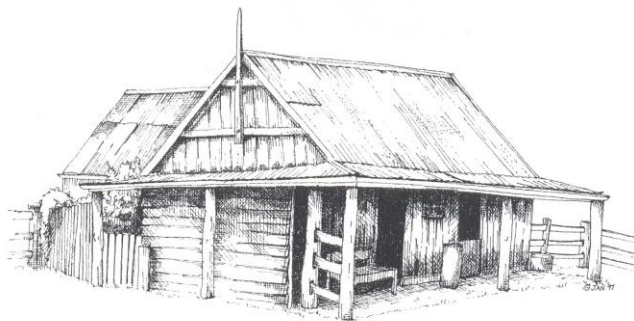


FRIENDS AND RELATIONS OF GULF STATION

APRIL 2019



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

Open Day for the Heritage Festival

Thursday 18 April - see page 2

Bunning's BBQ Croydon

Tuesday 23 April (after Easter Monday and before ANZAC day on Thursday – could be busy with extra leave days taken)

Talk 'La Trobe's Gold and Silver Testimonial Pieces'

Thursday 23 May, see page 7

'Ribbons of green' planting

Thursday 27 June - first of a series of tree plantings, see page 10

David Clark 180th anniversary 2019

Sunday 27 October, see page 10

Enquiries: davidclark1839@gmail.com

Bunning's BBQ – *note date change*

Friday 20 September (last day of school term, maybe not so busy)

Gulf Station Open Day with the Working Horse Association

Saturday 12 October - see page 2

First Thursdays Openings

Open *First Thursday* of each month, drop in, take a tour, bring a picnic, buy a plant, just enjoy Gulf Station

Thursday Work

Newcomers welcome, all skill levels, gardening, general maintenance etc. Also visitor reception.

Newsletter arrangements

Emailed to those with email. Volunteers' copies available for collection at Gulf Station.

Newsletter **contributions** always welcome.

Report from Work Group

April already - autumn leaves everywhere - but there's been progress since the last newsletter.

We asked the Trust to list Gulf Station's need for more gardeners with a local organisation for volunteers, with four contacts so far (all invited to visit and check us out). The first, **Cody**, came on 11 April (see page 7) - welcome Cody!

A major project has been completed - repairs to the bridge over the creek. At first, it seemed only the anti-slip wire on top needed to be replaced (it was rusting and curling up in places). Closer inspection showed decayed areas in the bridge timber underneath. When **Ian** and **Kevin B** started replacing the rotted sections, they found more stretches of disintegration, needing complete replacements in places; finding the appropriate wood took some research. This work has removed a major tripping risk - see page 4.

We are expecting chickens to be back at Gulf Station: **Jane**, who's moved into a property on our western boundary, would like to keep hens in Gulf's chook houses. In preparation, **Peter** has installed floppy wire netting around the top of the enclosure (anti-fox) and **Irene** raked out four large barrow-loads of dead leaves (now garden mulch).

Following the theft reported in the last newsletter, we now have a replacement (second-hand but much better than before) ute, and a ride-on mower. For secure storage, we have a shipping container (rustic yellow, screened behind the chook enclosure) which the team is fitting out. And security cameras are installed and more security lighting is planned.

I attended the Trust's quarterly meeting of site representatives on 23 February. The Trust is investigating a new tablet/contactless payment option but we'd need Wifi or 4G connection.

On a sad note - the death of our Clydesdale Dinah. We all thank Bri for what she does for our horses, now reduced to brother and sister Gil and Kelly.

We've all experienced the Bells' Gulf Station atmosphere that seems to percolate out the fabric of the place - hospitable and warm. It's certainly apparent on Thursdays as the volunteers arrive and get on with their individual or team projects, then come together at tea and lunch breaks. During the school holidays, why not bring a youngster in your family to join in for a day?

Mike Ridley, for the Work Group

FROGS and Volunteer news

Congratulations to **Pam** and **John** for their 50th wedding anniversary in May!

Bessie Kelso let us know she'd moved, now living only minutes away from family.

Bessie, at 98 and OK; says about her new place: 'I can look out of my large glass doors and see the road with cars passing or people walking their dogs. I have a bird bath outside and I see birds drinking.' It's lovely to picture Bessie enjoying the activity from her room.

At a recent meeting of the Eltham and District Historical Society, Irene was chatting to **Jenny Ellis**, an early volunteer at Gulf Station; Jenny is now on the newsletter mailing list.

Lesley has had another hospital spell but is home again. A couple of volunteers have had some minor nips and tucks: **Stan** (ear) and **Mike** (finger). If anyone else has had health issues, we hope you are soon well again. Best wishes to **Christine** too.

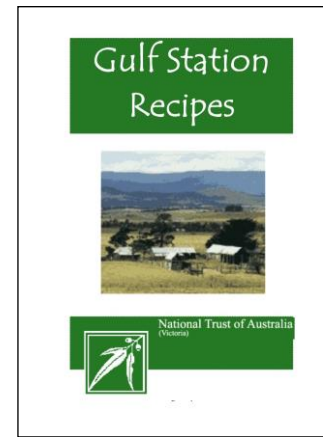
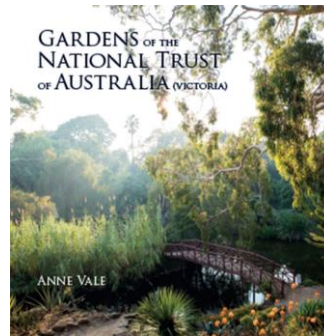


Gulf Station Recipe Books

We again have a supply of *Gulf Station Recipes*. As **Paula** generously met production costs, *all* sales income goes to FROGS - thank you, Paula. Price \$5 each (\$10 if posted).

National Trust Gardens

We have only three copies left of the *Gardens of the National Trust of Australia*. Price \$44.95 to Trust members and volunteers (\$49.95 otherwise). A chapter covers Gulf Station, with glorious photographs taken at different seasons.




Heritage Festival Open Day - Thursday 18 April

Open Day at Gulf Station
National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

Visit Gulf Station as the volunteers go about their work maintaining this historic farm complex. Take a tour, meet the friendly Clydesdales, see sheep dogs and working horses demonstrate their skills, and make sure to visit the station's plant stall.

THUR 18 APRIL 11AM-3PM
Gulf Station,
1029 Melba Highway, Yarra Glen
Bookings: trybooking.com/BAFMY

ADULT \$9 CONC \$6 CHILD \$3 FAMILY \$20



We had our moment of glory in last year's program - this year, only fair, our entry is more modest.

Matt will be working the Clydesdales. We'll run a sausage sizzle and offer hot-cross buns and tea/coffee. We plan an Easter egg hunt (find the hidden tokens, be rewarded with a chocolate egg).

As reported in February, the agisted sheep were moved to better grass elsewhere but cannot return for a while as some had picked up barber pole worm (*haemonchus contortus*), so no working dogs (the text in the Trust's program was submitted before the problem occurred).

Any help on the day would be appreciated - contact Mike.

Open day - Saturday 12 October

We'll try to make this a regular day each year with the Working Horse Association. Last year we had over 400 visitors – as we now have more contacts for more attractions, we hope to make this a bigger event this year to bring more visitors. Please put the date in your diary now so you can help on the day.

Could you represent Gulf Station on the Yarra Ranges Heritage Network?

Under the auspices of the Yarra Ranges Council, this group was formed in 1995. It comprises representatives of 'any group which identifies as interested in local history and heritage.' The Network meets quarterly, usually at Yarra Ranges Regional Museum, Lilydale (although meetings may revert to rotating around member locations). Meetings start at 12.30, include lunch (provided) and end anywhere between 3pm and 4pm. The objective is to share information between members and the Council; ideally representatives email ahead of the meeting a report on activities at their group (failing that, give a verbal report). The minutes include the reports in full but members can mention any highlights during the meeting. The Network also contributes to relevant projects, one recent one being submitting entries to create an excellent guide to heritage in the Yarra Ranges. Thanks to **Paula**, Gulf Station has an entry. Copies at Gulf Station or download: www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Lists/Latest-news/Guide-to-Heritage-in-the-Yarra-Ranges

Gulf Station needs a new representative (**Lesley** was our hard-working rep for many years). **Could you take on this role?** Contact Irene if you might be interested.

Noel Williams (25/12/1923-27/02/2019)



Alfred Noel Williams ('Noel' to everyone), the much loved husband of **Betty**, passed away peacefully at home on 27 February. **Glenn** represented the FROGS and Gulf Station at the funeral and we sent a card to Betty.

Both Betty and her late sister **Heather Oswin** knew Gulf Station from the time of the Bells, with the additional connection of being descended from *David Clark* passengers Andrew and Jacobina Templeton. When Gulf Station was opened to the public, Betty and Heather, with the support of husbands Noel and John Oswin, were there from the start, contributing in many ways to the success of events. Regularly on Sundays, the sisters served home-made scones and tea from the veranda outside what was then a kitchen in the house. Noel would be on the gate, collecting entrance money.

Betty and Heather were members of the organising group for the large 150th *David Clark* anniversary celebrations over a complete weekend in 1989, which included a picnic day at Gulf Station.

Message from Betty:

'Please thank all those folk who sent messages to me from Gulf Station, which Noel and I enjoyed for so many years. We always enjoyed our days there, but unfortunately grew too old to help any more. Love to all our friends there.' Betty especially sends her greetings to **Lesley**.

Left: Noel Williams at the tree-planting for John Oswin, 2014

In the School Room

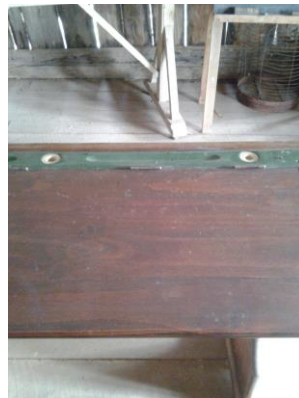
The last newsletter asked if anyone could supply some inkwells for the School Room and **Alan** got hunting:

On our (Alan and Betty with Alan's brother David Gosling) recent trip through country Victoria, traversing 'The Silo Trail,' which was fantastic, during one of our overnight stays at Warracknabeal, we took a wander through the township.

We passed a Bric-a-Brac shop in the main street. We have been on the look-out for some inkwells that Pam and Neil required for the school desks in the Gulf Station school house, so, in we went. Alas none there, but the proprietor Brian Stephenson said he might know of a friend in the trade who may have some, so we left it with him to chase up. Sure enough about one week later we got an email to say he had located three. We immediately replied Yes, and here they, now the desks look complete.

A small addition, but how useful when telling the school story to youngsters who've never dipped a pen into ink in their lives.

Images Alan Gosling



Visitor Report from Pam

Our Open Thursdays are becoming more and more popular. Many visitors express their gratitude that small groups now have access to Gulf Station.

Doncaster View Club visited our property recently. The ladies enjoyed their trip down memory lane. Seeing all the things that remind you of childhood visits to Grand-ma's always gives enormous pleasure. For me it is such a joy to walk in the footsteps of our pioneers and to share that with others.

A group of artists will be visiting Gulf Station mid April. They intend to paint water-colours of the property. I am sure they will have no trouble finding wonderful subject matter.

We look forward to sharing our Gulf Station story with many other visitors as the year progresses.

So popular the Thursdays have become that Pam now has set times for tours to avoid starting a tour then having later arrivals join in.

Work around the farm

Kevin B and **Ian** tackled the bridge over the creek, which had become a serious tripping hazard. Thank you both for a great job needing many weeks of hard work.



First, the rusty and broken wire mesh covering was rolled back (a tricky job to do without injury) then **Ian, Kevin B** and **Mike** reviewed the bridge timbers. Note rabbit holes on the approach - next on the list...



L. The worst section of damaged bridge timber (badly damaged sections were replaced).

R. The new surface in place, which will weather to grey. Even stiletto heels possible now!

Images Ian Gaff and Irene Kearsey



Harvey's sheep run reconstruction continues, carefully following the remnant clues.

July 2018 - just beginning

April 2019

Images Harvey Clark



Barry has been repairing the paddock fence near the Slaughter House. He's about 80% finished now, after the set back when somebody stole the fence posts that he'd fabricated: he had to start again and remake them. Now he has only the double gates to fabricate and install (which is a task in itself).

Images Alan Gosling



Update for the Clydies - April 2019 – from Bri Anderson



Sad news from me regarding the death of our beloved Dinah in February. Dinah was in full health and died unexpectedly of colic. The incidence of colic in the general horse population has been estimated between 10 and 11% per year. In a recent study, colic was second only to old-age as the leading cause of death in horses. The paddock is not the same without her, and poor Kelly really missed her initially.

Kelly now has the company of Gil and Pride, with the view to Gil moving back into the bottom paddocks with Matt's horses soon and returning to a working life (which he really seems to enjoy). Pride certainly seems to be thriving, bossing around the Gulf Station horses. He is firm but not nasty! Horses have a herd hierarchy, where they will establish a 'pecking order' for the purpose of

determining which herd member directs the behaviour of others, eats and drinks first, and so on. It can be very interesting to observe and is normal behaviour for horses.

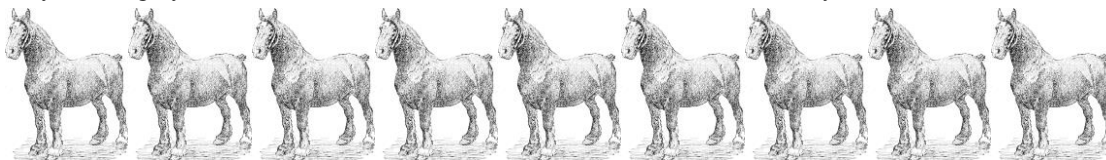
The cooler weather has certainly begun at Gulf Station, with the horses being fed supplementary hay due to poor pasture during this dry season. The horses are all in fine health, which is important heading into the colder weather. A good covering of fat (don't mention that to Kelly) is very important to insulate the horse, as is a bit of hay to warm them from their digestive system functioning. The horses are all beginning to grow their longer, thicker winter coats too.

The horses are wormed at the change of each season and are booked to have their hooves trimmed every six weeks. They have now moved back into the front paddocks to allow them to use their shelter in bad weather.

That's all from me!

Above: Dinah with Gil in 2013 Image Irene Kearsey

At the time, **Peter** emailed volunteers to report that, when Bri left the horses at 6pm on the Saturday, Dinah was fine, but, when Bri arrived mid-morning on Sunday; Dinah was dead in the paddock with Kelly watching over her. Gil was moved in with Kelly, who continued to call for Dinah, while Gil stayed close to her. Peter expressed just how much we owe to Bri, for how she has handled this sad situation. She has become very attached to the horses and once confided to Peter that Dinah was her 'favourite,' Bri was very upset on the Sunday morning by what she found. We all thank Bri for all she does for the Clydesdales.



Cobber By Madie Jeffery

Hi my name is **Madie**, and I would love to tell you about my new horse **Cobber**.

Cobber was born on the 30th October 2017. His parents are lovely horses, his dad's name is Aurunga Crusader but his nickname is 007, because he is always investigating people, like James Bond. His mum's name is Highgate Marie. My dad (Cracka) bought Cobber from Doug and Janine Watson. Sadly Doug recently passed away.

Cobber was just under 1 year of age when he came to live at Gulf Station. When we first got Cobber I wasn't too sure about him, but I am now glad to be proven wrong. I am proud to say he is a fantastic and majestic horse. Cobber is now starting to pull some light things like swingle tree and a tyre. He gets along well with our other horses and Gil, a horse from Gulf Station.

As Cobber grows up I would love to see him be able to participate in pulling the Chaff King Wagon or my cart/jinker.



Thank you, Madie. Cobber is brave, too, never put out by big Trigger.

For the horses

In the large sloping paddock behind the toilet block, the trough wasn't automatically refilling so **Alan** gave it a major overhaul. (Only downside: **Pam's** panic on finding no water on an official Open Thursday but relief when hearing it was a temporary turn-off.)

This project suggests the benefit of doing an audit of *all* troughs on the farm - another item for the Work Program.

Images Alan Gosling



A major clean-up near the burnpile

Alan, Kevin, Peter and **Ian** spent 3 weeks clearing up and took 8 loads to the tip comprising old fencing wire, barbed wire, steel framework, pipes and old gates, with the result that the site looks so much better.



Kevin B making a start



Before



After

Images
Irene Kearsey (top) and
Ian Gaff

Message from the chaps: Any person dumping non combustibile matter at our burnpile will be publicly hung, drawn and quartered.

Gulf Station's 'new' ute



If we had a volunteer sign-writer, we could have 'Gulf Station' emblazoned on the doors for advertising, and to discourage thieves. Anyone???

Image Irene Kearsey

Anyone for ladder golf?

Ian saw this game on his travels and built a (dismantle-able) frame from drainpipes, and also made a set of 'bolas' (two golf balls joined by a cord). Another attraction on big Open Days.



Above, **Ian** with the frame. Below, throw bolas so to wrap around a rung (each rung has a different score). Not as easy as it sounds.



Ladder Golf® is played with either 2 or 4 players.
First team or individual to get an exact 21 points win!

Garden news - from Marion



Our garden survived the dry summer with only once-weekly watering: we don't seem to have lost any plants but several were badly burnt. We've now added timers to two taps, so some fragile plants will be happier. We did enjoy our usual flowering season, mostly finished now and we look forward to Autumn colours.

Cody, although an IT trainee in the job market, came as a volunteer and achieved great things on his first day: barrowing a huge pile of mulched tree from near the School House to spread on the garden paths. Two achievements in one: a neater mulch patch and much-improved paths around the garden.

The gardeners always welcome more help - do you know someone who would like to work in Gulf Station's lovely garden?

Above: Cody spreading mulch

Image Marion Bishop

Below: The rose arbour reconstructed by **Ian**

Image Irene Kearsey



Mowing

While there was no grass to mow, **Kevin B** found other jobs, such as the bridge repair, but he also took the opportunity to service mowing equipment. A little recent rain has Kevin back on the mower.



Thursday 23 May - Friends of La Trobe's Cottage lecture

'La Trobe's Gold and Silver Testimonial Pieces'. Historian Susan Priestley will talk about the superb gold cup made in Melbourne 1853 (whereabouts unknown) and the London-made spectacular silver and glass candelabrum centrepiece 1854-55, now in the National Gallery of Victoria. Venue (left).

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens. Refreshments. Cost \$25.

Bookings essential: <http://www.latrobesociety.org.au/events.html>

Image NGV

The National Trust's annual fund-raising day - 2 April

For the 2019 day, photographs and film clips were taken at Gulf Station, Como and Rippon Lea. **Harvey** in particular starred in the Gulf images (the one below is on the web) www.nationaltrust.org.au/donate-vic/. Marion found **Harvey** and **Mike** on Instagram (right).



Can you help?

Some things that would be useful at Gulf Station:

Clean chaff bags - for old-fashioned children's games, we need chaff bags for the sack races (or, as one young lad said when asked what was the best bit of his day at Gulf Station, 'jumping in a bag').

Clean fill - all the rabbit holes are tripping hazards.

Golf umbrellas - our current stock is in very poor condition.

Orchard news

The medlar fruit is still on the tree although quite small this year, probably due to lack of rain - but will those #@%*@ fruit thieves be back for them anyway?

If you don't know about medlars....

The following article appeared in *Country Gardener* Autumn-Winter 1997 pp14-15:

The Medlar



PHOTOGRAPHY BY TRISHA DIXON

THE MEDLAR CAN
HOLD ITS OWN AMONG
CONTEMPORARY
COUNTRY GARDEN
FAVOURITES, WRITES
TRISHA DIXON, WHO
DELIGHTS IN THE TWO
GROWING IN HER
OWN GARDEN

The gentle art of creating a garden is not a simple one. Choosing the trees alone is difficult enough. Species *Arbutus* or *Ulmus*? The linden has superb shade but the tulip tree has stunning flowers; the wattles remind us that spring is on the way and the davidias with their incredible handkerchief-like flowers are tempting. With the enormous range of plants to choose from, the planning of a garden can also be immensely confusing.

Remembering the eucalypt, oak, silver birch and maybe the odd Manchurian pear or special crab-apple was a hard enough task when you first started to garden. It certainly took me years. With the incredible choice today, it is still possible to find an occasional rarity that won't be seen in every garden you visit.

The medlar is such a tree. It is incredibly overlooked, undervalued and unfamiliar to most gardeners. Having been endowed with all the qualities we want in a tree for our private gardens, its reticence is perhaps due to its subtle charms. Not large by any means, the medlar grows to a quite manageable 7m in height, making it perfect for city and country gardens. And for those wanting the trifecta — yes, it flowers, has decorative fruit, and colours in autumn.

The fruit is actually edible but an acquired taste. The fact that it needs to be 'bletted' (half rotten and soft) to be ready for consumption will ensure it won't be liked by everyone. But why pick them at all — they look wonderful in autumn and through winter with their russet shades of burnished

copper and bronze. If you do have them in abundance, pile them in large bowls on the kitchen table for winter, or fill those tall spaghetti jars with them. For those good at preserving, there are some tasty medlar jelly and syrup recipes.

Gastronomic delights aside, the medlar has a charm all of its own. It soon achieves patriarchal status in the garden with its broad spread of crooked limbs carrying masses of large downy leaves. Autumn transforms them into wonderful russet colours and they are often one of the last deciduous trees to drop their leaves. The fruit then holds centre stage, dropping by the time the leaves appear again in spring.

But for all these assets there is precious little mention of it in any garden literature. Only Edna Walling, Vita Sackville-West, Gertrude Jekyll and William Robinson give it more than a perfunctory mention.



The medlars (Mespilus germanica) have really been staggering in their autumn coloration. Their bold foliage grouped with the more delicate leaves of the birches makes a very satisfying picture.

— Edna Walling, *A Gardener's Log*, 1948

... A beautiful small tree with large and handsome flowers and wide-spreading head, and is beautiful in early summer when studded with pale green leaves.

— William Robinson, *The English Flower Garden*, 1838

Hard as it is to find any mention of this tree in garden books, it is even harder to find reference to the beautiful flowers produced each spring. Large single white blooms with five heart-shaped petals which sit flat against the leaves, these flowers appear throughout spring and often intermittently in summer.

As part of the rosaceae family, the medlar is actually the only species in its genus. There are varieties within this genus though. The Nottingham has larger fruit while the Dutch has a great mass of fruit. These are not to be confused with the Medlar 'lookalikes' or 'soundalikes'. The Mediterranean medlar is in fact a crataegus (*Crataegus azarolus*), often called an azarole. It is an attractive tree with a wonderful craggy shape and has definite hawthorn-type leaves and clusters of white blossom and red berries. The loquat, *Eriobotrya japonica*, was originally known as *Mespilus japonica*.

The medlar is native to south-east Europe and south-west Asia where it grows in thickets and forests. It is thought to have originated in Persia and was known to the Greeks by 300 BC. Early colonists of Australia introduced the plant to their gardens, and it seems to have enjoyed greater popularity back then as large specimens occasionally bear testament. A venerable specimen stands in pride of place in front of the National Trust house, Riversdale, at Goulburn, New South Wales, and I recently spotted another admirable one at Arden Wood in the Victorian Dandenongs.

A hardy tree, the medlar is adaptable to most soils and grows well in an open sunny position. It will readily withstand severe frosts (up to -16 here at Cooma). In fact, it is thought that frosts are needed to encourage the production of edible fruit. Propagation is by seed, cuttings, or grafting or budding onto apple, pear or quince stock. Specialist nurseries often stock young trees. They can be successfully trained for espalier or even as standards.

The medlar is not glamorous, not even quirky or eccentric, and certainly not common. And yet it remains the unsung gem of any country garden.



Top: The marvellous but much underrated medlar.

Middle: Crisp white blooms are dazzling against the healthy greenery.

Bottom: The medlar's unusual looking fruit is edible but definitely an acquired taste.

More electrical work in progress

Ian H is back doing more electrical work around the site. Among other tasks, he's overhauling non-functioning security lights and their timer in the drive, and installing new security lights at the Croydon Cottage. We do appreciate Ian H's input as he has busy volunteering commitments elsewhere.

Wildlife at Gulf Station

Seen two weeks in a row - yellow-tailed black cockatoos. A boobook has been sleeping in the barn although he moves out if there's noisy work in progress nearby. And straw-necked ibis have been seen around the dam.

Image birdlife.org



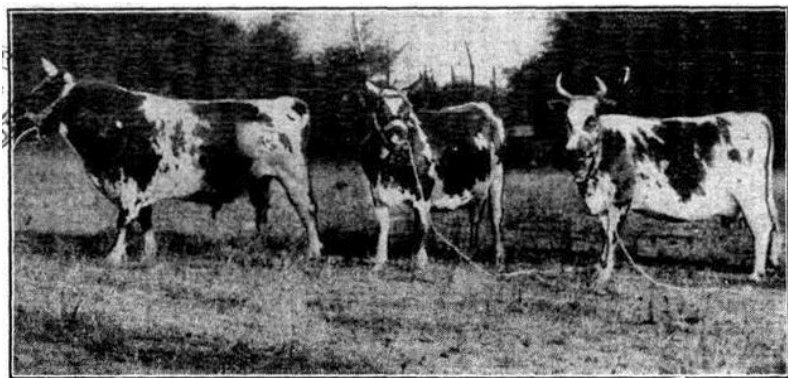
'Ribbons of Green' - Thursday 27 June - Planting Day

This program, through the Yarra Ranges Council, offers free indigenous tube stock along with free tree guards, stakes and weed mats to help the plants establish. Advice is available on how to prepare the site, control weeds and select appropriate species, although all manual work will be done by Gulf Station. All green thumbs will be needed on the day.



David Clark 180th anniversary reunion update

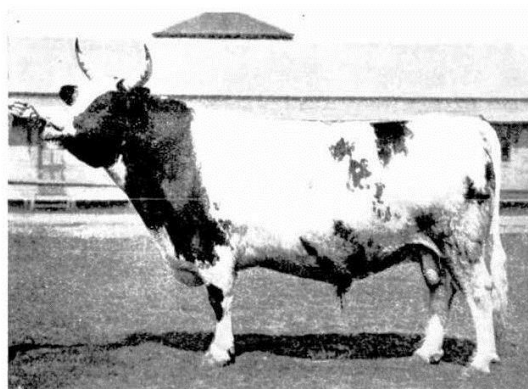
Preliminary details of the planned reunion (Sunday 27 October 2019) have been sent to local history and family history groups, hoping for inclusion in their newsletters. The Royal Historical Society of Victoria featured the event in its newsletter. Information appears also on the Australian Ayrshires website: australianayrshire.com.au/an-important-date-in-the-history-of-ayrshires-in-victoria/ As we know, Gulf Station has a place in the history of Ayrshires in Australia, but at least one other *David Clark* family was prominent: the McNabs of Oakbank (Tullamarine - there's still a McNabs Road in that area).



First prize group of Ayrshire cattle at the Yarra Glen (V.) Show, owned by Mr. A. Bell, Gulf Station, Yarra Glen.

Left Andrew Bell's group of first prize Ayrshires in 1929
Australasian 30.3.1929 p33

Below William McNab and Brothers' champion bull Jamie of Oakbank in 1901
Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser 6.4.1901 pvii



WILLIAM McNAB AND BROS.'S CHAMPION AYRSHIRE BULL JAMIE OF OAKBANK, FIVE YEARS.
By Glen Eulin's Bruce, dam Jeanette of Oakbank. Bred by exhibitor.

If you are a *David Clark* descendant and are not yet on the special mailing list, email for updates:
davidclark1839@gmail.com

Animal news from 1901

Messrs. M'Phail Bros. & Co. report having sold, on account of Mr. M. O'Keefe Allansford, the stud boar, Learmonth Chief. Sire, Admiral 2nd, champion Melbourne, 1898; dam, Daisy, by Prince Charlie, by Duke of Ellerslie, from Champion Lady Hamilton 2nd; g. dam Lady, by Lord Wellington, by Farneir, bred by Forsyth Bros. Learmonth Chief is a winner of several 1st prizes at Western district shows; also 1st at Melbourne last Royal show; and is a pig of the highest quality. He has been purchased by Mr. J. T. Bell, the well-known Berkshire breeder, of Gulf station, Yarra Glen, at the high figure of 40 guineas.

The Bacchus Marsh Express, 23.3.1901, p3

Using the Reserve Bank of Australia's pre-decimal inflation calculator, 40 guineas (£42) would now be around \$ 6,440.