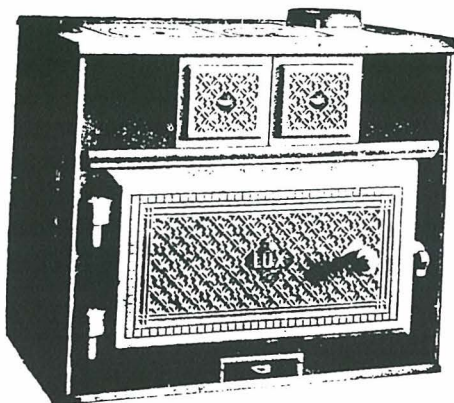


14812.—The Improved New Sunbeam Stove, fall door, with improved fall fire door the full length of stove, or double door if preferred. No. 1 burns 20in. wood; 24in. wide, 13in. deep, 27in. high; size of oven, 17in. wide, 14in. deep, 11in. high. Price, £5/7/6.

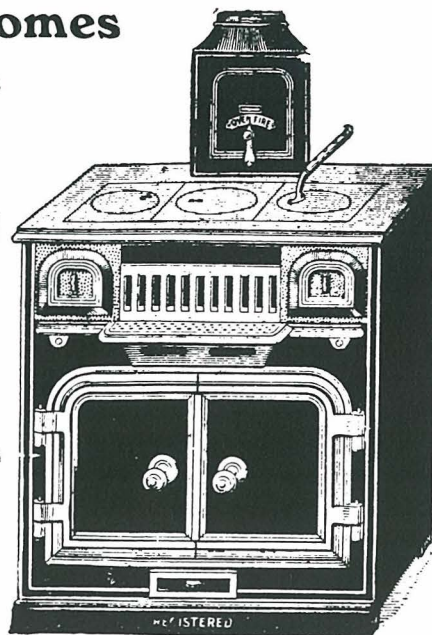
### COKE GRATES. (Not Illustrated.)

- 14805.—Basket, no Trevets; 14in., 7/3; 16in., 8/-; With Trevets; 14in., 8/-; 16in., 8/9.  
14806.—I.X.L., no Trevets; 14in., 6/6; 16in., 7/3. With Trevets; 14in., 7/3; 16in., 8/-.  
14807.—Gothic, 14in., 20/-; 16in., 22/6; 18in., 25/-.  
14808.—Company, 14in., 6/6; 16in., 7/3; 18in., 8/9.  
14809.—Skeleton—12in., 4/-; 14in., 4/6; 16in., 4/9; 18in., 6/6.

**T**HE number of users who recommend others to Buy these Stoves creates within us a confidence that thorough satisfaction must be secured.

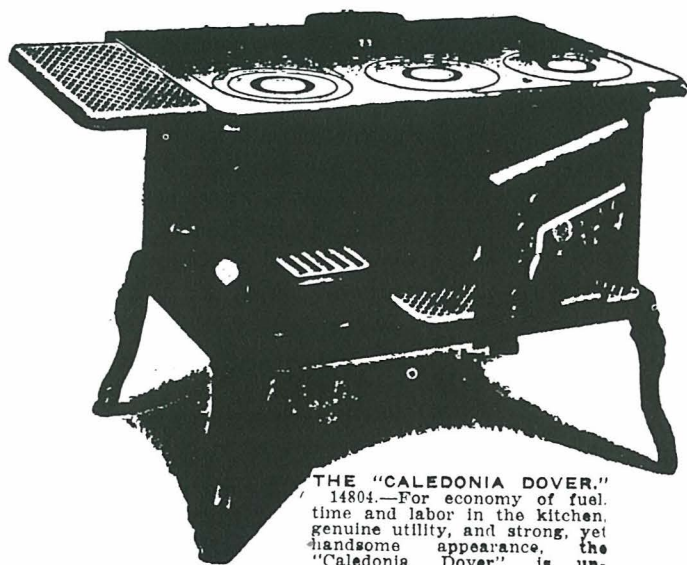


14803.—The Lux, a modern stove, wholly of cast iron, economical in fuel, convertible wood or coal and large oven. 24in., £4/19/6; 30in., £7/12/8; 36in., £8/17/4; 42in., £11/10/8.



### THE NEW SUNBEAM STOVES.

- 14800.—No. 1 burns 20in. wood; 24in. wide, 18in. deep, 27in. high; size of oven, 17in. wide, 14in. deep, 11in. high. £5/5/-.  
14801.—No. 2 burns 24in. wood; 30in. wide, 18in. deep, 27in. high; size of oven, 23in. wide, 14in. deep, 13in. high. £5/17/6.  
14802.—No. 3 burns 28in. wood; 36in. wide, 30in. deep, 30in. high; size of oven, 23in. wide, 16in. deep, 15in. high. £7/10/-.  
Gratings for New Sunbeam Stoves—1 and 2, 5/6; 3, 7/6.  
Ashpans for New Sunbeam Stoves—1 and 2, 7/6; 3, 8/6.  
Squares, 4"-; Cups, side, 1/9; 2"-; Centre, 2/3; 2/6; Dampers, 2/6; 3"-; Indicators, 2/-; Cup Lifters, 9d.; Rakes, 1/3.  
The illustrations above and below show the two styles that are available in Sunbeam Stoves.



### THE "CALEDONIA DOVER."

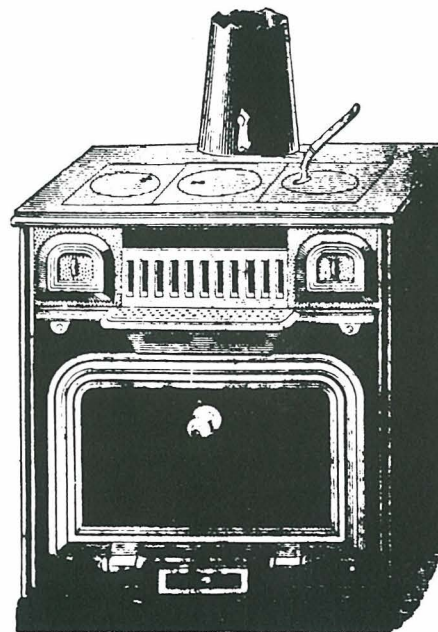
- 14804.—For economy of fuel, time and labor in the kitchen, genuine utility, and strong, yet handsome appearance, the "Caledonia Dover" is undoubtedly the "Best in the Market." No. 6, £6/12/-; No. 7, £8; No. 8, £9/7/6.

Have  
One  
Erected  
In Your  
Kitchen  
Now.

### "DREDNOT" STOVES.

(Not Illustrated.)

- One fire Stove at side, and built for wood or coal, with plate warmer.  
14810.—24in., with plate warmer, £6/7/6.  
14811.—30in., with plate warmer, £7/10/-.  
Size of oven—0, 13 x 13 x 13in.; 2, 16 x 13 x 13in.





## Family and home

Except for a few areas, Collingwood, from its early days, attracted families in search of low rents, labourers' families, the unemployed, widows and deserted wives. The *Collingwood Observer* in 1875 stated:

**There are some two thousand two or three roomed wooden shanties, in all stages of decay, in which are immured families large enough for houses twice the size . . . With neither comfort, nor convenience, nor quietness at home, the growing lads and girls naturally seek enjoyment elsewhere, and there is a wretched future for the young people thus driven to the streets for recreation.** There were also 'better off folk', but they tended to move away from the crowded housing of the Collingwood Flat.

Collingwood has continued over the years to provide cheap accommodation for poorer families. Some residents remember clearly the restrictions lack of money and poor housing had on family life, while others recall the pleasures of simple family entertainments and local neighbourliness.

The poverty of many of Collingwood's families was highlighted by a resident from a professional family who grew up in Collingwood in the 1920s and 1930s:

**In those days you had the maid. Carrie lived in, very much so. Carrie was one of the family. Carrie's mother used to come and wash and iron and Carrie used to take me everywhere and I often went to her home with her when she wanted to see her mother, in Cromwell Street. Carrie's mother had been widowed. Her husband had died of TB and left her to care for a large family of children. The youngest was a little bit older than myself. There were two grown sons who were married and away but she had eight others and she had to support those children by going and doing for people. I don't know how she existed really, and she wouldn't have done so but for the tremendous help given by the Methodist Mission. They were very involved with the Methodist Mission and I remember going to a Sunday School concert when one of them was**

**performing and somehow or other all those little girls had their white dresses. You'd wonder how they afforded those too. One by one the girls went into the factories — the shoe factories.**

**Carrie's house was incredible. It was a single fronted house with about a 14 foot frontage. A little strip verandah and a door on the right leading into a passage which ran into a kitchen which was an earth floor with a one-fire stove, and then in the yard there was the old wash-house that had tubs in it and that was also the bathing area. Off the passage there would have been perhaps three doors and they were bedrooms.**

**You can imagine how they would have been crowded with the size of family I mentioned, and that was home. There must have been thousands of families who lived in that sort of set up.**

**Within the family group we didn't have very much pleasure that I can recall. I had two brothers, no sisters. We used to visit some relatives occasionally. Go for a picnic down to the beach once in a while. That was the only outing we had in the family line.**

**My father was a prolific gambler and he took money into Wren's tote that should have gone in to our home, and we had to pay the consequences. There wasn't enough money to carry on a proper home life. We weren't the only family by a long chalk. There were many other families in the Collingwood area that suffered the same way as we did. Some worse than we did.**

**Family life in those days was closer than family life now. There was no television and all the family would come home at night. If you were married, you'd bring your husband home and your children home and you'd have a game of cards around the fire or just sit and talk.**

**We had a family day every two months. My mother and her sisters and all their children. You'd have tea and dinner, and perhaps all go down to the park, or you'd pack your lunch and take the train down to St Kilda or one of those places. You'd have it on the lawn at St Kilda.**

**Summer nights down in Collingwood**

**everybody sat on their front verandahs to cool off. Children played till late in the streets and people generally were very neighbourly, stopping to have a chat as they walked up to the corner shop.**

**In Collingwood and Abbotsford it was an easy matter to shift house. There were vacant houses to rent, ready and available around the streets with a 'For Rent' sign stuck on the front window. We were always shifting. We lived in dozens of houses in Collingwood and Abbotsford, even three in the same street, but my mother was a great mover.**

**Household chores many of our residents remember include doing the laundry — in a copper or a kerosene tin — washing dishes with no running water, let alone hot water, in the kitchen, and scrubbing wooden floors.**

**In the house we used to have a wash-up dish, no sinks then, and a tray to put your dishes on. You had water into the wash-house, you never had it in your kitchen. You had to go outside to fill up your kettles and that, then come inside.**

**Wash day was pretty hard — used to have the old scrubbing board in those days. No soap powders. You had to light up the copper and boil up. We had a dairy and every thing had to be clean. You'd just have to boil your water in those days. We used to have to wash all the dishes and milk containers in the coppers too. They used to milk 40 cows in the morning and night.**

**You know in those days there was a lot of places didn't have a copper. They used to have a kerosene tin out in the yard. Some of them did have wringers or mangles. A lot of people used to mangle their clothes after they were dry. Instead of ironing they'd mangle all their sheets and things like that, but you had to iron all your other clothing with a flat iron or a box iron. You push ashes in a box iron from the fire — cinders — and heat your iron up with that. You heated the flat iron on a fuel fire. For your lighting you used lamps, kerosene lamps and candles. That's all there was in those days and then**



the gas came. They had gas meters — a penny in the slot. You used to always have in your kitchen a mound of pennies. Then it went to 3d. When the electric light came in my mother wouldn't touch it. She was frightened of it.

For a bath you'd have to heat the water in the copper and carry it in and put it in your bath, if the copper wasn't in where your bath was. More or less the bathroom and the wash-house was all in one in those days. There were tin baths in those days, not enamelled baths like they've got today. People had a bath once a week in those days, usually on a Saturday.

We had kerosene lamps and wood burning fires, and a one-fire stove too. We didn't have water in the kitchen. We had it in the bathroom which adjoined the kitchen. The chores the children shared were washing the dishes, doing the messages and polishing the floors. The boys had to chop wood, that was something the girls didn't have to do. We used to buy bars of 'Witch' soap which was cut up and put into the copper of water with the clothes and boiled. The coppers had fires of wood

burnt underneath.

The clothes-line was one long line or rope with a clothes prop in the centre to hold it high to catch the wind. A clothes prop was a long thin tree with a natural fork at the top. They were bought at the wood yard. (Miss Hocking)

Mrs Willis, her sister Mrs Mayes and friend Miss Lord discussed the household chores of their childhood and some of the commodities the area provided free of charge:

There were no carpets then. My grandmother used to open potato bags and wash them and put a nail in each corner, and you could eat off her floors. She had white boards and you could eat off them.

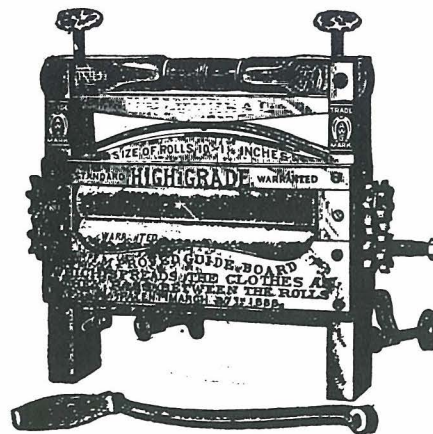
'Katie and I used to scrub the floors for sixpence a week.'

'My mother never used to have carpet. She had bare boards and she used to scrub them every week.'

'Sandsoap and scrubbing brushes were what we used to scrub the table and the floors. Mum had a table that was white as snow.'

'The wooden chairs all went out in the yard and were scrubbed every Saturday.'

'Had to do the laundry in the old



THE "ACME" HIGH-GRADE WRINGER.  
15613.—Treble Steel and Wood Springs, improved guide board; 12 x 12, best white rubber rollers, 41/6; 12 x 12, with steel ball bearings, 45/6; 14 x 12, best white rubber rollers, 47/6. British made, similar to above.

copper and the washboard.'

'And the old wringer to wring them through.'

'And many a time we burnt leather in the copper — made a wonderful copper. We used to get it from the boot factory. Sometimes they'd sell it for 6d a bag and sometimes they'd give it to us. A bag full of leather. After we'd done our work we used to get a penny or 3d and we could spend that.'

'We used to get silver sticks for a ha'penny and coltsfoot sticks, two for a ha'penny. I remember it as if it was yesterday.'

'There used to be a big flour mill down there and as the trucks were



THE MITCHELL FAMILY 1914



taking the wheat along from the railway bridge to the river they used to be dropping any amount of wheat about and I used to be down there picking it up for our chooks.' 'We used to feed our chooks for nothing, yes it was good old days.' 'There used to be dozens and dozens of goats all round Clifton Hill.' 'Goats used to run down this street (Roseneath Street) and people would take their vessels out and they used to milk them while they were in the street.'



14007.—New Design Sea Grass Car, well upholstered, with folding hood, well sprung, 4 rubber-tired wheels; any choice of colors, green, blue, brown, or maroon. 16/7/6.

'In the winter we used to burn coke in the dining or lounge room in a grate. When we wanted coke I would pull my trolley up to the gasworks, take a chaff bag with coke, all for the price of a shilling. The coke made a lovely heat once you got it going.'

'We had our firewood delivered. You could buy a hundredweight or a half hundredweight. But a lot of the time we used to go down to the park and hunt for bark for the fires. Some of us used to get leather. We used to go up to the leather factory and get pieces and we always used to call that "Collingwood coke".'

'Everybody burned scrap boot leather in their washing coppers — "Collingwood coke" they called it.'

Tom Mayberry remembers a different aspect of local life:

There was nothing worse than the mosquitoes that were around here in those days. We used to go all the way to Thornbury and gather dried cow manure. We'd have to light a cow manure fire at the front door and a cow manure fire at the back door and let the breeze take the fumes through. It was worse than the mosquitoes



really but the smell of the cow manure did keep them away.

Many Collingwood babies were born in the home during the 1920s and 1930s:

When I was young there was a Nurse Lovell and she was a visiting midwife and she always wore grey — a grey coat with a cape and a pillbox hat with tails down the back. You'd go round and tell her it was time and she'd come round. She was a trained sister and she was very nice.

Babies were mostly born at home with midwives in attendance. The Royal District Nursing Service had a delivery service, and so did the Royal Women's. But I think the majority would have been born at home with the midwives because the doctors were a luxury. The midwives I remember used to charge a sort of overall lying-in fee of so many pounds. Imagine the risk in some of those houses!

Serious diseases were common. The daughter of a professional family recalls:

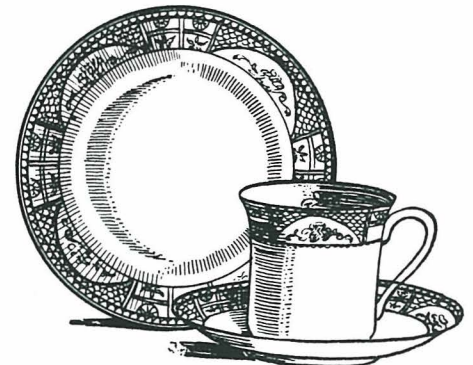
Pneumonia was a very dreaded disease in our household because our father's family was 'chesty' and some of his aunts had died off like flies with TB so there was always great concern if we had colds. My brother



SOAP SAVERS.  
15010—Soap Savers, round pattern, 10d. each; square pattern, 1/2 each.

actually did have pneumonia, 'a spot on the lung'.

That was when my father bought the car and 'aired' him weekly at Eltham. I don't think we were pollution conscious then but we went to Eltham for the fresh air, which I suppose meant we were breathing non-fresh air the other days of the week.



14203.—Radford's Superior Quality English China Tea Set; wide terra cotta and green lattice band, gold edges; 40 pieces. 15/5/-.



14206.—English China Tea Set, the latest Oriental design; artistic flower spray, bridge, pagoda and butterfly; 21 pieces, 72/6. 40 pieces, 15/5/-.

The chimneys were smoking like billio. All the factories had chimneys. Collingwood was dominated by smoking chimneys like you see in films of the English midlands. And of course there were diseases for which you were offered no protection. All that was offered when I was growing up was the smallpox vaccination and you didn't even have to have that. You were exposed to diphtheria, which was a real killer, scarlet fever, which was quite serious, TB and sores which were associated with dirt. So mothers like mine tended to be absolutely fanatical about cleanliness for fear that we would get a disease that might be fatal.



## School and Play

With the growth of Collingwood's population in the 1850s a number of small schools were established in the area to cater for the children of the new settlers. Some were set up by church groups, others by the Education Department. Many schools survived for only a few years, some were absorbed into newer and better equipped schools, others simply closed down. Some of our current schools were established around this time; for example, St Joseph's Catholic School was established in 1860. However, most of Collingwood's schools opened after the passing of the Education Act of 1872 which provided for free, compulsory and secular education. The Gold St school opened in 1874, Lithgow St and Cambridge St in 1877, Cromwell St in 1886, Victoria Park in 1889 and Spensley St in 1891. The Collingwood School of Domestic Economy which was established in 1915, was renamed Collingwood High School in 1968 and subsequently has become the Collingwood Education Centre. Collingwood Technical School opened in 1912 in the old municipal

offices in Johnston St.

The school grounds in Collingwood always seemed to be particularly crowded. There was a tremendous amount of poverty then and the children were very often very shabby. They must have been terribly terribly cold sometimes, because in the depths of winter they'd be wearing silk dresses — artificial silk — and no shoes and they were dirty.

At Cromwell St there was plenty of discipline. There were lessons and lessons and lessons. Not very much free time. On Friday afternoon we had sport. As soon as we did anything wrong we'd get a rap over the knuckles with a ruler.

I can always remember my teacher at the Cromwell St school. He had a stick about 15 foot long and he used to stand on this raised platform and once you lifted your head off your papers you were doing your work on, you'd get a clout across the head with this big stick he used. Another habit of his was he used to roll up the strap — you used to get the strap in those

days — and if he saw you wandering about at all with your head he'd throw the strap at you and cause a bit of pain — quite a lot. Another thing they used to give you was 16 spelling every morning. We had to learn it overnight and for every one you got wrong you got a strap across the hand, and with me not being the brightest I had to get more straps than I ever got answers.

We had one teacher — she was like a blinking man and she didn't mince matters. Bang'd go the strap or the cane. Girls and all.

We were always sitting two at a desk except when we got into the seventh and eighth when we used to sit on one long desk with a lot of children, five or six in a row. In the low grades we used to write on slate but then we used pen and ink with steel nibs. We dipped the pens into inkwells on our desks. One child always had to fill up the inkwells before school or after school. Mostly things were written down on the blackboard. You learned off blackboards. You copied things off the board or you learned by repetition.



GRADE 6, CLIFTON HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL, 1907



We always used to win the marching from other schools. We used to train round the Collingwood Football ground a couple of times a week before the competitions. That was for the school sports. I liked school at Victoria Park. We had very good teachers. I never missed a day. I only went to Merit.

I went to the Gold St school as a little girl. And they had a great big ground, a whopper, and as little girls



No 18308—The "ONOTO" FOUNTAIN PEN, 12/6. Do., Self Filling, 1/

of Cromwell St during the Depression years, Herbert Penrose, organised his staff, local authorities and churches to help him provide 150 children with a daily meal, free boots for 800, warm undergarments and tons of potatoes and vegetables. He founded the still

Depression years they used to go and get soup at Foy and Gibsons and bring it down for the children whose fathers were not working and couldn't afford dinner. The children used to have a cup of soup at school. Two of the big boys would go and get the pots. I can always remember when it was a wet day and the headmaster came and told all those that had got boots on to take them off and carry them home so as not to get



GRADE 2B, ABBOTSFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL, c.1900

we loved swinging round showing our undies.

Collingwood residents were badly hit by the Depression with as much as half the workforce unemployed, and the schools played a big part in tiding families over this period. The principal

existent State Schools Relief Organisation and encouraged other schools to give support to the new Organisation.

I always went home for lunch like most other children. I never ever took lunch to school. But during the

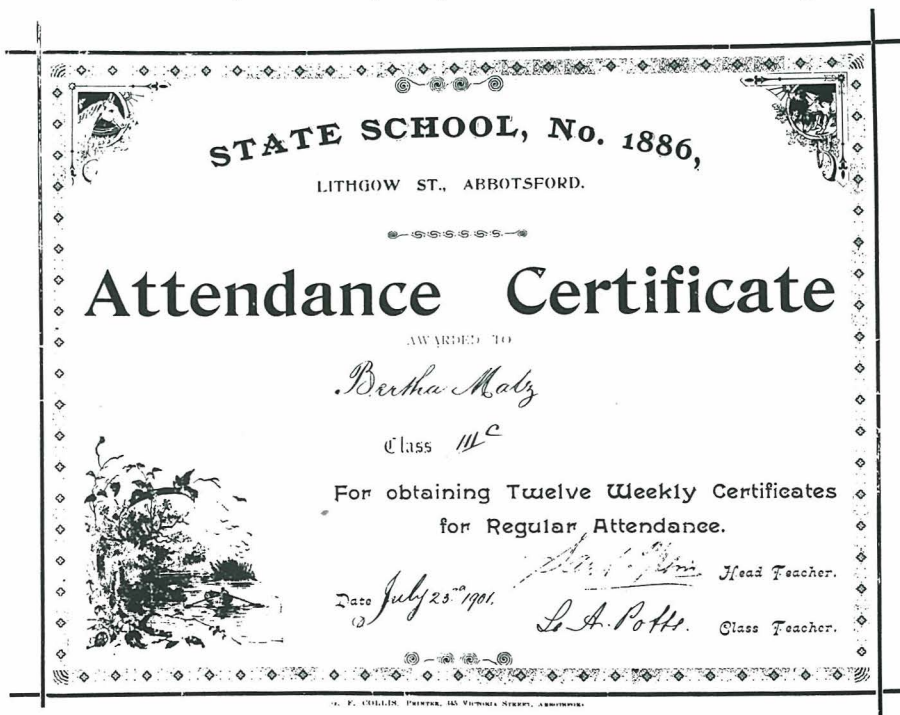


your shoes wet. You wanted them to wear and you didn't have another pair, those that had shoes.

The young people of today have no idea what it was like during the Depression. The principal of Spensley Street, Mr Hobbs, was very good. He had an orchard — he used to live out Mitcham way, and he used to send in cases of windfalls for the children. Mr Hobbs used to go and buy vegetables and the Mothers Club would distribute them. And another thing we would do was to provide hot cocoa in winter. The local dairyman was a good supporter of the school and before the grant came from the government, he used to supply us with the milk to make the hot cocoa for the kids.

Out of school the children amused themselves playing in the streets:

When you look at the games played and the materials used to me it shows how enterprising the children were to make the most of the little they had.





As kids we used to play hockey and tops. We used to colour our tops. We played marbles with the boys and we played rounders. You could play all those games in the street because there wasn't any traffic.

We played skipping and tops. They were practically our only toys but we thought a lot of them. As much as children of today who get expensive presents. One popular game was diablo. You had two sticks joined together by a string. You moved them up and down and you heaved them high in the air or as high as you could. Sometimes you tried to do it a lot of times without dropping your diablo.

We used to play oranges and lemons. When the cherries were in season we used to play toodle-um-buck. The games with cherry stones taught you to gamble. You'd have the cherry bobs and the boys would sit on the footpath. You had to bowl the cherries in. If you got it in the hole you got so many back.

The stop-cocks for the water were set into the footpath and had a cast-iron lid which lifted up and these were used to play one of the cherry bob games. The idea was to collect as many cherry bobs as you could get. These were carried round in empty tobacco or cigarette tins. The boy would crouch over the hole calling his odds, 'Two and your old girl back' or 'Three and your old girl back' depending how generous he was or

how many cherry bobs he had to back himself up with.

Others used to have a peep show, a shoe box with a scene stuck inside according to the imagination of the creator. The lid was stuck on and a hole was made in one end. A certain number of cherry bobs were required to have a look.

We used to go down to the tip. There used to be a lot of rats there and we used to amuse ourselves killing the rats and sliding down the inclines in the tip on bits of tin. Our tip was at the bottom of Gipps St near the Collins Bridge. It was right on the edge of the river and there was plenty of refuse there.

The refuse used to bring plenty of fish. Not big fish, just little minnows which were about two or three inches long. You could catch them with a bent pin with bread on it. The line would be a bit of string on a stick. There were eels down there too. We used to go down of a night time with just a ginger beer bottle with a bit of rag filled with kerosene which we used as a lamp. We couldn't afford hurricane lamps. Then we used to use a line with a bit of umbrella wire in it and a little bell tied to the top. We used to put half a dozen of these in each and when the eel'd hook itself it'd ring this little bell.

It was a most unruly job of trying to untangle it from all the other lines you had in. Eels seemed to have a great habit of wandering up and down between your other lines as you

were pulling them up.

Grace and Jim Hocking discuss their childhood games:

Cherry bobs were much the same as marbles. We used to play with them in a circle because we couldn't afford marbles. At school we used to put them under the seat so they'd crack when someone sat on them in class. We used to play 'King of the Castle' too. It was a chasing game. Another game we played was 'Tip Cat'. You had a small piece of sharpened wood and you'd hit it with a stick on the end. You had to see how far you would hit it. You'd hit it as far as you could and then you'd try and estimate how many jumps for the distance. Say I'd hit it from here to the back door and I'd say six and if you jumped it in six jumps I was out. You could play it in teams too. It was good for breaking windows!

We used to make stilts on jam tins and walk around with the string tied through. We used to make our own kites too. It wasn't as dangerous as now because we had the gas lights and there wasn't any wires between the poles.

In those days there was generally one vacant block of land in the street and mostly that was the gathering place for all the kids.

You played with whoever you went to school with.

We weren't allowed to go far on our own. You'd only go a street or two. I



PHYSICAL CULTURE CLASS, CLIFTON HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL, 1922



don't think we were allowed to go out at night till we were about 16.

We used to play knick-knock. You tied a string on the door knocker and ran. You would bang it with the string and people would come out looking for you and chase you. We put a tin of water on a post with a bit of string underneath it. We'd pull it and it would go all over them and you'd get another chase. Then we played drop a penny. We'd get behind a fence and drop a penny and they'd be looking for their penny out on the street and they'd think they dropped their money.

(Miss Tyrrell)

We used to play skipping games like 'Salt and Pepper' and 'All in together this cold Weather'. We used to play jacks and knuckles too. When we played cherry bobs we'd have all the horses names on a circle of cardboard. We'd spin the circle round. We'd call this 'Who's going on my toodle-um-buck'. We also played spinning a hoop. It was a round can which you threw on to a peg — like quoits. Bowling hoops was more of a boys' game.

The door knockers were heavy old cast iron things and made a terrible racket. Also lots of the front doors were straight onto the street not having a verandah, or if they did it was only about three feet wide so you could step straight in and knock and run.

A more elaborately organised way of

playing Knick-knock (which often took place on Sunday night) was to form up in rows and march along together, everybody had a number, the leader called out a number and whoever's number it was had to knock on the door while the others nicked off.

On Guy Fawkes night down in Collingwood the boys lit small fires in the gutter and set off their crackers from that. All the small fry picked up smouldering penny bangers and used them to set off their Tom Thumbs. There were sparklers, skyrockets, Catherine wheels, jumping jacks, throw downs and flower pots. The local dogs didn't like the crackers.

In school holidays the time was spent at home, playing in the streets. Girls sat on the edge of a doorstep or gutter, knitting or making 'Pig-tails' (with empty cotton reels, four tacks nailed on top with wool threaded around the tacks double. The bottom thread was lifted over the top thread and pulled down. Some of these grew very long). People didn't go away on holidays very much — no money.

Most Collingwood students left school aged 13 or 14.

The schools did not give you any opportunity, unless you were exceptional, to go beyond Merit (Year 8). The level most children left at was 'Qualie', which was the Qualifying Certificate which was two years beforehand. That was two years more education which people couldn't

afford. The Merit was the top of the school. Only very few families in Collingwood went beyond that. A few boys I knew were very bright, they went on to University High School. There weren't any local high schools then.

I was in Gold St. I was a good scholar. The headmaster did tell me that at last you know too much so it's time you left school. I left when I was 13.

I went through school with flying colours. I even got entered into the old Collingwood Technical School up in Johnston St. In those times it had an old bluestone police station at the front and a few new buildings at the back. I was always good with my hands. I'd always enjoy the carpentry sessions and the tinsmithing. I left school when I was 13.

You could leave school any time then. I think the day I turned 14 I said to my mother I wasn't going back any more. I hated school.

When I was 14 I went to school in the morning and my mother was going to have a new arrival and I went to help and I never went to school any more. I stayed home and helped my mother.

When I left school I stayed home with my mother for 12 months and then I went and I learnt neckwear. That's making all high collars and jabots and I worked for six months without any pay to learn a trade and then I got half a crown a week.



THE FIRST BIRTHDAY OF THE SPENSLEY ST MOTHERS CLUB 1928







## Work

Bernard Barrett in his book *The Inner Suburbs* describes in some detail the industrial development of Collingwood.

Until 1851 East Collingwood had been more or less rural, with only two factories (a coach-building and wheelwrights works and a glass factory). Early employment in Collingwood was found in constructing houses (the area was outside the force of building regulations), hotels, shops and streets. From the 1850s Collingwood specialised in noxious industries (including slaughter yards, tanneries, woolworks, soap and candle works, breweries, brickworks and a night-soil trade), all of which contributed to the pollution of the environment and, in particular, of the Yarra River. Factory development grew in the 1860s and Collingwood became the major centre for footwear manufacture in Victoria. By the 1880s it was also becoming important in textiles, including hat factories. In 1871 Collingwood had 36 factories (excluding breweries and brickworks), in 1893, 120 (and in 1970, about 700). The early factories were small concerns, but the era 1880 to 1911 saw the advent of the large factories, a number of which can still be seen today. Most of Collingwood's population worked in the local factories.

Collingwood was regarded as the 'capital' of the boot trade and Alan Marshall, who was an accountant in a boot factory, describes the life in his novel *How Beautiful Are Thy Feet*:

The machine room is an oven . . . the iron roof is just above your head . . . and the girls with curved backs sitting in rows on old stools . . . the long benches and the black machines like heathen idols hungry for sacrifice . . . and girls that lay their hands upon them . . . that lay their small hands, their large hands, upon them . . . or their fat hands, cheap ringed . . . or hands that tremble . . . or old hands that should be resting on laps . . . or hands that weep . . . or hands, confident, untiring . . . and fingers that dart and manipulate . . . that control . . . that get covered with the blackness of box leather . . . that

dip between breasts for handkerchiefs whereon to wipe the sweat that beads the forehead.

I wasn't brought up to work and I was very spoilt. But I turned around fell in love and left home against my parent's wishes and got married. I'd have been about 19 years old then. I had two children some time after I was married, but my husband was very delicate. He had T.B., and he died when the little boy was two and the little girl could just walk. Well, I had to settle down then to work. I wouldn't put them with the state, and I wouldn't appeal to my people. I had nothing whatever, because they'd given me a good education, music and singing, but I started out on my own and I found life very hard and it was hard to find a position. I finally answered an ad. in the paper for the boot trade in Collingwood; it was a place called Trueform. I would have been 26 at the time. I didn't know much about it but I picked it up very quickly and two years later they made me a forelady. Anyhow I worked there for 14 years and I got fed up with it. It was a big strain on me being over girls that I'd worked with.

Alan Marshall, the novelist, was an accountant there and he drove me home one night. I was very tired, I was working late and I said to him, 'I'm just sick of this place. I'll give it up and write a book on it.' He said, 'Could you write a book?' and I replied 'I could write a book on this place'. He said, 'Alright, suppose we both write a book. I'll help you'. Well I didn't write it, but he did. It was his first book, called *How Beautiful Are Thy Feet*, and that was Depression time. In that book he gave a fair bit of the story of my life. I told him everything that happened in the factory, it's all in this book. He asked me my opinion of a factory girl and I said I'll write it out and give it to you and I wrote it in a poem. Twenty years later he sends me this book. It was the first — he told people it was me that started him as a novelist. The firm went insolvent and of course I left, then I went to another firm. I spent 36 years in only two places.

The conditions were dreadful. There

was nothing hygienic whatever in one place I was in. When the bell went they all washed in a dirty little dish. I was forewoman of the socking room — the socking room is a room where they clean the shoes and get them ready for the boxing to go out. Well you had to please the boss, you had to please the customers, and you had to please the girls — it was a very hard life. There was no morning tea, no afternoon tea, and there was no heating system whatever. The place we were in was practically a tin shed and you could see the grass growing underneath and into the room. That was at Rampling & Hall's. In winter time the girls used to wrap brown paper round their legs and tie it with string to keep the cold out. No sick pay or holiday pay or anything like that when I was there. The hours were from about 7.30 to 5.20 and you didn't get any smokos either, and if a girl went to the toilet and she was too long there the boss'd send you after her. They were all girls in this room. The men were out in the making room. They had the same conditions.

My wages were £2.9.0 a week, and I had to keep two children on that. When I left there it was £18.0.0 a week.

I boarded and the woman was very good to my little boy and the Reverend Mother down at the Star of the Sea Convent took the little girl. She boarded there from when she was five to when she was 15, but I had to keep the little boy myself. I used to manage to put half a crown a week away in the bank and I never got into debt and I never asked for charity.

Depression time was the worst — in the first place I was in, you advertised for a girl and there'd be thirty or forty turn up at 7 o'clock in the morning at the door, pleading for a job. You'd have to sneak in the back door so they wouldn't see you. It was long after I left before any improvements started in the boot trade. I suppose it'd be about five or six years after I left.

They did a little while I was there because the boss caught me one very cold morning making a cup of tea and when I saw him coming I put a box over it but he came in and caught me. And I said, 'These girls are cold, if



they had a cup of tea to warm them up I'd get more work out of them.' He let me do it and from then on things started to improve a bit. But the inspectors came, they'd just walk in and say 'Are you girls alright, anybody sick?', then they'd walk out with a pair of shoes under their arms. The 'first aid' man was a packer in one place I was in. He'd leave off the packing with dirty hands and he'd pick up the first bottle that'd come to him. He poisoned my leg once through that. I scratched it on a rack with a rusty nail sticking out of it and when I went to him it was bleeding and the first bottle he got out was Friar's Balsam and he put iodine on me and I was allergic to it and I got a poisoned leg out of it. But I worked with it like that. You couldn't knock off in those days because you were sick.

When I retired I went for a position as an inspectoress for the boot trade. I thought if I can get that job I can make conditions better for the girls. They took my name and address and my good references and after the interview coming down in the lift a man said to me 'You'll never get that job because you know too much'.  
(Mrs Don)

I went up to 5th grade then I went over to Vere St Domestic school till I was 14 then I left and went to work. I went to work at the white work for a little while, sewing. I wasn't very good at that, then I went to the boots. The pay wasn't much. I think it was about half a crown a week. We never got any Christmas holidays like you do now. I suppose we got Christmas Day and Boxing Day and New Year's Day, but we never got any weeks like they do now. There was no cover if you were sick, no sick pay. We used to have a terrible lot of strikes. I worked at Whybrows in the end and they used to go out on strike and we never used to get any money. My husband was a wicker worker before I knew him. He served an apprenticeship making chairs and piano stools and all that but then that went out of fashion. When that folded up, he went to Brooks Lemnos down Richmond way. He used to make syrup for the tinned fruits. He used to work overtime for about three months every year on the cannery.



THE STAFF OF PAYNE'S BOOT FACTORY WHERE MR TOWERS WORKED BEFORE THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Then there was a job advertised in Sydney and he answered the ad. and he got the job and we all shifted over to Sydney, for a three months trial. I took the little girl and his mother took the boy — I only had two at the time. It was Douglas's flour place over in Sydney, then he left there and worked for a Pole in Marrickville and he was on preserving. Then my mother was having her golden wedding and she paid our fare back. While we were back my husband got a job at Whybrow's boot factory and stayed there for thirty-five years.  
(Mrs Jell)

There was only one union in the boot trade, but many unions cropped up for the other trades around. Some had scanty membership but others had a few more members. They battled for better wages, better conditions — the same as they're still battling for. There wasn't any strike in my time in the trade and I was in the boot trade for 46 years. They did have one strike

previous to when I joined the trade, but they came off second best and they never went on strike again.  
(John)

Firstly I went to Mattier Bros up in North Richmond then I went to Whybrow Shoes then I went to another shoe place in Stanley St Collingwood — can't remember the name — but I always walked past a millinery place to come home, so I decided I'd like to do millinery. Then we got a letter from Collingwood Domestic asking if I'd like to do apprentice-millinery which I did. I started off at millinery at 7/2 a week. I used to give my mother 6/- a week board and have 1/2 for myself and this used to take me to the pictures and buy myself some lollies. It was 7d to go into the pictures and 6d for humbugs and they were lovely then. You really had to work then even though you only got your 7/2 a week. They were quite good conditions. There wasn't any blaring music like





they have in factories these days. We used to start at 7.30 and finish at 5.30. Half an hour for lunch and that's how we used to work for 7/2 a week. (Mrs Bayne)

My first occupation was working in Tuckfields canned food factory putting the rubber bands in the lids to seal the cans. That was next door to where I used to live in Cromwell St, Collingwood. They used to can pears. That's all they did at that time, and we used to carve up the pears and peel them and I got the job of putting the lids on. Then I went to Frieze Bros clothing factory. I had a job sewing on the labels and cutting off the cottons and folding up the clothes. I think I got 15/- when I went there to work. After that I went to Diecasters. Diecasters was a metal factory. I used to work on windscreen wipers for cars. There was no morning and afternoon teas. They were not heard of in those days. After I had been there a couple of years, I remember they gave us a

Christmas present. They gave us Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day as paid, but they were the only holidays you got. If you wanted a holiday you used to have to ask to see if they'd give you time off. There was no such thing as annual holidays. (Miss Hocking)

When I left school I went into the boot trade for half a crown a week. I remember that. 48 hours a week, and I worked Saturday morning. I worked for J.C. Hansens at the corner of Hoddle St and Alexander Parade. You had to work. You had to put your head down and go. I was at the tables cutting cottons off and things like that to start with. Then I went to the tobacco factory, the Australian-British tobacco company in Swanston St. First I was in the dining room and then I went into the factory into what they called the stemmery. That was where you pulled the leaf off the stem. You'd get tobacco leaf and you had to strip it. Take the leaf off and

put the stem in one bag and the leaf in a basket. And they used to take that down. We got paid by the stems. It was on piece work. We got good pay there. We got half our lodge paid and they had an insurance and housing system for their employees and they paid part of our rent. A very good firm. We used to get shares every year when you were there so long, two years I think. And we could bank there. You know. Make out a statement and have say so much taken out of your money each week and they'd swap that over and you only had to take your bank book over to the bank and get it put in the bank. (Mrs Cain)

I left school when I was 13 and went straight to work. I worked in a little place in Little Napoleon St making pillow cases and petticoats and of course, like any girl, they didn't give you too much money. I earned about 7/- a week; five bob for board and 2/- for yourself. In fact I saved them up and often bought a bit of material. I was fond of sewing and I'd get a new dress for about 6/-. It was near enough to walk to work. I forget how I got out of that but I must have got out of it somehow. I also worked at Mattier Bros in Richmond doing sewing. I became a machinist. We used to get paid by what we'd done, piece work. I had to teach an apprentice and though you're supposed to give your apprentice so much, I used to give a little bit more because she had no father. You know, we're friends to this day. My sisters were in sewing too. (Mrs Pizer)

I worked at Foy & Gibsons in Smith St at the men's tailoring and I got 5/- a week, and I used to walk from Clifton Hill to Oxford St to Foy's and home again at night. I wasn't apprenticed but I learnt my trade thoroughly. It was very nice at work. We had a very nice forelady. It was homely; they weren't on your back all the time. No stopwatch on you, but you learnt your trade and the staff were all very nice. We did everything from the time the material came in till it went out all pressed. Cutters, pressers, machinists. I was on the orders. You know when you





From

**J. COOMBS**

General Ironmonger, Coppersmith, etc.,

Bath, Tank, and Fire Shovel Maker,

**197 HODDLE STREET, COLLINGWOOD.**

(Opposite New Town Hall)

To

Aug 8 1900

To whom it may concern

This is to certify that William Johnston was in my employ a period of 12 months & I found him a honest straightforward & steady lad hoping to hear of his advancement in the future

J Coombs



get measured for a suit and order it and you had to do your own machining for that. They did have a factory part, but the girls had to do the whole lot. There was no just doing sleeves or that.

We had one of the best tailors. If you cut anything by mistake or put a hole in it he would mend it and you wouldn't know. We'd get roared out for that and be more careful with the scissors. But they were all very nice and if you were sick you were sent up to the nurse or sent home. Foy's had a good set up. They were a very good firm to work for. We used to get holidays — a fortnight at Christmas and public holidays. (Mrs Haynes)

I left school when I was 13. We were living in Langridge St in a terrace of about six houses and a carpenter

came along to build a picket fence about ninety feet long across the back of the houses. I was standing watching him digging the post holes one day and he said would I like a job, so he gave me a job at 12/- a week and I had to cut the points on these pickets and cut them off at 6ft 6in long. There was about 3,000 of them, because they were only 3in wide. When he came to a corner post which had to go down a lot deeper, we struck a big lump of bluestone so he asked me to go round to the hardware shop near the station and get some gelignite. In those days you didn't have to have a ticket to get gelignite. We drilled holes into this big bluestone boulder and put in a couple of sticks. Unfortunately we forgot to put a cover over the top of the hole and when they went off the bluestone

sprayed up and went all over the roofs on the opposite side of the street and there was a terrible commotion. It took us about two months to do the fence and he wanted me to stop on but just doing that type of work didn't interest me. I thought I'd like to be a motor mechanic.

In those days there were the old Whippets and Rugbys and Rovers. So I applied for a job at a motor mechanic shop in Richmond, but all I did there was punch holes in 1/8in steel sheets so that they could be rivetted to make soap vats. I never saw any motors there at all.

In about 1919 I was apprenticed as a shopfitter. Being a shopfitter you learned how to cut glass and do a bit of electrical and plumbing work. I went to Gill's in 1923 till I left in 1952. (Mr Mayberry)

BUILDERS, c.1890





## Work and the Depression

1929 saw the beginning of a severe financial crisis in Australia as export prices fell and English capital was withdrawn. Unemployment soared and by 1932-33 nearly one-third of breadwinners in Australia were out of work. The result was mass poverty. For those who retained their jobs there was short time employment or lower wages. For the unemployed there were handouts of money, clothes, fuel or food and, for some, work on government relief projects. But help was only for those who could satisfy the authorities that they were destitute.

We were that poor I didn't know where the next shilling was coming from. I was that hard up I walked into town and walked home. I had 3d. — that's how hard up I was. It was terrible. I've seen my son cry — he couldn't get a job. No money. You couldn't get money in those days.

The Depression — that's when I first learned to drink my tea without milk. My husband lost his job and he was very upset about it. He had to do something with less experience and it hurt his pride when he had to sing out 'Bottle-o'.

I was out of work for 18 months and my husband was out for two years. It was terrible. You'd go to the Council and they'd give you coupons for groceries and different things. There was no work. You walked everywhere. You couldn't afford a tram ride. A lot of people suffered, especially people with young children, and especially if the father drank because they always got the money for beer. You could see a lot of that down Collingwood.

Many people remembered the handouts. Mrs Bayne was a school girl at the time:

During the Depression we used to have to go down to the mission (Melbourne City Mission, Sydney St Collingwood) and get a card and we used to have to take it up to the butcher's and he'd give us meat. The mission used to get donations of clothes and stuff for the people and we used to get our clothes over there.

We never knew what it was to wear shoes to school. We used to have to wear boots and if they hurt you or not you wore those boots to school because there was nothing else. What I can remember of it was pretty grim. Dad was out of work all the time. He

was a bootmaker and they were the first to be out of work then.

We were just married then. You got a handout. My husband was out of work for 14 months. We got 2/- worth of meat a week — you didn't get



MRS BAYNE AND HER SISTER



# RATHER THAN BE IDLE, unemployed bootmakers in Melbourne have been mending school children's boots and shoes gratis, with leather supplied by the State Relief Committee.

much. Lucky we didn't have any children. There were plenty of people worse than us that had children. My husband used to go round looking for work and I remember he used to have to form a queue down here in Johnson St at the baker's to get bread, and it was rotten bread too. It was pretty hard times.

However, there were plenty of people that lined up for things that they shouldn't have got. Especially kiddies' shoes and stuff and they sold them for a few bob. There's always people like that.

During the Depression years the Council was pretty good. There was always plenty of wood there for you, and vegetables. They were never hard on you for the rates.

We used to get up of a morning and go round looking for empty beer bottles. If we found two or three empty bottles we'd get a ha'penny for them. You'd think it was quids.

My husband worked in the boot trade then he got two days work and

perhaps the next week they'd be off, then they'd get stood down altogether for so long. I was better off. I got a job over in the Dunlop factory where they used to make those big heavy leechers, you know, the water boots. I was there about 6 months I think and they started putting them off. Last on had to go first, which is only natural.

I started work during the Depression years and I got my job at Diecasters. They wouldn't advertise for anyone because they'd have 300 looking for the job if they advertised a vacancy. A person that worked there told me there was a vacancy.

Some relief work was provided for the unemployed. This included projects around Yarra Bend and Studley Park.

The only work my father had was when he'd be sent away to work on the roads for the dole.

All my mates that didn't have a job got about 30/- a week to work over on the Boulevard, digging all that beautiful Boulevard that's there now.

Of course, there was no front-end loaders or tip trucks in those days. It was only just horse and dray and pick and shovel and all that was done manually right through, and it took quite a few years to build. Now it's turned out a terrific drive. (Mr Mayberry)

Those in work helped the others in various ways. A former Councillor's wife remembers:

My word I can remember the Depression. We were living in Clifton Hill and the young men used to come around with little bits of pins and papers, writing paper and envelopes, things like that. They came mostly on a Saturday and I've often given them a hot dinner. We'd be having a hot dinner and they'd be really hungry, the boys. But you couldn't buy from everybody. My husband went into the Council. The Depression was pretty bad then and he went round to people's houses and he said they went to bed in full marching orders and bags over them. Not a scrap of furniture — nothing.

I'd go round to all my neighbors and see what they could give me in the way of food and clothing and all that sort of thing, and to my own relations. One of the other Councillor's wives would ring me up to tell me how badly off the people were. Coming into her bakery, she would know, and we went around to the different people she gave us addresses to. It was pitiful to see. In the places there were rats running everywhere and the rain coming in everywhere. No, I don't want to remember the Depression.

In another relatively well off family:

My mother didn't get involved in committees or auxiliaries. She preferred to see people's needs and try and fill them. We had someone coming in on a daily basis and it was her family that Mum tried to help. They lived just over the road and my mother used to provide them with their weekend meat and groceries, and not only them. We were always having the clothes ripped off our backs to be given where there was need.

Identification No. A 67300 Government Labour Bureau No. SS

**Employment and Sustenance Registration Card (Not Transferable). 61**

Name PIZER Claude W D

Address 30 Stafford St. Aford

Occupation Labr

Married or Single M. W. R.

Baker Johnson 2/3

Butcher Willetts 3/-

Grocer Beck 6/3

Milkman

When you become ineligible to receive sustenance, but are still entitled to be registered for employment, you must immediately apply at the local sustenance office for re-registration for work only, and renew this card monthly. Should you obtain work return the card at once.

Signature of Applicant C. W. D. Pizer

Issued by COLLINGWOOD

Renew this Card on 2 JUN 1932

3 AUG

(See Back.)

11 115/3.32-3354





SMITH ST IN THE 1930s



## Shopping

Since the 1870s, Smith St has been Collingwood's commercial centre. It was written in the gaslight era: We are in Smith Street — a thoroughfare only second to three or four of the central streets in the city in regard to the magnitude of its traffic. The drapers' shops and the great produce stores, the shoemakers, the clothiers and scores of other trades here make a display that gives to this street a metropolitan air; and on Saturday nights the crowds thronging through its gaslit footpaths are as dense as those in Bourke Street itself.

Smith St remained one of Melbourne's major shopping streets for many years, with Foy & Gibson's as a central focus.

When Foy's had their fair there used to be buggies and jinkers along Smith St and people down from the country going to Foy's fair for the first day. There used to be a tall gentleman who walked up and down outside in a uniform watching the horses and minding the turnouts while the people were inside buying.

Foy's fair was an annual event. I don't remember when it was but I think it must have been June because we always got woollen things there. Foy and Gibson's was quite famous for its woollen wear. It had huge mills in Collingwood. Foy and Gibson's shop was on two sides of Smith St and people came from all over the place to Foy's fair. Apparently bargains were spectacular and Smith St was just ablaze with people. It was a huge sale. You never bought any other blankets except Gibsonia blankets. They were really famous. Just the same as Yarra Falls material. They were exported heavily. It was very sad when they went down the drain. They had a world-wide reputation. Smith St had Friday night shopping too.

Everybody went to Smith St late night shopping on Friday night. It was a meeting place. That was Friday night out. You wouldn't dream of holding anything on a Friday night because it was Smith St

night. That was the social gathering point of everybody. You couldn't move outside the post office for all the young ones that used to meet everybody else.

Most of the factories paid their workers on Friday so this helped to make Friday night shopping such a big thing.

We used to go up to Smith St on a Friday night. You'd meet all your pals there. Mother always went to Foy's for her bacon and cheese. Every Friday, she never missed. I used to love silver sticks and licorice straps. They were a ha'penny each.

George James Coles opened his first 3d., 6d. and 1/- Variety Store in partnership with his brother in Smith St, Collingwood in 1914.

I went to the opening of Coles — nothing over a shilling. I bought an enamel dish for 6d and I got a supper cloth. It was all stamped out and I worked it and stitched it. I've still got it. You don't get stuff like that today. You've got no idea the things they could sell for a shilling — pot holders, tea strainers, cups and saucers. I bought a lot of things to put in my glory box.

I remember when Coles half crown store was in Smith St. That was the very first.

Foy's always had shopwalkers and the shopwalker would always see that you had a chair to sit on while they served you. Foy's had a beautiful delicatessen part downstairs. While I was there, one of the lasses won a beauty competition. She worked in the glove department and she got sick of people coming in to look at her, so she ruffled her hair and put a dirty spot on her face and pointed to another girl when they asked who was the beauty queen. It was the laugh of Foy and Gibson's.

Ackman's was really the 'George's of Smith St'. It was a beautiful shop. There were Clauscens, Maples, Pattersons, Brookes. They have all been there for years. There were really lovely delicatessens and cake

shops where the cakes were made on the premises. (Mrs Haynes)

In Smith St there were barrowmen set up on corners selling greengroceries and they called their prices similar to the market men. The barrows were long, narrow handcarts on two wheels. The men had to push them up the steep hill to Smith St using their own strength to get them there, with a few stops for breath.

Although shopping in Smith St was the major weekly shopping expedition, during the week people patronised the many local shops. Johnston St and Queens Parade were also major shopping centres. Because of the lack of refrigeration, people shopped daily. Many items were delivered or sold in the streets from carts.

In the block in Johnston St from Victoria Park Station beyond Hoddle St and perhaps going up to Gold St there was a tremendous variety of shops. There was competition between greengrocers and lots of butchers. We had our own florist shop at one stage and there was the fabulous place called Paris House presided over by a Mrs Reidberg, a very queenly lady, very fierce. It was a haberdashery shop with a difference. She had a wide range of babies clothes and things like that. In Johnston St now you can't buy a needle or thread.

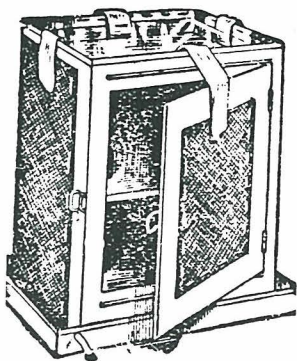
In Johnston St we had The Don. That was a fairly big place, and we had Bennett and Woolcocks, the butchers. The Don was a clothing shop. It was after the style of Myers. And we had Lloyds, the ham and beef shop. They had a big shop there and



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then on the other side we had Ammfield's cake shop. Hunter's shoe factory was on the corner of Hoddle St. There were three bakers, Tressida's, Maynard's and Bowden's. Bread was only 2d a loaf then. We used to have to get our meat every day. (Mrs Cain)

We used to have a little round bin that you used to soak in water to keep your butter cool. It was called a butter cooler. And you'd have a Coolgardie safe. We had a hanging safe to keep meat in too.

Well you'd shop practically every day, or you'd have a Coolgardie. It was made of tin with hessian or towelling stitched to the openings and a door on it of course. The top would hold water and you'd have the towelling running down the sides to keep the sides wet. Later on you got an ice chest.

I think we used to go shopping every day of the week. We never bought in bulk. Of course we didn't have any refrigerators or anything like that to keep food in in those days.

I used to have an ice chest. The ice man used to come on a Saturday morning. If I wasn't home he'd leave it on the doorstep and by the time I'd get home there wouldn't be much of it left.

We used to have to go for the messages when we were children. We'd have a little truck with wheels on it and set off to buy 20lb. of potatoes for so much somewhere, wherever they were cheapest. Or

we'd walk up Brunswick St to buy a 7lb. tin of golden syrup. Children did all the shopping messages.

Friday night at the fish shop was very popular as there were lots of Catholics in Collingwood and they didn't eat meat on Fridays. So the rest of us, if you wanted fresh fish, knew when to buy it. A Greek man ran the fish shop nearby. It was great on a cold night or lunch time in the winter to buy 3d. of chips. They were eaten out of paper. They were poked down the front of your jumper and kept you warm while they lasted.

The area was thick with lolly shops. They talk about Collingwood's pubs but there were just as many lolly shops. So many of this or that for a penny. Mrs Gentry was a sweet old lady who ran one of the lolly shops. She had a completely old-fashioned set-up. She had a counter that you lifted up and she had her lollies in the traditional jars. She had her weighing scales and she was dressed to match. She still wore her tight bodice and a long skirt with her hair done up. You know, for all the poverty that there was in the place the lolly shops seemed to survive.

Packaging was to come much later.

Things were served from tins. You bought butter by the pound or half pound and it was patted up. Cheese was cut up in front of you and you got a taste of that.

The grocer was behind the counter and so were all his goods. He had scales on the counter on which he weighed most things as you ordered them. There were one or two chairs with long legs and a small seat with a back for you to sit on near the counter while you waited. Biscuits were all delivered to the grocer in tins. The tins all lined a shelf. The biscuits would be weighed into a paper bag while you waited. Any that were broken were put aside. You could buy broken biscuits which were much cheaper but just as good to eat. When you got your week's supply after you paid your bill the grocer would make a little cone out of paper and fill it with boiled lollies and give it to you free. (Miss Hocking)

The local grocer would take the order and deliver. There would always be a free bag of boiled sweets in your grocery order, and if you had small children there would always be a bag of broken biscuits.

On the way to school we would always call in at the butcher's and he would give us a slice of German sausage and we knew if we ever went to get Mummy's meat that we would always get a piece of sausage too.

Chemists were used for consultation very widely instead of going to doctors. If we went to the chemists we used to go to Clyne's which used to be on the corner of Hoddle and Johnson Sts. There was always someone waiting for Mr Clyne, either to look down one's throat or to give an opinion about a cut or burn or rash. I think that was very common because even then the doctors were beyond the average person's pocket. And of course the chemists had a wide range of their own potions in those days. There was Lawson's cough mixture — that had a wonderful reputation. Lawson was the chemist in Gertrude St near the old Champion Hotel. Then there was Dr Tharr's ointment which was marketed by a chemist in Richmond. I remember it was wonderful. It used to draw boils. It was the era of homeopathic thinking.

We owned a fruit shop. My brother and I used to go to the market with my father at two or three in the morning. Either my brother or I would drive the horse and cart home from the market. We would unload the cart before we went to school. During the day Mum would manage the shop, but in the evening Dad would come back from his job at the sewers and take the horse and cart and go out on his rounds. I think he delivered to practically every person in Clifton Hill. We could hear him every night till about 9 or 10 o'clock singing out 'peas or beans' or something like that. We'd have the market gardeners come home with their load and drop it at our place. Rhubarb was a penny a bunch.

I remember the rabbit man. Macreed his name was. He used to have a tin



on the back of his horse and cart. He used to bang on the tin and sing out 'Rabbie, Rabbie' and you'd run out and get a pair of rabbits for 6d. You knew they were fresh because he used to go and kill them himself. He'd clean them and skin them while you were there waiting for them.

Mr Freeman would skin the rabbits and give the kids the heads for their cats and dogs. He used to come around with a little white pony and a cart.

There was McAlpine's factory at Abbotsford, but bread was made at the baker's. The bakehouse was behind the baker's shop and you would go and buy a large loaf or a small loaf which was a large broken in half. The bread was always very fresh, often warm. One baker's was on the south side of Gipps St. It's now the second house from Hoddle St. It's still there, though not as a baker's. Another baker's was on the south-east corner of Gipps and Rupert Sts. At this bakehouse people used to take the Sunday dinner in their baking dish down and put them in the baker's oven to cook. A small charge was made for this.

Men selling fruit and vegetables would drive around in horse drawn carts and you would just pull them up and buy from them. If you heard a tin being beaten with a stick you knew it was the man selling mussels. On Good Friday morning a man would walk along the street with a basket on his arm with a white cover on it crying out 'Hot cross buns'. You would go out and buy your buns from him. They were freshly baked at the baker's. When he sold one basketful he returned to the bakehouse for more.

The milkman used to have a small, two-wheel, horse-drawn cart with two large milk cans on the back. He had a small can with a handle on it from which he used to measure out the quantity of milk ordered with a metal measure. The milk billy with a lid on it was hung on a nail inside the front fence. The milkman used to put the milk requested in the billy and hang it back.

There were three dairies around our

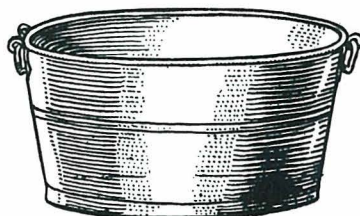


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area. One on the north-east corner of Gipps and Cromwell Sts, one on the south-west corner of Rupert and Vere Sts, and one in Rupert St between Langridge and Victoria Sts on the east side. The dairies were small, cool rooms. The milk was kept there in large milk cans. The dairies were at the back of the houses. If you wanted milk you rang a small bell and someone would come out of the house and take your billy and fill it with the required amount of milk. The dairy was the only place you could buy milk.



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Horne's had a dairy and at Christmas she used to make a big plum pudding and put money in it. All the kids who went up for milk on Christmas morning got a slice of

plum pudding with money in it. We used to fight over who would go for the milk on that day.

After we got the milk in a pail we boiled it. It was horrible.

Vincent's dairy was a big thing then. They were in Hotham St. It did all the suburbs in two-wheel carts with two large milk cans with taps poking out the back. They would put the milk in billies or saucepans with a hand can. No bottled milk in those days. They would even come around to the back of the house to deliver. I can remember drivers coming into Vincent's office reciting off their rounds. They would always start and finish the round in the same order every day and they would say pint, half pint, gallon, etc. in the correct order from memory. Vincent's had a big boarding house for their single drivers, with a proper chef. They charged 30/- a week for keep. (Mr Atkinson)

Mrs Cain's family owned a dairy: The cows were kept in Trennery Crescent in Abbotsford, and Roseneath St, Clifton Hill. They were our cow paddocks. Then, of course, the law came in that you could only keep one cow for your own use. We had to get rid of the dairy then. There used to be lots of little dairies around Collingwood. Mr Hobson had one in Rutland St and Cuts had one. There were three around us.

A favourite thing to do on your way home from the dairy was to spin the billy arm's length over your head and around in big circles without spilling any. Also, you could buy cream on Sundays. It was sold in an open container so naturally the fingers went in and by the time you got home there was a bit missing.

Terence O'Callagan used to come round blowing his trumpet selling skimmed milk on a Sunday morning. Skimmed milk was about a penny a pint and fresh milk was 2d a pint. The bakers used to have carts painted in different colours. There was a bit of white and red in them. The baker wrote on them. They were very good. They were the good old days.



HAIR RESTORERS.



Egyptian Henna.



## Recreation

Not only did Collingwood residents work and shop locally, but their recreation was mostly local: singing around the piano at home, Sunday walks in Yarra Bend Park, swimming in the Yarra at Deep Rock, listening to bands in the Darling Gardens, dancing at the Town Hall, going to the pictures in Johnston St, barracking for the Magpies at Victoria Park, attending local church activities and meeting in local pubs.

**We had to make our own pleasure. When we went out on a Sunday we'd go visiting another family and we'd sing around the piano.**

Yarra Bend Park was a favourite place for local outings.

**We used to walk across the Yarra Falls in the summertime to Studley Park. The falls were dry. We used to go over to Yarra Bend and all around the asylum and talk to the people. If you annoyed them the warden would come and chase you away. We could go right across the zig-zag bridge behind where the Yarra Bend golf course is now, to Kew.**

One of the most popular entertainment areas in Yarra Bend Park was Deep Rock. On weekends families would walk down to the swimming area, swim, picnic, and lie under the trees. John Wren was a driving force behind its construction, but many of the local people helped to build it.

JOHN WREN AND THE DEEP ROCK SWIMMING CLUB, YARRA BEND PARK 1920

Dadda was an old identity of Collingwood. He was Harry Smith and a partner and friend of Jack Wren. They got together and started Deep Rock. They built the cement bottom basin.

Paddy Kennedy used to go down to Deep Rock. I think he taught everybody in Clifton Hill how to swim. He used to go down rain, hail or shine, with an umbrella over him every day. Then they formed this club down there. After they formed the club we started a ladies club and I was the secretary. We used to have nights down at the Collingwood Town Hall to raise money for the club. Deep Rock used to be like a little St Kilda of a night time. (Mrs Mayes)

The men used to work down at Deep Rock by hurricane lamp while the falls were shut off to keep the water back. They used to work till all hours of the night to get the basin built. Mr Wren supplied all the concrete and our men built the basin. (Mrs Willis)

The Darling Gardens provided a pleasant setting for leisure hours.

Christmas time we'd have a bonfire in the Darling Gardens and crackers'd go off. It was all supervised. It wasn't just haphazard. We used to have open air concerts in the Darling Gardens too. The Gardens had a fence right around them and there was a fish pond down at the bottom with beautiful coloured

fish in it. That was near the corner of Hoddle Street and South Terrace.

They used to have a bandstand there in the Darling Gardens. They've since built a new one of the same design. They used to have bands there every Sunday and we would sit in the Gardens. Different bands would take it. Sometimes the Salvos, sometimes the municipal band.

I can remember the lovely falls at the Darling Gardens. It started from the top of the hill and had half a dozen drops down. There were goldfish in there and flowers all around. I remember going there fairly often to hear the bands play.

Collingwood Citizens Band had a fine reputation. They used to practice every Sunday morning at Collingwood Football ground. We could hear them quite clearly. They had tremendous volume. They sometimes used to march.

Many Collingwood girls played in the ladies cricket team at Mayor's Park. They played in long dresses. Some of the cricketers wore shoes but the fast bowlers had to protect their ankles so they wore boots.

Memories of their dancing days remain vivid.

Can I name the dances? You're telling me — Exhibition, Coallies, Greenmill, Collingwood Town Hall. There was nothing on the board I





couldn't do. I really loved the dancing. It was part of my life. My husband never minded me going to the dances without him because he reckoned it was part of my pleasure. He loved fishing and used to go to cricket with the boy. We never had no cross words about going dancing. (Mrs Henry)

Collingwood Town Hall was the most popular venue in the early days. There'd be old time dancing there on Saturday night. But my main venue was the M.U. Hall on the corner of Vere and Hoddle Sts. I can still remember when I started dancing there. I stood at the entrance for about three months I suppose, trying to pluck up courage to go and ask a girl to dance. Some of the dances we used to do were the Blackbottom, the Foxtrot, the Quickstep and the Waltz. There wasn't much old time dancing but they did have the Alberts and the Valetta at the ordinary dances. They started to bring in that you had to wear white pants and white shoes in the hot weather and the girls had to wear light dresses. It caught on for a few months but it gradually died out because the old white pants used to get dirty and it was hard for Mum to do them up. (Mr Mayberry)

We danced every night of the week when I was eighteen or so. We used to go down to the Collingwood Town Hall on a Thursday night. The Highland Society used to run a dance there once a month and the Caledonian Society used to run another one. We used to go to Cathedral Hall and the Fitzroy Town Hall too. We did the Barn Dance, Waltzes and the Alberts and the Lancers. I used to love dancing the Polka Mazurka too. We didn't dress up all that much for the dance. We just wore skirts and blouses. (Mrs Cain)

I met my husband in a lolly shop opposite the Collingwood Town Hall. I used to go to dancing classes there. I danced a lot until I was sixteen as a matter of fact. There'd be concerts for charity and that sort of thing. Apart from the Saturday afternoon you used to go for your lesson and then I had private tuition in Scottish dancing.

Every year Collingwood Council had a marvellous Mayoral Ball. They'd have a Mayoral Ball first and then they'd have a Return Ball which was always very good and well attended.

I went to 35 or 36 of the Mayoral Balls in Collingwood.

Going to films, first to the silents and then the talkies, was a popular pastime.

There was the *Austral Picture Theatre* in Johnston Street and there was the *Star*. At the *Star*, the roof used to open up and they had tan bark on the floor. We used to get into the pictures for 1/3 for the best seats. We used to sit on the forms.

We went to the pictures locally. There was the *Austral*, which was near us; they of course had the Saturday matinees — Johnston St was just full of kids. There was another theatre called the *Lyric* which was near the old McRobertson's factory. At first I didn't go to the Saturday matinees because of what happened when my father took me to see Charlie Chaplin. It was a silent movie and there was so much noise that I got frightened and he had to take me home. So I blotted my copybook. But I remember going later on.

They showed silent movies for years. The talkies were very much city stuff. There was this woman thumping away at the piano, but I

suppose it was employment for someone. They certainly had to earn their money there.

I don't know why the *Austral* wasn't closed down for health reasons. The stench from the lavatories was really fearful.

In my day we got 3d a week to go to the old *Star*. It was a galvanized iron picture theatre down towards the river in Johnston St. You had to go through the doors at the back of the screen to go to the toilets. Every time somebody went in they'd let light in and you couldn't see the pictures.

There would be a terrible scream of 'Shut the door, shut the door!'

Sometimes, for a change, we used to go to the *Crown* theatre in Richmond. It cost 4d to get in there, but they used to give a prize to everyone. It might only be a balloon or a tin whistle, but you always got something. Then a few years later the *Austral* was built and the *Lyric* and the *Solway*.

In the summertime they had open-air pictures at Victoria Park cricket ground. The screen was fixed to the goal posts. It cost a penny for kids and 3d for adults. They also had pictures at Collingwood Town Hall in the wintertime. (Mr Mayberry)

Going to the pictures was a novelty. They were all silent pictures in the early days. It didn't matter how much the kids yelled in their seats because you had to read the words. There was plenty of noise in the matinees. (Miss Hocking)

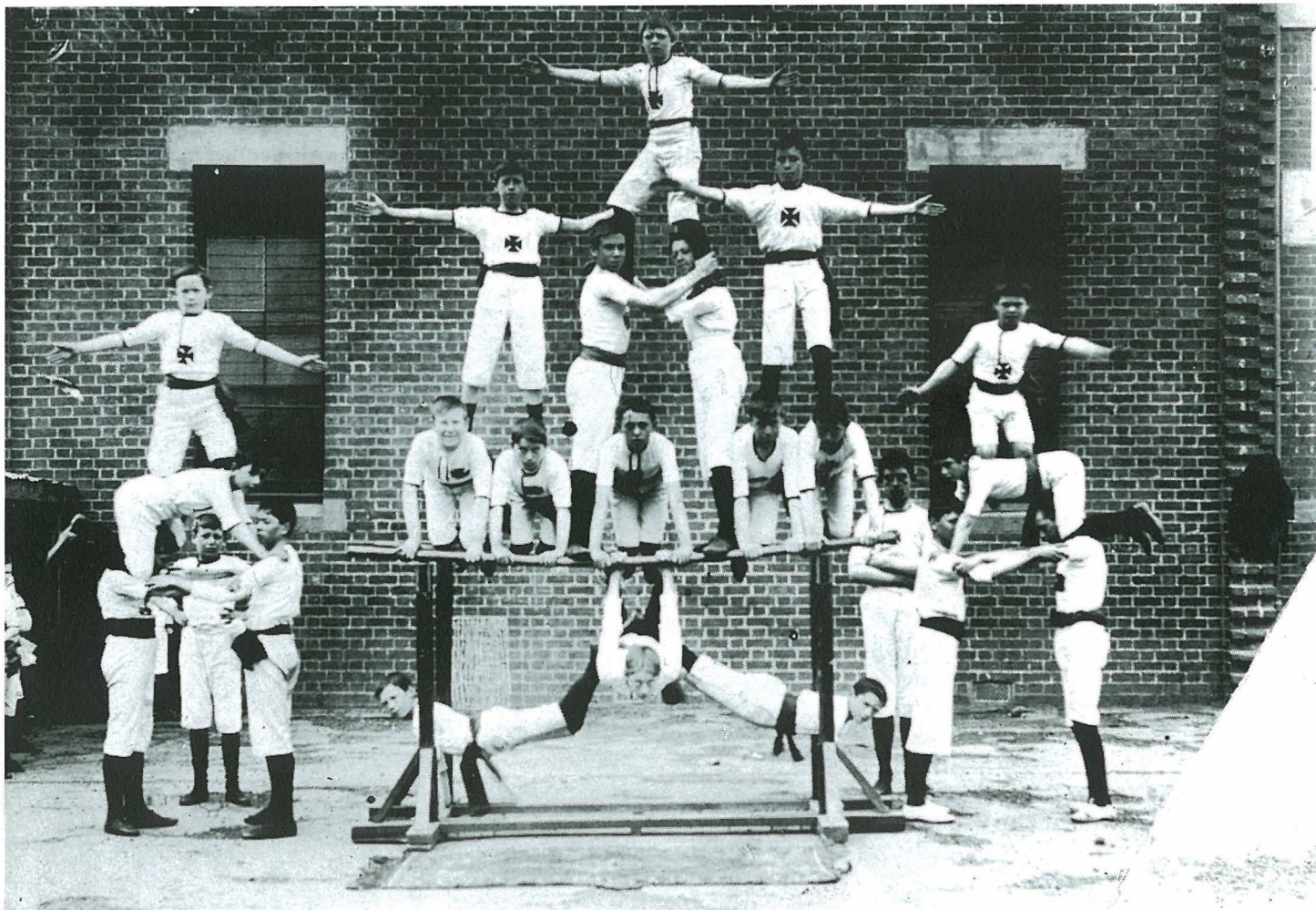
RUBY CRICHTON'S DANCING CLASS BALL, COLLINGWOOD TOWN HALL 1906







GYMNASTICS AT ST JOSEPH'S BOYS SCHOOL, 1906





## Churches and Missions

In Collingwood in the 1850s 'there were large attendances in half a dozen wooden Churches and Chapels'. The number of churches increased rapidly as the population grew and more substantial stone and brick buildings were erected. Churches held a near monopoly of Sunday entertainment as many other activities were prohibited on the Lord's Day. There would have been few Collingwood residents who would not have had some contact with one or more of the local churches, such as, the Gipps St Methodist Mission, The Baptist Tabernacle in Sackville St, St Philip's Church of England in Hoddle St, St Andrew's Church of England, Clifton Hill (all demolished in recent years), the Church of Christ, Stanton St (now Carringbush Library), the Catholic Church of St John the Baptist, and others.

We used to go to the Melbourne Cith Mission which was in Sydney St, Collingwood. It was pulled down when they built those Housing Commission flats. We used to go to prayer meetings, choir practices, gymnasium, Sunday School and Church on a Sunday night. I used to teach Sunday School. That was our recreation — going to church.

We were married over at St Andrews Church Clifton Hill. Christened, confirmed and married. Five children were christened there, and two of my daughters were married there. When I was older I didn't have much to do with the church. I was the rebel of the family, but my mother was secretary of the mothers' union, my brother was superintendent of the Sunday School, another brother was in the choir, one sister was auditor of the church and my other sister used to teach Sunday School. (Mrs Towers)

We had a lot of social life at the church. St Andrews had two tennis courts. We used to play tournaments there. And I remember their hall which is now the church. They used to have lantern slides; Mum would take a plate of supper and we'd pay so much to go in. It was a sort of family night. They started to have

dances for the young people there. The Reverend Beveridge was a nice go-getter chap and he was all for the young ones and he used to dance. We danced to the piano. The Foxtrot and the Pride of Erin and all the old favourites. They had plays there too and amateur theatre. There was a gymnasium for the girls. (Mrs Haynes)

Miss Hocking recalls the activities of the Collingwood Methodist Mission:

Most of my social life was in Gipps St in the church. We had plenty to occupy us. You were that busy with what was on there you never had time to do much else. Sunday I used to go to Young Worshippers League in the morning, then to church, then to Sunday School and then to church at night, and go for a walk in between. That was the whole of Sunday.

They used to have after-school activities at least one day a week and then there was usually practice for the Sunday School concerts or something like that. There was always gymnasium during the week, one night for girls and one night for boys. And lodge meetings and the Ladies Guild. At one time they used to have a sewing group.

There was always a lot of work to be done when they had fairs to raise money. In those days you didn't get things donated. You had to make everything you wanted to sell yourself.

Her brother adds:

They used to have cricket teams and football teams, they had a tennis court and used to play basketball in later years. There was a kindergarten in the Sunday School hall for the smaller kids, a free kindergarten. They would have relief work usually for the people and there used to be all types of clothing or food because it was a mission and they had permission to appeal for relief.

I went to the Methodist Mission for a few years. I went to the mothers' meetings mostly. They did a lot of good work you know. They'd have stalls and competitions for children. And the best baby. They ran jumble sales and many people were thankful

they did because they got the things for next to nothing.

The Gipps St Methodist Mission used to have big 'tea meetings' for the church Anniversary. They had a very large hall and there would be rows of trestles laden with sandwiches and cakes and the hall would be full. Their Sunday School Anniversaries were so big at one time that they used the Collingwood Town Hall. They also used the Town Hall for some of their fairs.

I went to St Philip's Church for years. But when I started to play cricket at about 16 I couldn't get a game with St Philip's, so I went down to the Baptist church in Hoddle St. From there I joined the Church of Christ cricket team in Stanton St. They would never let you play cricket with the cricket team unless you attended two Sundays a month at church, so I was baptised at the Baptists, baptised at the Church of Christ and christened at the Church of England, so I am pretty religious. Those days at the social club at the Stanton St church were the best days of my life really. I suppose there would be about twenty boys and twenty girls — it was just a small church. For young people it was rather good. (Mr Mayberry)

I remember when the Wellington St Salvation Army was a strong force in Collingwood. Every Saturday night they would play their band and sing and give testimonials at the corner of Smith St and Johnston St. Then they'd march down to their citadel in Wellington St, flag flying, drums beating and band playing. They would play outside for a while and then they would all march inside, followed by the crowds. It cost 1d for children 3d for adults. The first half of the program would be slides shown on the screen, illustrated I remember, hymns and sentimental songs. All the songs seemed to be of a sentimental nature in those days. One very sentimental song was illustrated with a slide of a father and a young daughter living in a very poverty-stricken house. It was 'Lay your head on my shoulder daddy and turn your face to the west: It's only a year ago today since the one that we





MRS TOWERS' SISTER RITA AS QUEEN OF THE ST ANDREW'S MOTHERS' UNION IN THE 1920s

loved best passed away'. Or one about a wayward girl going into a hotel: 'Don't go into that place, it will bring us disgrace: It will drive your poor parents to the grave'. Not bad for a kid of nine to remember that. The second half would be cowboy and Indian pictures. (Mr Atkinson)

The Salvation Army Band used to set up on the corner of Smith St and Greeves St and play and play with their banner. I wanted to be a 'Sunbeam' — that was my ambition. I was fascinated by the tambourines. Then they used to march through the streets on a Sunday morning. That

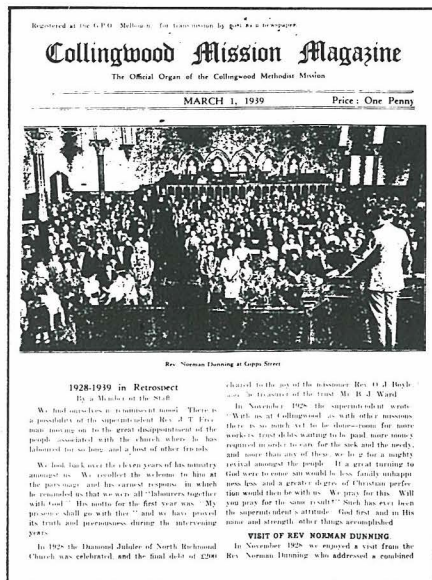
was a feature of Collingwood. And of course the Salvation Army drew a very large following amongst the population.

(A Sunbeam was the equivalent of being a Brownie or a Guide. The Salvation Army had a large Scout troop for the boys and Sunbeams for girls.)



THE BAPTIST TABERNACLE, SACKVILLE ST IN FLOOD





picnic over where the asylum grounds are at Yarra Bend.

Our outings mainly were our Sunday School picnics. We used to get one of those removal vans and we'd all pile in and go off to our picnics with the Sunday School.

I went to the Brethren Sunday School for 16 years. They'd have an annual tea party and prayer meeting as they used to call it. There were prizes for the best attending scholars in the various classes and for the one who'd brought the most new scholars to school. I gained the prize one year.

I can remember St Philip's when the Rev. Wood was there and he said to one of the girls at the church there he knew, 'Righto Myrtle, how about getting married. That'll be my hundredth wedding for the year.' He'd had 99 weddings in that church for the year. That was the church for weddings, unless you belonged to Gipps St. Of course there were plenty of churches around apart from those. The old Tabernacle in Sackville St, was a good church. Of course in those days the Salvation Army was very strong in Collingwood too.

Particular church leaders were

remembered:

The Rev. Mr Eunson at the Tabernacle was a Collingwood tradition. The people turned to him for counselling, they turned to him for comfort, and he was always marrying pregnant girls in his sitting room. He really was an institution.

Mr Eunson was a fine man. He helped anybody at all, it didn't matter who they were. And there used to be Father May up in Clifton Hill at St Johns. He's another one done a lot. Yeah, he worked hard too. When all the men were digging the road in the Parade one hot day he came out and threw them money, 'Here go up and have a drink' and they all went up to the pub.

Dr Mannix was the priest up at the Cathedral in East Melbourne and he used to walk from 'Raheen' at the top of Studley Park hill and come across and walk up Langridge St about half past 8 every morning with his big, long, black frock-coat on and a great big top hat about twice as high as any other hat I remember. Always a walking stick or an umbrella whatever the weather was. He'd walk all the way up to St Patrick's cathedral.

For Sunday School picnics we used to go to Heidelberg or down to Seaford. We travelled to the picnic by dray. They gave us raspberry vinegar to drink and corned beef sandwiches. The mothers used to cook the corned beef and put it through the mincer to make it go further.

Well, I remember them having a lorry with seats strapped back to back to one another and you had to hold on a bit and you'd have your mug around your neck with a little bit of tape and they used to have the





## Hotels and Wine Saloons

From Collingwood's early days hotels have been numerous and have played an important part in the lives of many of the residents. As early as 1860 there were 33 pubs in Collingwood. Pubs were a main focus for leisure over the years and lodges, friendly societies, sporting bodies, working men's clubs and ratepayers' groups met at their favorite hotels.

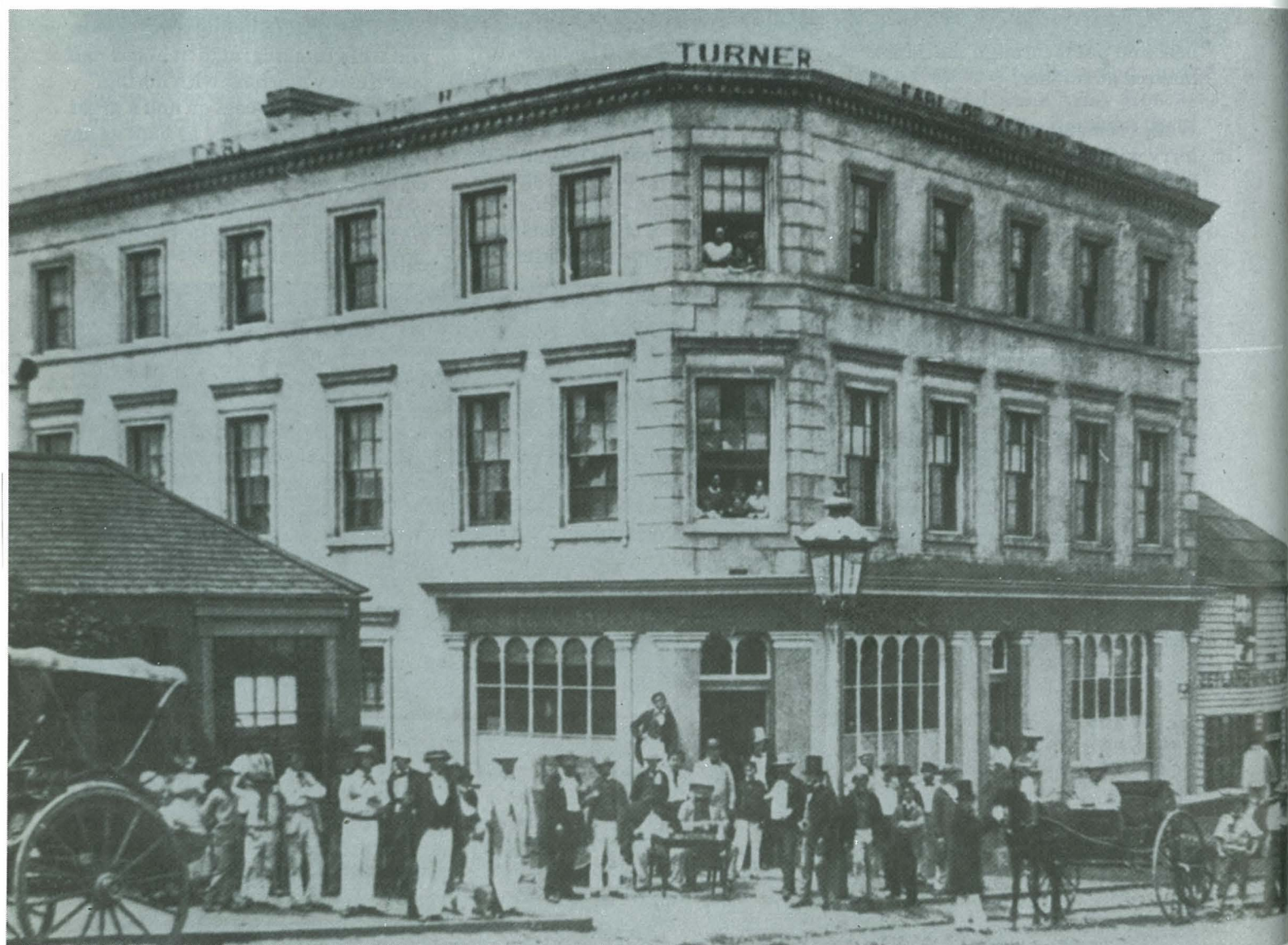
**Pubs used to open till 11 o'clock at**

night before the first World War and on football Saturdays the pubs would put up the scores quarter by quarter. They would be stuck on the outside window.

I remember when some kids' parents would send them to the pub with an empty beer bottle for a bottle of draft beer. I think it was 6d. Some of the kids would have a swig on the way home so the temperance people (I think) had an act passed whereby the publican had to put a sticker over the cork and onto the bottle so the

parents would know if it had been tampered with. (Mr Atkinson)

Well I used to sell *Heralds* and *Ages* when I was young and I never used to see any trouble in hotels. There were that many hotels; about ten from Riley St drain, which is now Alexander Parade, down to Victoria St, Abbotsford. In those days they put on free counter lunches which were hot baked potatoes and slices of German sausage and pickled onions and cheese. I used to run from the



EARL OF ZETLAND HOTEL, STANLEY ST 1862



# JOSHUA'S AUSTRALIAN Boomerang Brandy

ONE OF OUR LEADING DOCTORS HAS STATED THAT SHOULD IT  
BE NECESSARY TO HAVE RECOURSE TO A STIMULANT,

**The Most Wholesome Spirit**

THAT CAN BE CONSUMED IS

## Joshua's Boomerang Brandy.

front entrance to the side entrance and grab a baked potato or a couple of slices of sausage and run for me life. The publican didn't like the *Herald* boys coming in and helping themselves.

But I did eventually start going to the hotels when I was about 18. Living in Langridge Street I used to go to the 'Yorkshire Stingo Hotel'. There were quite a few young fellows about my age, and we asked Mr Daveram would he form a social club and we used to go out playing Sunday cricket matches. Sometimes if we weren't playing cricket he'd have a quiet sing-song in his back yard on Sunday morning. (Mr Mayberry)

Would you really like my attitudes to hotels — they should burn them all down. Because drink makes monsters out of men.

We didn't have anything to do with hotels. Nothing at all. I was brought up with a mother and father who didn't drink and I thought it was terrible. In Gold St where I was born there were pubs on nearly every corner and they used to have fights. They didn't have knives, they took their coats off and had a humdinger box on. That was a frequent sight on Saturday night. And they were open till ten o'clock at night.

## The Liquor Habit.

**A** N INTERESTING PAMPHLET on the Disease of Drunkenness and its cure by **Eucrasy** will be sent free (sealed) on application to the EUCRASY

Six o'clock closing was introduced during the First World War and was in force until the 1960s:

With six o'clock closing you'd see groups of men standing outside the

hotels, many had 'too many'. Tea-time was the time when the father came home from the pub.

Collingwood had a number of wine saloons. The one I remember best was the Perversi's in Hoddle St. He was an Italian and he had the most beautiful display of grapes around his windows. They were absolutely first class replicas. Wine saloons had a bad name. They sold very cheap wines. They did not have any food on the premises for you to eat and some were really quite sleazy but Mr Perversi seemed to maintain a good standard. People drank the wine on the premises.

There was competition for the pubs:

When we lived in Johnston St, my mother used to make hop beer and ginger beer and have great big barrels on the counter with taps on them and I remember the trammies coming over and saying it was as good as they'd get in the pubs. That was the hop beer my mother was making at 3d a glass, a penny for ginger beer.

Mrs O'Loughlin and her husband took over the Normanby Hotel, Queen's Parade Clifton Hill in 1933 and ran it until 1961:

It was in more or less a good area and we were advised it had been let run down but could be made a first class business, a first class hotel, which it was. When we went there it was more like a home for everybody than a business. We had quite a few people stay. There were only seven bedrooms but they were quite often occupied. We had a housekeeper and we had one permanent barman for a start. I always helped in the bar in

the evening when it was busy. We had quite a good passing trade, although the bulk of the trade was local.

The hours were from 9 until 6. From when the bar opened in the morning we seemed to have people all day long. My husband was a great one for opening on the stroke of 9. Never before, never after. At least straight on the stroke of 9 the bar was ready to open and you could always find people coming off night work would be wanting to come in and have some relaxation before they went home.

When we first went there, there were a few patrons who were not desirable. There was an episode that everyone would remember when a man was nearly beaten to death with a picket in Gold St, but my husband had a wonderful way of just gradually getting rid of these people. But we had a wonderful trade and there wasn't one you wouldn't trust. My daughter learned to serve in the bar and there wouldn't be anyone who would take her down for one penny or one drink. They were really a good clientele we had, and you didn't feel that there was anyone who came there who — well, my husband wouldn't have had it if you thought perhaps his wife or family would be in need. There may have been one or two that you had to be more or less charitable to.

The best known character was the S.P. Bookie. He set up shop for years. I don't know whether he was there before we got there. There used to be a lane not far down from the hotel where he operated — never in the hotel. We served most of the leading business people on the Parade. It was mainly beer we served. Whisky or gin was fairly popular for a good while but then it seemed to fade out.

We didn't have any place for women drinking. Only in the bottle department. About six or eight could squeeze in there until the place was enlarged and then we could have mixed drinking. We had a wonderful clientele after races — that's mid-week and Saturdays, and after football. Husbands and wives or just groups of mixed drinkers.

We never seemed to have people with children. They were never any bother to us, but we didn't really ban them.



## Transport

In the 1850s Melbourne public transport consisted of horse cabs and omnibuses.

Cable trams were introduced in 1885 and provided Collingwood with public transport until the 1940s when they were replaced with electric trams. Railways had been established in the 1860s and in the 1880s an 'outer circle' line linked Collingwood (Victoria Park) with Melbourne via Royal Park. The direct railway line from Melbourne through Collingwood was not opened until 1901.

Horses remained a major element in transport until quite recent times and cycling and walking were common. Many residents remember a Collingwood in which cars were very rare.

You could play games in the street then because there wasn't any traffic. If you saw someone with a car you'd say 'Gee, he must be rich' and it'd be a little old Ford. It's a shame that the horse is a dying race.

When the whistle blew at Foys you used to have to get out of the road.

Everybody would tear out on bikes. Hundreds of them used to come out of Foys in those days.

I often look out the window now and think there isn't a soul going to work past here. When I shifted here you'd see them all hurrying past at half past 7 to different factories. There's a lot of them closed down now — the boot factories. Now they all go in cars.

We only saw horses and carts around the streets when I was young — horses and lorries and tip drays. They used to come around with fruit on them. You used to see hansom cabs then, too. You used to have to ride in the cabs if you wanted to go anywhere. Some people used to have jinkers. Jinkers had two wheels and you could sit in them. They were covered in like cabs. One of our neighbors used to go out in a jinker and his horse. It was beautiful. (Miss Tyrell)

A friend of ours had a weekend shack in Mentone. He used to harness up his horse and jinker and we'd go from Collingwood to Mentone. We'd get to

the bottom of Punt Road somewhere near St Kilda Town Hall. From there there'd be two bits of steel in the ground like a tram rail and it went all the way down to Mordialloc. Once you set the horse in between these two tracks you could go to sleep and the horse would lead you all the way. The market gardeners used the tracks to bring up all the groceries from their farms.

The baker's cart had a step on the back on which the driver stood to reach in for the different loaves of bread. This was good for a 'whip behind', a ride on the step when the driver wasn't looking. The brewery carts all came through Collingwood drawn by a number of draught horses. At night, near knock off time, they headed back to the brewery in Victoria Parade, East Melbourne. The big carts were good for having a swing on. On the front was a high seat that the driver used so that he could see over the team.

The milkman's horse knew the rounds as well as the milkman. The milkman's horse on his rounds was an early morning sound, hail, rain or shine. Housewives prized the manure



WILLIAM PETCH, SADDLER, JOHNSTON STREET



droppings in the street for their gardens and it was a common sight — a woman with her dustpan and brush or a shovel scooping up the manure.

Rather than lots of service stations that we see today there were produce stores where big bags of chaff were stored. The driver of a horse had his feed bag on the cart which was filled from the larger chaff bags when needed. While the driver had a drink or a meal at the hotel the horse stood outside with its chaff bag over its head having a feed. There were also horse troughs outside some hotels and in the main streets for the horse to have a drink.

Sometimes a horse bolted and had an accident and if it was badly injured the police would come and shoot it on the road. This was always horrible if you saw it happen. The police would come on their bikes.

I remember going to a Labour Day procession and all the floats were horse drawn drays. My father had a dray. The Eight Hours processions were lovely. Everybody'd be done up and you'd get samples thrown at you. All the different trades used to be in it. They used to be on lorries. And oh, the horses were beautiful. The brewery horses and McRobertson's were the best.

All the harnesses used to be polished up with rosettes and plumes on them. They were beautiful in those days; you don't see that now. They would have banners — oh different ones, like the boot trade used to have a banner and there would be a man, you know, doing the boots.

Sometimes they used to have them working on the lorries making a shoe or something like that.

You don't see none of them now. Every union I think had a representative in it you know. It used to take just on two hours for the Eight Hours processions in those days. My father wouldn't miss the march. Oh the old people didn't miss the marches in those days.

People walked a great deal more than they do today.

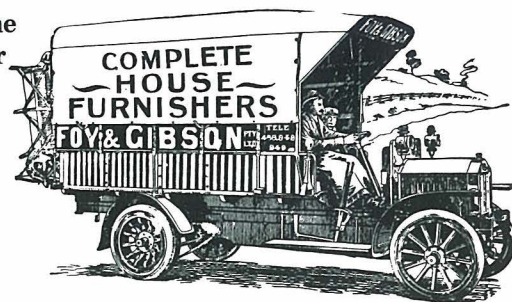
We didn't think anything of walking. Sunday afternoons we used to walk across into Fairfield Park. We'd go

up the hill and walk around and come back over Johnston St. That was our walk. The kids today are killed if they have to walk to the station.

We walked up to the station or the tram in Queen's Parade. When my husband was in the army camp at Seymour I'd walk into Spencer St Station to get to the train. We thought nothing of walking. I had aunts who lived in Clifton Hill and another one in Westgarth. You walked over to see them.

Only the bosses had cars. They would get a new car every year. It was a real joke. The employees used to say, 'we paid for that'.

Collingwood was isolated from the eastern suburbs because there was no direct public transport route to Kew. The cable trams stopped at the Johnston St Bridge and if you wanted to go to Kew you had to go on



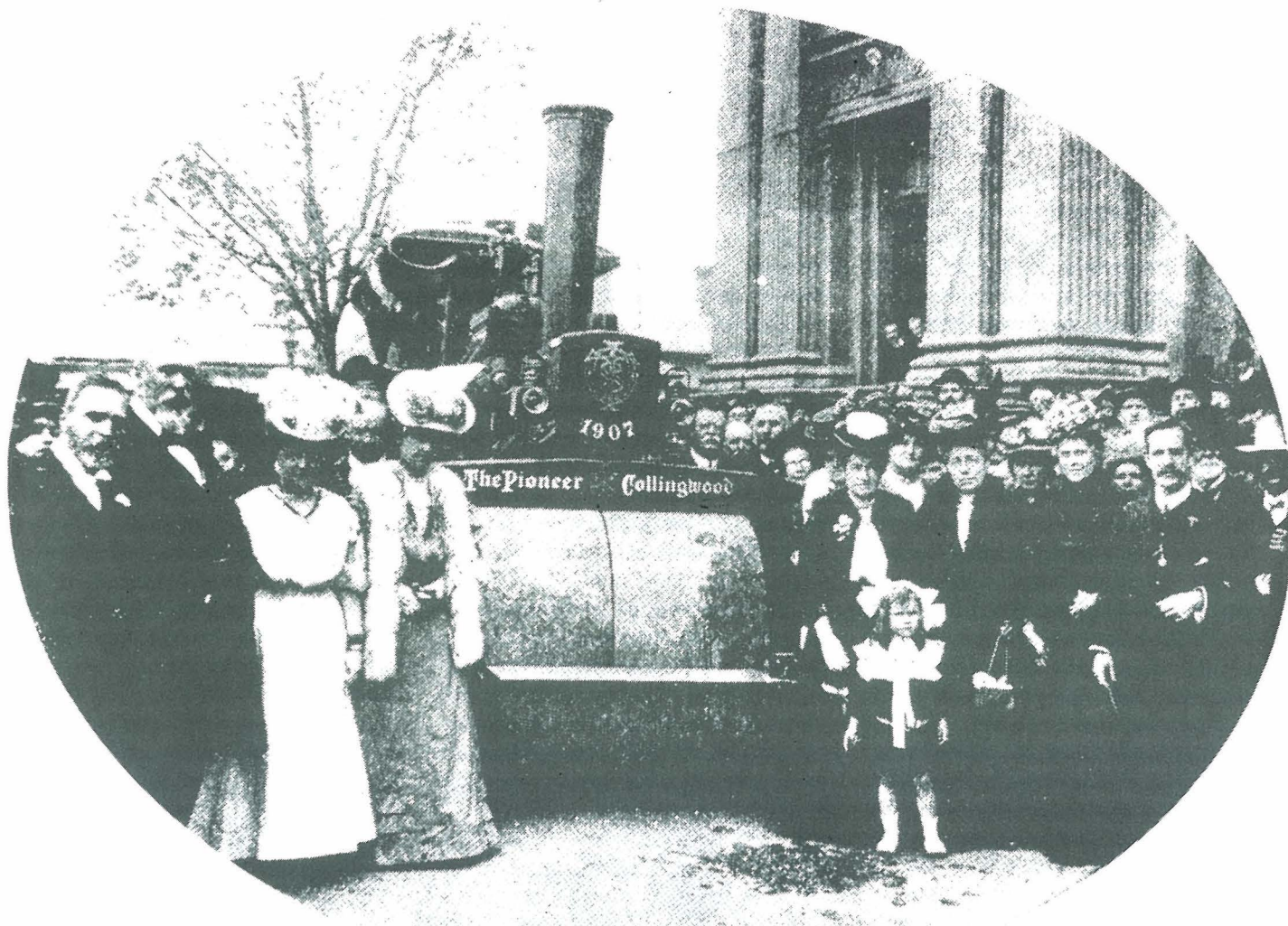
a rather small erratic privately owned bus which took you to the Kew Junction. But on the other hand Collingwood was lucky in having such easy access to the Zoo because the train going through Collingwood and Victoria Park Station went to Royal Park and the Zoo Station. It closed down before the war.

Cable trams used to run from Johnston St here and used to go right out to Prahran for 2d. You'd sit in the front of the tram and go right through town, right out to Chapel St, down to the end of Chapel St at



MOVING A BUILDING, c.1920





COLLINGWOOD'S NEW STEAM ROLLER OUTSIDE THE TOWN HALL, 1907

Dandenong Road. I used to go to work on the tram too, sitting on the outside dummy. The dummy was the outside front seats, the popular spot on the tram. The men sat along the side and the women and children in the carriage at the back of the tram. The conductor swung from one to the other and walked along the outside board. (Mrs Cain)

People lived near where they worked. They built the factories because the people were there and you just went from home to factory and home again. There was no real travelling. The first job I had when I worked was in town. I got that when I was 18. I used to travel backwards and forwards then on the cable tram. I would go to work on the workers' tram. You used to have to catch it by



COLLINGWOOD RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION 1900

7 o'clock and you used to be able to get a workers' return ticket for threepence. You'd go in on the workers' tram and come home on any tram. And when you were short of money we used to walk in to save the 3d; walk in and walk home. (Mr Hocking)

The older ones in our family remembered the railway being built from Clifton Hill to Princes Bridge. When it opened all the kids got a day off school for a free ride to Melbourne and back. The older ones also saw the old cable trams laid down and lived to see them replaced by electric and motor buses. I remember waiting in the train stations. There were hurricane lamps and galoshes left in the waiting room. People left them





FLOODS, c.1900

there in the winter time when they were catching the early morning trains. They would pick them up again when they came back at night. I don't know if anybody ever took the wrong lantern. Lots of the roads weren't made and the way back was dark and muddy. (Mr Atkinson)

My mother took us all down to the beach by train on a day in the holidays; us and half the other kids around the place. Mum used to get three or four family tickets. We used to get a return ticket to Brighton — one adult and five children under 14 or two adults and four children. If you had two children under 14 they could go as one adult so you could take six kids. Method in your madness in those days. (Mrs Towers)

Over the years one the impediments to transport in Collingwood was 'the floods'.

One time when we had a flood there were tables and beds all floating down the river. The Chinese gardens and all; there were pumpkins floating down the river. You couldn't get across the Johnston St bridge. We heard of a couple drowned at the creek trying to get vegetables coming

down from the Chinese gardens.

On the Collingwood side of the river at Victoria St was a huge market

FLOODS IN GIPPS STREET, c.1954



garden run by Chinese. They looked like typical coolie Chinese with their straw hats and denim suits and I think they lived in shacks on the garden site. That really was one of the sights of Melbourne.

The floods used to happen roughly about every seven years. Down the bottom of Johnston St behind where the big galvanized iron tram terminus was, Yarra Falls wasn't there in those days, were about two dozen two-storey weatherboard houses built right down on the edge of the river bank. Of course every time it flooded, the river bed's so narrow there, it flooded right up to the second storey of their houses and they would have to evacuate every time.

I remember two floods in central Collingwood; in Gold St and up to Johnston St nearly to Hoddle. Most houses were flooded out, but Dad had built ours up two or three feet above the footpath level. I remember when there was a pan service in Collingwood and then the place being sewered. At least one of the floods was during the sewerage operation.

I remember some lads in bathers paddling down Gold St on a concrete board.





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## Syd. Coventry, Captain Of Premiers, Carried In



WHEN THE FINAL BELL RANG THE KNEEL OF LEAGUE FOOTBALL FOR 1929 on Saturday, Collingwood's champion follower, Syd. Coventry, had achieved the unique distinction of having led his team to premiership honors for three successive seasons. As he ran to the dressing room after the game against Richmond, he was rushed by the Collingwood trainers and carried shoulder high from the arena. Many of the 63,000 spectators joined in the reception to the captain and his men. The player on the left is L. Murphy, the Magpie's useful half-forward.



## Good Old Collingwood Forever: Football

To many people throughout Australia the name of Collingwood is synonymous with the Collingwood Football Club, and within Collingwood, the magpie and the black and white club colours have been symbols of utmost importance for almost ninety years.

The Club was founded in 1892 at a small meeting in a back parlour of the Grace Darling Hotel, Smith St. The first senior game was played against Carlton on May 7, 1892, before a crowd of about 15,000, and Collingwood's first premiership was won in 1896.

Going to the football, barracking for the side, and for the kids, playing football, were important aspects of the residents' lives.

**I always went to Collingwood football every Saturday. We used to sit in front of the old stand. We knew all the footballers.**

I used to barrack for Collingwood. It cost you 50/- for the whole year to get into the football. That was your season's ticket and it used to take you everywhere, outside games and all. Premierships and all. It was cheap and my mother would never miss a game. The footballers didn't get much money at all. Dicky Lee used to do a place kick. He'd place the ball and make sure he got a goal. You don't see a place kick any more. Jack Dyer was the last one to do a place kick. There was only one layer of seats around the fence in those days, that's all, and all the rest of you had to stand. In those days you didn't get anything to eat there. They used to have a soft drink place there. I used to like Teddy Roulle. The players were all local in those days. Dicky Lee was a good footballer. So was Saunders. They only paid them about a dollar for a game. (Miss Tyrrell)

Collingwood really was football crazy and the players were really local boys. They came from local families and Collingwood was very proud of its football tradition and there would be no thought of players transferring for money. I think everybody got the

same weekly fee wherever they played. I remember myself, we were absolutely horrified when Norm Smith went to coach Melbourne. It just seemed a complete and utter let down. And even though you didn't go to the football you were terribly interested because you wanted them to win. I never went to the football, Dad used to take the boys sometimes, but I was never considered. I don't think many women did go. It wasn't a woman's sport though a lot of them were very enthusiastic.

We used to play in the street with a paper football. That was the main hobby in all the areas around Collingwood. It was a piece of newspaper with a piece of string around it. You never had a proper football. (Mr Hocking)

A famous Collingwood player, Lou Richards, Captain of the 1953 Collingwood premiership side, reminisced on his experiences of football and Collingwood in *The Sun*, 30 April 1977:

Old veterans like me can never forget the history and the legends that haunt the dressing rooms at Victoria Park.

To us, Collingwood IS football. The whole town reeks of it.

In my day it was the greatest ambition of every kid who kicked a paper football down Gold St, Vere St, or Hoddle St, to one day pull on a black and white jumper.

I was one of the lucky ones, I made it.

But I had a lot of help, three generations of my family were Magpies through and through. My grandfather, Charlie Pannam sen., played for 14 years, and his two sons, Charlie and Alby, played for seven and 13 years.

My brother, Ron, had 11 years there and I had 15.

From the time I could crawl, my Uncle Alby, a champion rover and ex-captain, stuck a footy in my hands and brain-washed me that I would one day run out on to Vic. Park.

Every Saturday I was dragged off by Grandpa Charlie to watch the great Collingwood teams of the 30s — the Depression years, or to old-time football followers, the Golden Years. How can I ever forget the successive

premierships in '35 and '36 when the Pies were led by one of their greatest captains, Harry Collier?

Harry and his brother "Leeta", vice-captain and Brownlow medallist, were not only inspirations to the team but to every Collingwoodite in those tough days.

And then there was Jack Regan and his wonderful aerial duels with South's Bob Pratt; our own two champion full-forwards, 'Nuts' Coventry and Ron Todd, kicking 100 goals year after year and Marcus Whelan, only 5ft 8in, but a master of towering marks in the centre.

I can still remember the mighty blue between Collingwood and Carlton in 1934 when players punched hell out of each other all day.

But to me Collingwood wasn't just football — it was home. It was places like the boot factories where my Mum worked for two quid a week to keep the family going when Dad couldn't get a job.

It was Friday night shopping in Smith St, and watching some of the star footballers parading up and down and putting themselves on show.

And ragged bare-footed kids slipping in and out of Coles and Woolies, nicking Violet Crumbles, bullseyes and humbugs off the lolly counter. Cable trams ran in Johnston and Smith Sts and it was a favorite game to stick a long string through an empty jam tin and let the cable drag it along. It was nothing to see 20 tins clattering in a long line along Johnston St.

And I reckon just about every kid in Collingwood got a whack on the fingers from the connie's ticket book while trying to whip behind the tram. We were all terrified of the "Don Mob" that used to hang around the Don Billiard Room in Johnston St. Those hoods used to terrorise the kids going to night school at Collingwood Tech, belting the daylights out of them.

That was until Fred Hughson, Fitzroy full-back and Collingwood copper, straightened out a few of the ringleaders with a hefty boot up the backside.

Fred was the longest kick in the League and no wonder — he had plenty of practice at the Don. We were no angels ourselves. When





LOCAL COLLINGWOOD FOOTBALL TEAM, 1907

the Sustenance Workers on the dole were building the Boulevard at Studley Park we used to heave bricks at them and chant: 'You're on the susso now.'

In all my life I'd hardly ever been outside Collingwood — a trip across the Yarra was a big event then — so there was no thought of any other team when I started with the Seconds in 1940.

There were no Maseratis Porsches or Jags outside the dressing rooms in those days. The only transport to training was Shanks' Pony or, if you were lucky, a pushbike.

I was an apprentice fitter and turner and my boss insisted I work overtime until 11 on Saturday mornings, even if we had to go to Geelong.

That meant a mad sprint to Vic. Park to catch the bus. Sometimes I was exhausted before the game even started.

Those were the days of champs like Des Fothergill, Fred Froude, Jackie Ross, Vinnie Dogherty, the Coventrys, Todd, Regan, Pannam and above all, the legendary Jock McHale.

Jock WAS Collingwood. I'll never forget the first time I met him — I was goggle-eyed with awe. Here was the man who had led the 'Woods to four successive

premierships in 1927-28-29 and 30 (still a record) and was to lead them to many more.

Jock commanded such respect that it was years before we dared call him anything but Mr McHale. Yet he was just an ordinary guy, a foreman at the brewery.

Jock had four great loves in his life — the Labor Party, the brewery, his family and the Collingwood Football Club, though not necessarily in that order.

I'll always remember one day when Jock was making his half-time address and we were down by four or five goals.

The then Labor Prime Minister, John Curtin, had just slipped into the rooms and Jock spotted him. Quick as a flash he yelled: 'If we want to win this match, we've got to be like the Labor Party and stick together'. Lately there have been a lot of nasty things said about the late John Wren — but I bet no old Collingwood player will hear a word against him.

Mr Wren was a familiar sight at Collingwood with his bow legs, grey felt hat and black overcoat with the velvet collar.

He helped many a Magpie out of financial difficulties in those hard times — especially forwards who

kicked a bagful of goals.

I remember once when I kicked seven goals against North Melbourne. I walked past Mr Wren seven times on my way to the showers before he slipped me a tanner.

Big nights out were watching 'The General Died at Dawn' with Gary Cooper and Madeline Carroll at the *Austral* — better known as the flea house. You were Big Time if you sat in the lounge at 2/7d.

The big go on Saturday nights was Freeman's Dance at the Collingwood Town Hall — where I won my Edna. The trick was to slap some rubbing-down oil on yourself first so all the charlies would know you were a Collingwood footballer.

But, of course, the big entertainment in town came on Saturday arvos when the Magpies burst out of that race.

And to be there with them was the greatest honor a Collingwood lad could know.

That's how some of my fondest memories began. Like the time I led the team on to the MCG and we went on to beat the champion Geelong side to win the 1953 Premiership — after a 17 year drought.

Or when I was picked to represent the Magpies in the 1947 Carnival team to Hobart.

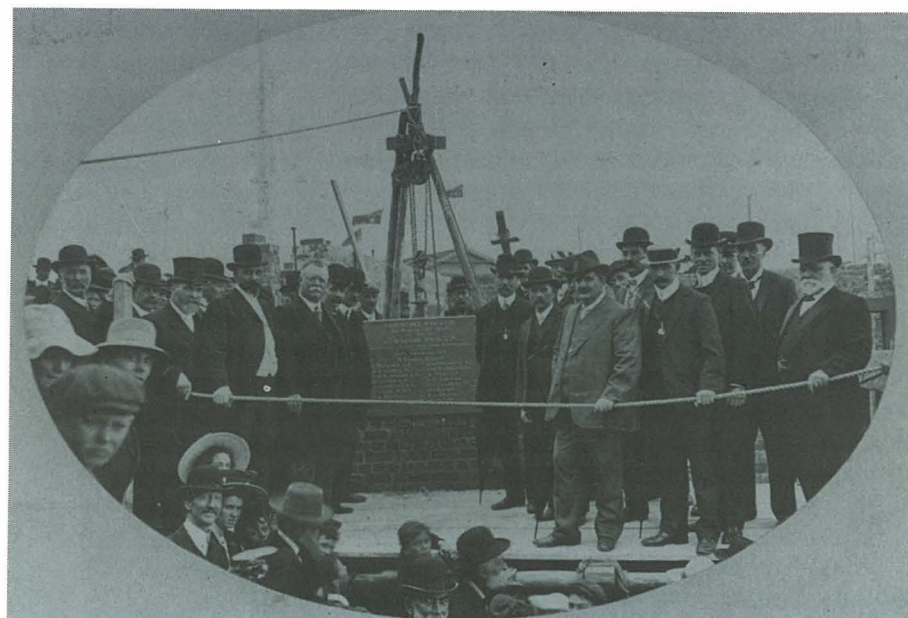


Or even sitting in the grandstand as a commentator watching Murray Weideman's side knock off Barassi and his Melbourne Mob in the '58 Grand Final when they tried to equal our record of four flags in a row. (But) to me Collingwood will always be the potholes in Gipps St, boot factories and grimy terraces, dancing at the Town Hall, the cable trams, John Wren, Jock McHale and the great players.

But most of all, it is the wide, green spaces at Victoria Park and the deafening cheer from the one-eyed Jack Ryder Stand.

Changes in football were revealed in a recent interview with Jack Regan, Collingwood Football Club Secretary who played for Collingwood from 1930 to 1946.

When I was playing during the Depression years, I was getting £3 a match — and that was at a time when the basic wage was £3/7/6. So we were pretty well off, compared to most, getting three quid for a day's work. Even so, I don't think the pay was as important to players of my time as it seems to be now. I remember in 1934 the Collingwood players called a special meeting because the club was in financial



LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF VICTORIA PARK GRANDSTAND, 1909

trouble. We decided to play each game for nothing, to help out the club, and at the end of the season divided up any spare money amongst us. We ended up getting our match payments, as it turned out, but I doubt whether too many players today would play simply for the love of the jumper.

I trained a few nights a week and on Sunday mornings. I think we were just as fit as today's players. The big thing about those days is that we walked everywhere, or used public transport — very few people had

cars. With all that walking, we were pretty fit. One thing which amazes me now is the number of players who break down with a hamstring injury. In my day hamstring injuries were almost unheard of. I put it down to the amount of walking we all did in our day-to-day life, instead of hopping in the car to drive a hundred metres down to the milk bar.

Football fame provided Collingwood with an element of respectability which contrasted with its reputation for larrikinism.



STANTON STREET FOOTBALL CLUB, 1923



## Larrikins

In 1882 the *Argus* newspaper reported:

So rampant is larrikinism at present that it takes rank as a question of most import to the whole colony. It may be safely said that not a day passes but ladies are insulted in the streets by the loud language of foul-mouthed ruffians, and that scarcely a night passes without an outbreak of rowdiness or the perpetration of some blackguardly outrage.

In 1881, 3,141 youths were arrested and appeared on the police books of Melbourne and the inner suburbs. Twenty-two constables and one detective were injured or maimed in the street battles in the same year. From 1870 onwards, Collingwood became notorious for its larrikins. Many of our local residents can remember gangs of larrikins. In the early years of this century, well-known gangs included the 'Campbells', 'Rileys' and, later, the 'Don Mob', named after the Don billiard hall in Johnston St.

In the old days when we used to have the mobs in Collingwood and Fitzroy, they never used to attack people around — they only used to fight amongst themselves. They never went around attacking people like they do these days. At first the Campbells was the main mob in Collingwood. The Don Mob was only in the later years. The Don billiard hall wasn't there in the early days. (Mr Hocking)

I can remember when these gangs would fight each other — they'd run along the streets and rip out the pickets from the fences and thrash one another with them. It was mostly in the evenings that they'd start these fights. The boys were mostly 18 years and onwards and they used to work during the day. I only ever saw one gang fight in the daytime and that was about 7.30 in the morning. These two gangs met, the Coppins and the Campbells, on the corner of Langridge St and Hoddle St. I was just going to work at the time and there they were with chains and pickets. The Campbells came from Campbell St, and the Coppins came from Richmond. Another well known

gang was the Rileys from the Riley St drain. (Mr Mayberry)

My mother got up one morning and found the verandah full of rubbish. Another time they put the gas-lights out. There were quite a few mobs of teenagers, known as the Rileys, the Ding Dongs and the Albions. They used to settle their differences in the swamp in Smith St, Fitzroy. The mobs selected the best fighter from each mob and the fight was properly conducted every Sunday morning. They had some good boxers. After a few years the mobs gradually disappeared from the town, owing to the police force engaging a couple of professional runners. They gradually caught up with them and cleaned them out. (Mrs Towers)

My son and a friend of his went to the *Austral* in Collingwood and the mobs were about. They passed a remark to my son. The two boys started running and they ran from the *Austral* right up Ramsden St. By gee, they were exhausted when they got here. They reckon if the mob had caught them they would have killed them. They never got their breath for

The larrikins were kept in order by the police. One particular policeman, Tony his name was, the boys would only have to see him and they'd be gone. They used to have some terrific fights, but they used to fight it out between themselves. They never used to bother other people. (Mrs Bayne)

There used to be a crowd they called the Don gang. They used to get the pailings off the fences and go out and meet other gangs and bash them up. The Fitzroy gang used to come over. The children of Collingwood were allowed to go wild. They used to go around breaking street lights and as they got older, of course, the gangs started and they gave Collingwood a bad name. The boys in the gangs were about eighteen. They didn't have a job because they wouldn't work. They'd go out in the afternoons and look for trouble. (Mrs Don)

The Don mob used to have a bad name, but they weren't that bad. They were a most decent, respectable lot. If they saw any elderly people out at night they'd help them home rather than follow them home.





## The Wars 'The Great War' 1914-18

When Great Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914, in Australia, '... crowds sang the National Anthem in the streets, bands played "Rule Britannia" in the cafes, and crowds cheered and sang in theatres'. By the end of the war, 11 November 1918, 416,809 Australians had entered armed services; 59,342 had been killed and 152,171 wounded. From Collingwood some 3,000 soldiers enlisted, 300 of whom were killed. While the boys went to war, those at home worked, often in the secondary industries which were expanding to serve the war, and waited for news from distant Europe.

One thing I can remember was just after I started school in 1914. War broke out and my Uncle Bob got a job of going with his horse and cart into the Herald office in the city and getting the Extraordinaries, and I can remember him taking me and rushing up and down Hoddle St — which was only a dusty old road with small cobblestones in those days — selling these Extraordinaries. That happened nearly every week for quite a while. They were a small, say two

page, paper telling you what happened at Gallipoli or the Dardanelles or anything specific that was happening in the war. There was no wireless or even cat's whisker sets in those days. All you got was by the newspaper or by word of mouth.

Hundreds of young boys went and we couldn't get the casualty paper quick

enough of a night-time to see. There was a lot of them killed. There was a lovely lad next door. He'd been away and just come home for his 21st birthday and was only home a couple of days and he went back and got killed.

There was a big factory on the corner of Groom St and Roseneath St and



RED CROSS FETE FOR THE WAR EFFORT, COLLINGWOOD TOWN HALL



'SMOKE NIGHT', SIR ROBERT PEEL HOTEL TO FAREWELL THE SOLDIERS OFF TO THE WAR



Copy of Letter sent by General Birdwood  
to Lt. W. Ruthven on the occasion of the award of the  
Victoria Cross, 13th July, 1918.

Headquarters,  
A. I. F.,  
Attached Headquarters, Fifth Army,  
B. E. F.  
13th July, 1918.

Dear Ruthven,

It is with very great pleasure that I write to send you my heartiest congratulations on the award to you of the Victoria Cross in recognition of your exceptionally good work and conspicuous gallantry during our attack which resulted in the capture of Ville-sur-Ancre on the 19th May. During the advance under heavy fire, your company suffered many casualties, while the company commander was severely wounded. You at once grasped the whole situation, and assumed command of this portion of the assault, while you also took charge of the company headquarters, and rallied the sections in the vicinity. On approaching the objective, your leading wave came under heavy direct fire from an enemy machine gun distant about 30 or 40 yards. You at once rushed forward most gallantly, bombed the post, and then charged it, killing one of the crew with your bayonet, and capturing the gun. You then attacked a party of Germans coming out of a shelter, wounding two, and capturing six others, whom you sent back under escort.

On reaching your objective, in which you established a post, you noticed enemy movement about 150 yards distant in a sunken road. Without hesitation, and armed only with a revolver, you crossed over open ground and rushed the position single-handed. After killing two Germans who refused to leave a dugout, you captured the whole garrison of 32 men, and held them in custody until an escort arrived. During the remainder of the day, you displayed untiring energy and good leadership supervising the work of consolidation, and inspiring valuable confidence in your men.

I am also so pleased that the award of this high distinction has been followed by your promotion from Serjeant to Lieutenant, and I wish you further success in the future. With my kind regards, and sincere thanks for your splendid work.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed.) W. R. Birdwood.



of Pozieres on the Somme in France in 1916. His wife remembers:

They wanted him to come home and he didn't want to come home. And they said, 'Wouldn't he want to see his fiancée and his mother' and he said 'Yes'. They said he'd be able to come back again. He was only home one day and the war ended and he was very sad about that. He wanted to be there at the finish you see. (Some years after his return, William Ruthven became a Collingwood Councillor, Mayor of Collingwood, and MLA)

My brother wanted to go to the war. My mother didn't want him to go. She said, 'You can go if your Dad says'. My father signed the papers. My brother was seventeen when he was in Egypt.

I voted against conscription. I had a brother there and three uncles killed over there, but I couldn't vote for conscription. I wouldn't compel anyone. The First World War should never have been. Australians have got no business to step into other people's countries.

## The Second World War

September 1939 saw the outbreak of war with Germany in Europe and again Australian soldiers went to fight. In December 1941 Japan entered the war and in February 1942 the Japanese bombed Darwin and Broome. Before the fighting ended in August 1945, 8,572 Australians were killed in the war against Germany and Italy, 17,501 in fighting against the Japanese.

Of course, the war upset everything for us. I had two boys, William and John, and they both went to the war. Bill was in the Navy and Jack was in the Armoured Division, he was in Bougainville for more than 4 years. That was the Second War — their father was in the First War and was in the landing of the Eighth Light Horse. I've seen two wars.

It was because of the Depression that so many joined the army. They couldn't get work so they joined the army. That was how they could get money coming in.



BILL TOWERS M.M., LATER MAYOR OF COLLINGWOOD AND LOCAL M.L.A.

they used to make the harnesses for the First World War. And Stockwells made their military hats.

Miss Lord's first job was at Stockwells:

During the First World War I used to work in Emma St at Stockwell's hat

factory and we made the khaki hats for the soldiers. I was fifteen when I worked there.

From Collingwood, William Ruthven went to war and was awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest military honour, for gallantry during the battle





MRS BAYNE IN SMITH ST, 4 SEPTEMBER 1939, THE DAY AFTER WAR WAS DECLARED

The war also brought rationing of many necessities including tea, sugar, butter, meat and clothing.

They brought the rationing in. We were alright, we had five children and we had more than enough coupons to go round.

The thing that affected people most was when there was rationing of cigarettes and beer. I think we

opened the hotel from half past 4 until 6 during the war, but it was very hard. Depending on how much beer you got, well, naturally the more beer you got the more you could stop open. (Mrs O'Laughlin)

You had a black-out of a night. If you had a light in your window Harry Durnedas would knock on your door.

Mrs Hoggett, Mrs Pizer's daughter,

**A.C.F.**

**"THE DUGOUT"**

SWANSTON ST. (Near Collins St.)

*Offers a Welcome to*

**ALL SERVICEMEN  
ON LEAVE**

- Good Eats!
- Good Band!
- Good Entertainment!
- Hot & Cold Showers!
- Barber's Shop & Shoe Shine!
- Writing & Reading Room!
- Dancing Partners Provided!

**OPEN DAILY**

*Including Sundays*

**From 9.30 a.m. to 11 p.m.**

*Ladies and Men in Mufti  
NOT ADMITTED*

grew up during the war:

The bus inspector had to have plans of a route to evacuate the kids in case they had to be taken from the city in a hurry. The headmaster sent home for names of the children whose parents were willing to send them to the country if necessary. My mum wasn't letting me go.

Dr Singleton's was an ARP and air raid centre for if there was an emergency. They used to have first aid classes and children were asked to volunteer as patients while they practised on them. They had the old stretchers hanging up on the wall and helmets at the ready. In the schools they had air raid practice. At the siren you'd all have to run and lie down in the play ground. They also had air raid practice at night for everybody, when the planes flew overhead and everybody had to have their windows blacked out and all the street lights were dimmed. They called it a 'brown out'. The lights were covered so you only got the light going down. And the ARP wardens knocked on your door if you hadn't blacked out properly. Actually it was rather frightening when they did it, and they had searchlights.

In every vacant block of land they had trenches dug, everywhere where there was a playing area was dug up for trenches.

Coupons were issued for food and clothing and any of the girls over a certain height got extra coupons —





you had to be tall to get extra coupons. It was a common sight to see people queued up outside Coles when a fresh supply of chocolates or polly waffles came in as they were very hard to get. They were all sent to the troops. So if you were lucky you were in the queue before the supply ran out.

They also used 'austerity' wrapping instead of the glossy papers for chocolates. Even envelopes were brown paper and ordinary writing paper you bought in a shop had V for victory printed on it. People bought war savings stamps at the post office and the money was used for the war effort.

At Collingwood Domestic Arts all the girls in the sewing classes hemmed up tea-towels for the army canteens and khaki, navy and white heavy wool was issued for knitting jumpers for the army and the navy. All the girls' knitting was scarves or socks for soldiers. I knitted my first pair of socks for a soldier.

I can remember all the form 2 girls playing the wag from school when the American servicemen came so they could collect the army buttons from their uniforms. All the goody-goodies were terribly scandalised. Because a lot of food was getting sent to Britain there were shortages here which caused the black market. You could buy material, cigarettes, stockings (that was a real racket, stockings) on the black market, at a price. You were rationed for tobacco



F. A. WHITELY DURING WORLD WAR 2

so anyone who didn't smoke was very popular.

The government took over lots of machinery in factories and so much of the production was for war effort. I worked in a woollen mill, weaving, and some of the mills were commandeered for army blankets; the grey ones with the blue stripes. That's why there were shortages because the army got first choice. I worked then in the post office as a

telegram girl which was the first time they'd employed girls — so many of the young boys had joined up.

I can remember VE Day, victory in Europe. All the shops and offices and factories stopped work and everyone dashed into town. They danced up Bourke St. Everything came to a stop. Blokes were climbing lamp posts and kissing the girls. It was a great old day.





HOUSE IN ABBOTSFORD, 1978



## Collingwood into the 1970s Changes and Attitudes

Between 1914 and 1947 Collingwood's population fell from 36,000 to 27,000. In the years following the Second World War the 'vacancies' caused by the continuing exodus from Collingwood to the outer suburbs were filled partly by the expansion of industry and largely by European migrants. In 1961 Greek and Italian migrants alone accounted for 21 per cent of Collingwood's population. The 1976 census showed Collingwood with a population of 16,645 of whom 9,985 were born in Australia, 2,622 in Greece, 845 in Yugoslavia, 684 in Turkey and Lebanon and 581 in Italy. In the 1950s many local people left to live in outer suburbs when their houses were demolished by the Housing Commission to make way for high-rise flats.

Changes have continued in the 1960s and 1970s with massive road widening and freeway building in Collingwood and increasing renovation of the remaining houses both by the migrant population and by young Australian-born people moving in to the area.

As Bernard Barrett wrote in *The Inner Suburbs*:

**For many people, Collingwood has been a satisfactory place to live. Apart from the low-cost housing, there was local employment. Whereas middle-class suburbs tend to be dormitories for people employed in the central business district or elsewhere, Collingwood people generally worked together . . . It must be remembered that Collingwood was a community, and that it always commanded a greater degree of commitment from its residents than most other Melbourne suburbs did. This has been evidenced by the enormous local support for the Collingwood football team in the Victorian Football League. Families stayed in Collingwood for generations, often by choice as much as necessity. Collingwood was like this at least until World War II.**

The citizens of the City of Collingwood have been very aware of the differences between the three areas within the municipal boundary —



Abbotsford, Collingwood and Clifton Hill.

**When I lived in Collingwood, Abbotsford was the elite part of the area.**

**I think Clifton Hill was the aristocratic part of Collingwood. They had better houses and the Darling Gardens.**

**Clifton Hill people do think they're a step higher. Years ago no-one ever spoke of living in Collingwood or Fitzroy if you could get out of it. They'd always name a different suburb. They thought there was too much rough stuff and too much poverty. It sort of lowered their dignity to let anyone know they lived**

**in Collingwood. The children in Collingwood were let go. They used to go round breaking street lights and as they got older of course the gangs started and gave Collingwood a bad name.**

**You're not far from the City here in Clifton Hill and the streets are wide and open. We're not low down like down at Abbotsford and down on the river. I think a nice class of people always lived around here.**

What did people elsewhere in Melbourne think of Collingwood?

**Oh, so you come from Collingwood — that sort of thing. The other places looked down on it, like Kew and the likes of them.**





I suppose because the money wasn't as free. The people weren't very comfortable. The people had a very hard time, those in the heart of Collingwood.

I think the marvellous thing about the people in Collingwood was that with all their hardships and low wages and rented accommodation they got out of Collingwood. It was Collingwood really who populated Fairfield, Alphington, Ivanhoe,

WELLINGTON STREET HIGH-RISE FLATS, 1978



KILL FREEWAYS  
NOT NATURE

STOP FREEWAYS

ROSES ARE RED  
VIOLETS ARE BLUE  
GET RID OF FREEWAYS  
OR THEY'LL GET RID OF YOU.

Heidelberg and then, later on, Eltham. They were the sort of pioneers of the northern suburbs. I mean we're the only ones who stayed.

The people of Collingwood have seen many changes. 'In those days' they lived, worked and played in the area. They were able to walk or ride a bike to work and go to the local church, hotel, picture theatre or dance. Some old timers seldom crossed the dividing main roads. It was almost like a big

village. On the Collingwood flat, changes which the residents recall include the spread of the factories and relatively recently the work of the Housing Commission, both destroying established residential areas. In contrast, in Clifton Hill paddocks gave way to houses, and parks replaced quarries and tips.

I remember when I first started school in Vere St, Collingwood, there was still a small Chinese market garden. It was somewhere on the south or south-west side of the

school.

In the early days White's was the only factory between Gipps St and Victoria St and it went through from Rupert St to Cromwell St. That was the only factory and now, I counted them one day when I walked along Rupert St, I think there are only seven houses left between Victoria St and Gipps St. When we were kids there was no such thing as all these factories. Old Hughie Thompson's tannery and boot factory was in





HODDLE STREET AND COLLINGWOOD COLLEGE, 1978

Rokeby St, corner of Rokeby St and Cromwell, but that was about the only factory we had around here.

When the Housing Commission flats were built along Hoddle St there were something like 300 homes had to be pulled down. One we lived in in Francis St was among the number. Ours wasn't a very good building, it was only rented, but one a bit further along where Mrs Hughes lived, she spent nearly £1,000 putting the place in proper order setting it up for her old age, and all that had to go, and she got no recompense for it — or very little. She wanted to stay there for the rest of her life. She didn't want to be moved around but she had to go like the rest.



SIGN IN WELLINGTON STREET, 1978

The Commission estates, well the mission I used to go to and my mother's and father's house had to go for those monstrous looking flats in Hoddle St. I lost my mother and father within 16 months of them having to get out of their house, because they just had no anchor.

Mrs Mayes and Miss Lord remembered the paddocks of Clifton Hill:

Oh Clifton Hill's gone ahead wonderfully. Now where I live in

Dally St from Ramsden St to Roseneath St was one big paddock. Further down Roseneath St towards Hoddle St my father had the letting of for 1/6 a week for cows and horses. And right up from Ramsden St to Roseneath St was one big paddock with only one big house — a big stone house. And that lady had chooks — about 500 or so chooks on the corner where the butcher is now. And ducks. And the lady on the paddock used to tether her cows there and when we went to school we used to chase the cows and she used to run after us and swear at us. And could she swear. Where these factories are here now used to be one big paddock. We could walk right through from Roseneath St practically to where the Victoria Park school is. There wasn't a house of any sort. Now you've got to go up around corners and everywhere.

Mrs Henry lived in the old bluestone house which Miss Lord remembered:

I walked along Roseneath St when I was only 13 years of age and saw the house that I'm living in now. It was all quarry and there was no houses here and I said to my granny 'Look at that old-fashioned house on the hill'. Little did I know that it would ever be my home. They tell me that people by the name of Ramsden owned my home and that's where Ramsden St got its name. Mr and Mrs Ramsden had their own coach and horses and everything like that.

(Samuel Ramsden, of the Clifton Hill quarries, purchased the land in 1851 and built his home soon after. He was

a Collingwood Councillor in the late 1850s.)

And what of other changes in Collingwood?

I miss the shops — Treadways and Foys. A few weeks ago I went to Smith St and saw a wonderful change. It's all foreign shops now.

Hoddle St has changed terrific. You'd get lost now in Collingwood. Anybody who'd been away and came back after a few years wouldn't know Collingwood, because of Hoddle St being gone. It was the main street in Collingwood.

Well Collingwood's not as friendly as it was. To my way of thinking it used to be very friendly. If anyone said anything against Collingwood I'd down them, I wouldn't let anyone say anything against Collingwood. Collingwood has made a lot of changes in my time for the better — filling in tips, providing parks and gardens around Merri Creek, widening Hoddle St and cleaning up the slums.

The parks and gardens have improved. Heidelberg Rd is lovely. Down the end of my street is a great improvement. Before there was the tip, we had drays and, oh, it was horrible before. I can't complain about Collingwood and Clifton Hill, only at the present moment we've got a rotten shopping centre and I don't care who knows it. My family wanted me to leave it all, but I just couldn't.

Well at the moment the Collingwood area looks dreadful with these monstrous looking flats and pulled down places and dug up streets. They've really raped Collingwood, it's dreadful. But I like Clifton Hill, I've always liked Clifton Hill and I wouldn't like to move from here because it's a friendly area and I know all the people around here and I get on fine with most people.

There's more migrants. I've got a lot of friends around Clifton Hill, New Australians and old Australians. I get on very well with the migrants. I would hate to shift because I know the ground so well.