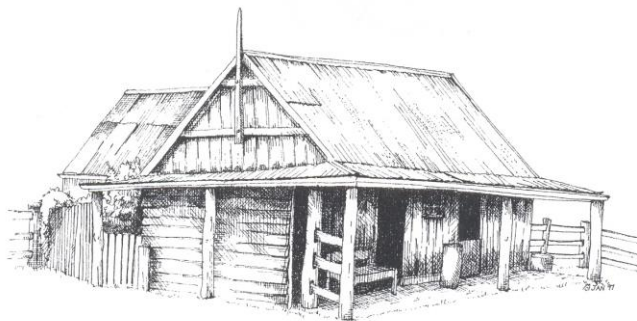


FRIENDS AND RELATIONS OF GULF STATION

APRIL 2016



Diary Dates (except if Total Fire Ban for *Central District*)

FROGS Meetings, alternate First Sundays 2.30pm

5 June
7 August

FROGS Social Sundays, alternate First Sundays 2.30pm (see page 2)

1 May
3 July

Sunday 17 April Open Day 10am-4pm 160th Anniversary of Gulf Station

Saturday 21 May Open Day 10am-4pm 60th Anniversary of the National Trust

Saturday 4 June, Bunnings BBQ, 268-288 Maroondah Highway, Croydon

Please let Di, Stan, Alan or Ian know if you can help.

Sunday 30 October

40th anniversary of Gulf Station's being purchased for Victoria (see Lesley's letter)

Thursday Work

Thursday morning work continues.
Newcomers welcome, all skill levels, gardening, general maintenance etc. Join the friendly team.

Tadpoles

No response to the appeal for a new person to take over co-ordinating the group so activities are in abeyance for the time being. However, do come for Social Sundays (see page 2).

Newsletter arrangements

To reduce costs (and Irene's workload):

- Those who have an email address will automatically be emailed the newsletter.
- Volunteers' copies will be available for collection from Gulf Station.

From the President

Dear Friends

This is a very important year for Gulf Station. It is the 60th anniversary of the National Trust in Victoria and it is forty years ago on October 31st that Sir Rupert Hamer purchased Gulf Station on behalf of the Victorian government and vested the property with the National Trust to restore and maintain. It is time to celebrate.

On **Sunday October 30th** we, and everybody who supported the Station, will celebrate. Part of the event will be an exhibition of Gulf Station memorabilia. If you have anything - photographs, objects, costumes - that you might like to lend us, please let us know: we would be most grateful.

I attended the National Trust's 60th anniversary dinner at Ripponlea Estate. It was a very happy event. The keynote speaker was Mr Simon Molesworth, a past chairman of the Trust in Victoria and the A.C.N.T., and recently retired chairman of the World Organizations of the National Trust. He stressed how important it was for future generations to be aware of our precious heritage, both indigenous and Australian. He quoted bringing his children to Gulf Station to our Pioneer Skills Days and Bush Christmas celebrations, and how such events carried the message of heritage to future generations - it was such a moving address that I started to weep - I won't say any more, I think you understand what I felt and the pride I feel for all the Gulf Station community, past and present. Gulf Station is not just a heritage property but a group of people dedicated to preserve and present to the public the history of our pioneer past.

A joyful announcement at the dinner was, that day, the engagement of Lachlan Molesworth, Simon's eldest son, to a very beautiful young lady named Olivia. Lachlan, as a child visited Gulf Station often and was made No. 1 FROG. I'm sure we all wish Olivia and Lachlan every happiness for the future.

See you at our two Open Days April 17th and May 21st. Until then,

Keep well and God Bless,

Lesley Barnes OAM

Social Sundays

For many years, the alternate First Sundays (*not* the meeting First Sundays) have been Working Bees but, now that most work is done on Thursdays, we're re-branding those alternate First Sundays as "**Social Sundays**." Just come for the afternoon, have a cuppa, bring a plate to share if you like, bring friends, bring other Relations (although you can work if you really want to). Those youngsters who now miss Tadpoles could come and have fun. Just enjoy our lovely Gulf Station!

Volunteer news

We've welcomed several new volunteers recently - the more the merrier!

There are still some volunteers with health issues - we hope they are better soon. And others are travelling - bon voyage and welcome back as appropriate.

Sheila Wood damaged a shoulder which has prompted a plan to move to supported accommodation - we hope you are soon settled in comfortably, Sheila, and can continue to come to Gulf Station.

Kevin Heeley is back to full strength and keen to get back to work (see following item).

Volunteer Co-ordinator

Some Thursdays there are as many as 15 volunteers working on various projects and this creates the need for some co-ordination. Scott Strachan asked **Kevin Heeley** if he would be willing to assume this role and Kevin agreed. The FROGS meeting of 3 April endorsed this appointment. Kevin was employed as manager here in previous years and since then has been a volunteer, he lives locally and has many connections in the area. Thank you Kevin!

Membership numbers

A FROGS member asked about membership numbers. The following is an analysis of *newsletter* distribution for 2015 (not all posted - an increasing number are emailed and volunteers' copies are left at Gulf Station for collection):

- 9 Honorary (current) members
- 55 Financial (some are couples/families; some are also volunteers)
- 8 Not yet paid 2015/2016 (some are couples/families)
- 7 Volunteers who are not also FROGS members (some are couples)

Additionally some non-financial Relations are sent a copy because we don't want to lose connection with them.

Copies also to certain Trust staff and to a few individuals/organisations contributing to Gulf Station and we swap newsletters with a couple of related organisations.

Renewal forms for 2016/17

Where have the months gone? It's Renewal time already and there's a form with this newsletter. Please note there's a small increase (\$2) in subscription rates, approved by the FROGS February meeting. This the first increase in anyone's memory so please be understanding.

However, the FROGS meeting of 3 April agreed that anyone with an email address will automatically be emailed their newsletter.

Irene currently takes up to 3 hours to photocopy, staple, envelope, frank and mail the paper copies (plus the time taken to print address labels at home and of course text preparation) so the change will save her time as well as leaving more FROGS subscriptions for useful projects.



From Helen Watters (1980s staff member)

I would like to thank you and all the FROGS for keeping me in touch with Gulf Station via the Frogs Newsletter. (I worked at Gulf Station during the 1980s and it was a memorable and wonderful time.)

I have been living in Central Victoria for the past 25 years which has meant I have not visited Gulf Station as much as I would have liked and now I think it is time for me to stop receiving the Newsletters too. I really appreciate the way you have sent them for so many years.

I would like to send my greetings to the Frogs who remember me and I wish you all the best for the future and the time you spend caring for that precious lovely place.

Helen Watters

Bill Cameron

Another sad loss to Gulf Station's Relations and for all who value the memories of Gulf Station: **William John Cameron** (Bill) passed away peacefully on 2 March 2016.

We send our condolences to **Mavis**, his wife of 53 years, and to all his family, including Bill's niece **Marion Bishop** (who kindly contributed the following Life).

The life of William John Cameron

William was born on the 28th May 1922 in Eltham, Victoria. The third of four brothers, the eldest Douglas K.I.A. in Luxembourg in 1940. His father Gordon served in Europe in WWI.

With his family he lived in Lilydale then Mooroolbark and walked through the paddocks to Lilydale Primary school watching for snakes and swooping magpies. Later they moved to Bayswater Road, Croydon.

Bill always attended Sunday School and spent most of the school holidays with his aunts and uncles at Gulf Station. Riding with his Uncle Bill one day, he was led to the edge of the dam where the horse drank and Bill rolled forward into the water.

As a young man, he belonged to East Melbourne Harriers Club and competed at Olympic Park and in many cross-country races. Bill then studied Electrical Engineering and Aeronautical Engineering and worked in both fields with the State Electricity Commission, the Shell Company, the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation, and Ansett Airlines. He tried to enlist in the Armed Services in WWII but he was refused due to the Essential Services Power Act.

In 1963 Bill married Mavis nee Morel; after 10 years a daughter Deborah was born. There are three grandchildren: Rochelle, Alexander and Oscar. Bill and Mavis were married for 53 years. Bill was a private person, an absolute gentleman, very placid and had a great sense of humour.

SOMEONE SPECIAL.

"Death leaves a heartache no one can heal
Love leaves a memory no one can steal".



Born: Eltham 28 May 1922
Died: Prahran 3 March 2016



William Cameron, Marion Bell Bishop (nee Cameron), Dinah Bell (Aunty Dine)

Image: Courtesy Marion Bishop

Thanks from Mavis Cameron



Thank you for your support, very much appreciated. Mavis Cameron

Voices from Gulf Station

The visit of **Alan Bell** (grandson of **Frank Bell**) and wife **Gay** on 17 March was the excuse for a happy gathering of Relations in the Gulf Station barn; they were joined for morning tea by volunteers and Tasma staff Martin Green and Vicki. Alan and Gay told us about their find, in the Kongwak house, of a cache of postcards sent from Frank's siblings at Gulf Station to him, his wife Elsie and eventually to his children at Kongwak. Gay has created *Voices from Gulf Station*, a selection of images and transcriptions that is both absorbing and beautiful. However, Gay wants to do some more work on this before there can be any plan for publication. **Marion Bishop** brought some postcards from her own family archives, which Gay scanned. Many Relatives expressed their appreciation of the volunteers' dedication.



Back row L to R: Unknown (apologies - please can someone supply the name?), John White, Peter Horn, Allan Bell, Murray Tomlinson, Tony Earley, John Sharman, Colin Tomlinson. Front row L to R: Gay Bell, Marion Bishop, Sandra Sharman, Pam Earley, Lindy Tomlinson, Ros Tomlinson

Image above: Carina Harding

Martin Green took the opportunity to record on video-camera memories of Gulf Station from **Sandra Sharman** and **Murray Tomlinson** (this will become part of the Trust's planned self-guided tour app for visitors' mobiles). Filming in the bakehouse was interrupted by a brush-tail possum who objected to the disturbance of his peaceful sleep in the bread-oven (that blur is the possum).

Stills from Martin Green



Martin's reported: "The possum just passed behind Sandra, brushed her shoulder and ran out under the door. And we all got a big fright not knowing quite what happened."

Sandra's response was to roar with laughter - you can't faze a country woman

As children, **Sandra** remembered how Aunt Ida baked the bread and did all the cooking; Sandra had baths in the bath-house and **Murray** remembered riding horses and seeing the old men who sat by the well.



A word from Bessie Kelso

Bessie is a Little connection: her grandmother Ellen (Stevenson of Kangaroo Ground) married William Little, brother of Mary Ann Bell. Bessie wrote to Lesley of her planned move and took the opportunity of enclosing a newspaper clipping covering the death and funeral of Mary Ann Bell.

Just a note to put in the post with an old clipping from a newspaper that my mother had cut out and kept.

I am leaving my house in a couple of months as I have bought a smaller place at Mornington. I will be closer to my family who are at Mt Martha-Bittern and of course I have been steadily getting rid of paper stuff. I am glad I will be moving as I am slowing down being 95 years and it is good to be able to do it whilst I am still well and able. I can settle my pussy cat and will still do my own cooking of meals etc so I am very blessed. The place is called Morwen Mannor.

Lesley and all FROGS wish Bessie best wishes for the move and her new home.



Wildlife at Gulf Station

On 3 March, a firetail (red-browed finch) was seen flitting around the working-horse stable entrance - that flashing red rail is unmistakable.

Top-secret Gulf Station photo-shoot

In April there was a hush hush photo-shoot at Gulf Station for advertising the Ram ute (made by Dodge). This involved **Stan** and **Mike** attending the site to facilitate several research visits by the company, then teamwork by several volunteers to move out some carts from the barn end. To celebrate the end of a long day's shooting, Stan (in frog suit) and Mike had their photograph taken with the huge vehicle: a Frog, a Ram and a Mike.

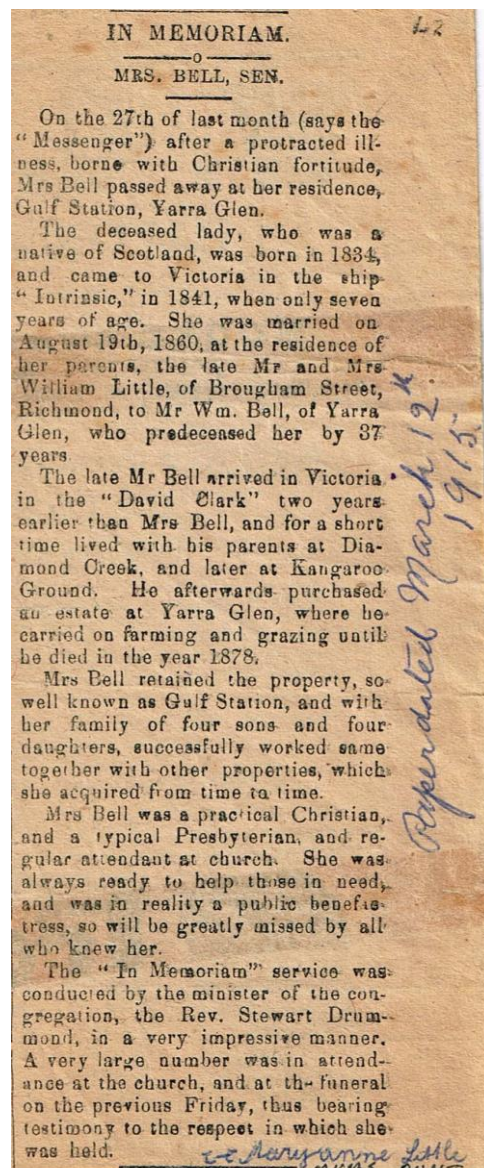


Image: Christine Barnes

Bulrushes

Mike Ridley is extending his scything activities by tackling the bulrushes threatening to choke the dam: using his scythe, he's chopping them off at the socks. **Elizabeth Clark** has endorsed Mike's method, reporting that her father used this technique: he had a special tool called a "carbungi hook" (carbungi being a narrow-leaved bulrush - *Typha angustifolia*). Elizabeth recalls her father kept this long-handled tool lethally sharp (as he did all his cutting tools). To be effective, the plant needs to be chopped below the water surface (so it "drowns").

Image: Irene Kearsey



Whelping kennels - no sooner said than started

Irene alerted **Stan**, **Alan** and **Ian** to a single panel coming adrift in a half-door of one of the whelping kennels and, in no time, the chaps have a major renovation underway of all kennel doors and the adjoining pen (used for pigs waiting to go to a Show, wooden floor so they don't get muddy). Luckily there is a supply of palings available, suitably weathered to blend in. Here is a pair of *Before* and *After* photographs of the right-hand kennel:

Images: Alan Gosling



Work done so far in 2016 by one group of volunteers

Stan and **Neil** at long last made the back kitchen, dairy and butcher's shop secure; **Stan** made the slaughterhouse and woolshed secure (padlocks installed). Owing to the theft of the two best-restored horse-blinker sets from the house barn during a festive season gathering, **Neil** stripped this barn of all restored and refurbished harness which are now all stored in secure buildings inside the trunks **Neil** and **Pam** restored.

Stan did work on the gates plus his usual repairs and upkeep of many other items.

Pam and **Neil** stripped the main kitchen down and, while **Pam** washed down all the filthy shelves, **Neil** sealed various items again with oil and/or silicon wax to stop rusting. The brass tap on the water fountain was polished up to look much nicer.

The bathroom and laundry were again given a thorough cleaning, as was the butcher's shop, separator room and the dairy. The dairy was filthy and, amazingly after washing down the locker top, it was found not to be wood as thought but is in fact a slab of heavy marble. All the bottles were again washed and, as there were more than on the previous clean, they must be breeding.

All the windows in the house, kitchen, Maggie's room and boy's room were cleaned twice and we can now not only see in and out better but also the light inside is much improved (no artificial light in the latter two). **Neil** also gave all the picnic tables and benches plus the de Bortoli garden seats two to three coats of wood oil: this not only makes them look better but will help preserve them. Next big job was to restore and refurbish the wagons and carriages but, owing to the Trust now going to remove some of these items, this work will not be carried out.

The schoolhouse was also cleaned again and its windows washed; this revealed both window sashes were loose and these were secured; the lean-to also reorganised. **Pam** continues to lay out fresh flowers in the house and to water the house-plants. Oiling the saddles stored in the boy's room along with other precious items continues.

Pam and **Neil** also act as the guides every Thursday for drop-in tourists, who always seem to call in just on lunchtime or an hour before closing. [Thank you, **Neil Moir**, for this comprehensive report.]

Healesville Mission Church

Matt Jeffery (Cracka) has kindly provided some photographs of the church before and during his work dismantling the building.



Left: Before Matt started work and
(below) Work started

Above right: Matt's daughter
Madison measuring the shipping
container for size.

Images: Matt Jeffrey

A sad closure

The Light Horse and Field Artillery Museum's participation in last year's *Parcels from Home* contributed greatly to our event's success. Regrettably, the owner, Bernie Dingle, has had to close the museum at Nar Nar Goon as the local council required unaffordable building work. Bernie hopes he can relocate the museum to another district.

Herald Sun 5.2.2016 p13



Just another Thursday for Irene

I'm not a regular Thursday volunteer at Gulf Station, having no talent for gardening or maintenance work. However, I do appreciate the great atmosphere of teamwork and camaraderie created by the volunteers and I'd like to try and convey that feeling for those who cannot be a Thursday volunteer or to bring back memories for those who used to be (and if I inspire someone new to join, that would be wonderful).

There hasn't been an on-the-spot manager for a long time so each piece of work undertaken at Gulf Station has to be decided by the individual or by a sub-group of volunteers: noticing something that needs doing, working out how to tackle it and what's needed, finding what's required and who else might be needed to give a hand – and then just *getting on with it*. *

Other jobs that I noticed being done on just one recent Thursday included the following:

- In the garden, in addition to regular maintenance, broken sections of a rose arbour were replaced and the whole made good (see below).
- Elsewhere around the property, a broken leg on the BBQ was repaired. The jockey wheel on the trailer was replaced. Picnic tables were oiled. Three handymen assessed what could be done to repair aspects of the whelping kennels and a plan was made (see page 6). The school house was given a good clean. Bulrushes were removed from the dam (see page 6). A quote for a new chain-saw was obtained.

Each Thursday everyone gathers for morning tea and the opportunity to exchange their own news but there is usually some general information that needs to be shared or gathered: on this Thursday it was planning for the visit of some Relatives (see page 4). Then everyone goes back to their tasks. Actually that's when I *can* contribute - I can at least wash up the mugs.

*Now that Kevin Heeley has agreed to co-ordinate work, this should work much better.

Garden News

Work continues, as is the essence of gardening, but a recent task has been giving the hedges a trim.

Harvey and **Maureen** have renewed this arch (below), ready for roses to climb up next season. And the pomegranates looked luscious. However, once again some #@!^% has stripped most of the orchard trees of all their fruit, even getting to the top of the taller trees.



Images: Carina Harding