

people place heritage

# CONTEXT

## BANYULE THEMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY

Final report  
29 October 2018

Prepared for  
Banyule City Council



Banyule  
CITY COUNCIL

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*Cover image: 'On the Yarra Yarra, Heidelberg', lithograph, Fergusson & Mitchell, Melbourne. [1890]  
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## Report Register

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

In 2017, the Banyule City Council commissioned Context (now GML Heritage Victoria Pty Ltd, trading as Context) to undertake the Banyule Thematic Environmental History to document and broaden our understanding of the rich and diverse history of the municipality.

## 1.2 Purpose and scope

### The study area



**The scope of this report**

Key tasks for this work include:

- Preparation of a bibliography for the project, scoping a wide range of resources;
- Identifying key historic themes for the City of Banyule;
- Preparation of a written thematic environmental history for the City of Banyule.

**The time-frame**

The thematic history relates primarily to the ‘post-contact’ period in the City of Banyule, or the period after the beginning of British colonisation, which could be alternatively nominated as the early 1800s or the 1820s or, from the beginnings of ‘permanent settlement’ in 1835.

The historical time-frame of this Thematic Environmental History is generally the period after 1835, however many Aboriginal heritage places (discussed in Chapter 1) do not fall into a confined time-frame but, rather, existed and had relevance both before and after white settlement.

**1.3 Limitations and constraints**

The Banyule Thematic Environmental History draws on a wide range of historical sources (documentary records, government records, photos and maps, digital resources, etc.) as well as previously produced heritage reports and heritage registers.

Whilst the sources of the Heidelberg Historical Society have been accessed to a great degree, the resources of the Greensborough Historical Society and Eltham District Historical Society were used to a lesser extent. Greater use was made of material available through the Heidelberg Historical Society, as this group has a jurisdiction that is a much wider area than Heidelberg proper but takes in the areas of the former Shire of, and City of, Heidelberg.

The identification of a wide range of local heritage places provides important foundational material for writing a thematic history. Whilst there has been a considerable identification of heritage places in Heidelberg, Ivanhoe and Eaglemont (and Eltham) in previous studies,<sup>1</sup> other areas of what is now the City of Banyule has not yet been comprehensively assessed, in particular those suburbs that were formerly part of the Shire of Diamond Valley. With further revision and review of heritage places in the City of Banyule, especially in those areas outside Heidelberg, Ivanhoe and Eaglemont, which to date have been less closely scrutinised, it is expected that new historical information will be identified.

**Aboriginal heritage**

This report has drawn on the ‘Banyule Aboriginal Heritage Study (public edition)’, prepared by Brendan Marshall of Austral Heritage Consultants in 1999, which was commissioned by the Banyule City Council and prepared in consultation with Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council. Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council as the Traditional Owner group has also been consulted regarding this present report.

The Thematic Framework has been prepared from the perspective of the ‘post-settlement’ period, but endeavours to be inclusive of Aboriginal heritage, where possible and where appropriate. This work recognises the notion of ‘shared’ or co-existing heritage values, as expounded in the recent work, ‘Shared Heritage Values’, produced by Context jointly for the Heritage Council of Victoria and the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Notably, Graeme Butler 1985, ‘Heidelberg Conservation Study’; and Allom Lovell 1999, ‘Banyule Heritage Study’.

<sup>2</sup> Context Pty Ltd 2015, ‘Acknowledging Shared Heritage Values’, prepared for the Victorian Heritage Council and the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council.



The incorporation of Aboriginal heritage places into the draft Thematic Framework remains potentially problematic in that it presents and interprets element of Aboriginal heritage from a non-Aboriginal perspective. There have been several reports (on public access) on the Aboriginal heritage of the area, however, and these have been drawn on to assist in the preparation of this report.<sup>3</sup> In addition, one of the recommendations in the Brendan Marshall report of 1999 was for closer scrutiny of the William Thomas journals — a task that has been undertaken for this current report and was made possible due to the timely publication of the journals in 2014.<sup>4</sup> There was also considerable information available through the Trove digitised newspapers project at the National Library of Australia, which was not available to researchers when the Marshall report was produced in 1999.

## 1.4 Acknowledgements

This Thematic Environmental History was carried out for the Banyule City Council. The contribution of the following people and organisations to the completion of the Study are gratefully acknowledged.

Nicola Rooks, Banyule City Council

Alison Fowler, Banyule City Council

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Gail Smith, Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council

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Jenn Burgess, Heidelberg Historical Society

Noel Withers, Greensborough Historical Society

Graeme Butler

Professor Ian D. Clark, Federation University

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Dr Christina Dyson, Context

Vicki McLean, Context

Eltham District Historical Society

Trevor Smith

## 1.5 Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used in the report:

HCV	Housing Commission of Victoria
HO	Heritage Overlay
HHS	Heidelberg Historical Society
MMBW	Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works
PROV	Public Record Office Victoria
RHSV	Royal Historical Society of Victoria

<sup>3</sup> Brendan Marshall 1999, 'Banyule Aboriginal Heritage Study', prepared for City of Banyule; Isabel Ellender 1994, 'Aboriginal Heritage of Eltham', prepared for the Shire of Eltham.

<sup>4</sup> Marguerita Stephens (ed.) 2014, *The Journals of William Thomas*, 4 volumes, Victorian Centre for Aboriginal Languages, Fitzroy.

Rs	Reserve file
RNE	Departmental of Natural Resources and Environment(former)
RSL	Returned and Services League
SLV	State Library of Victoria
TAFE	Tertiary and Further Education
VBDM	Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages
VGG	<i>Victorian Government Gazette</i>
VHI	Victorian Heritage Inventory
VHR	Victorian Heritage Register
VPRS	Victorian Public Record Series (PROV)



## 2.0 HISTORICAL THEMES

### 2.1 Overview: using historical themes in heritage practice

A thematic framework is a standard tool used in current heritage practice (relating not only to forms of built heritage but to many different place types), which is used to categorise, contextualise, compare and assess all kinds of heritage places. The framework prepared for this report was modelled on the document *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes* (Victorian Themes), which was developed for Heritage Victoria in 2010.<sup>5</sup>

It is envisaged that this framework will serve as a useful tool to better understand the historical context, and to assess the significance, of the heritage places and potential heritage places that are located within the municipality of Banyule, and to assess their significance.

### 2.2 Developing historical themes for Banyule

The 'Banyule Heritage Review', prepared by Context Pty Ltd in 2012, proposed a set of historic themes for the City of Banyule. These themes were workshopped at community group sessions as part of the Banyule Heritage Review. These themes took into account the evident gaps in historical understandings of the municipality which had been provided in previous heritage reports, such as the various heritage and conservation reports prepared in the 1980s and 1990s before the widespread use of the thematic framework approach. A more recent report by Allom Lovell, 'Banyule: An Urban History' (1999), goes some way in identifying key aspects of the historical development of the built environment of Banyule, but ignores some important elements and historical developments.

Generally speaking, a key deficiency of the earlier heritage reports was a tendency to focus on built structures and architectural history rather than to consider the heritage values of non-built historic places – although landscapes and trees are considered in the Allom Lovell report of 1999. Gaps that were identified by Context in the 'Banyule Heritage Review' in 2012 included the migrant experience and the social and architectural dimensions of the postwar era. An additional theme not identified in the 2012 Context Review is the conservation movement (concerning bushland, wetlands and waterways).

#### Developing a new thematic framework

As part of the current study, a new set of 12 historical themes for the City of Banyule has been prepared. This framework has been developed following a wide survey of documentary sources, maps, photographs, and other historical material; through community websites; and by a desktop survey of the heritage places that are already listed on the VHR and local heritage overlays. Some limited field work was carried out in the areas less well covered in previous studies, including Rosanna, Montmorency and Greensborough. Some additional gaps have also been identified as part of the current study, including:

- Landscape and nature conservation, with particular attention given to the waterways
- Roads and river crossings
- Places associated with Aboriginal people (post-contact)

The new draft historical themes are set out below, alongside the 2012 draft themes by way of comparison. Some examples of heritage places are given for each historic theme (note that these are representative examples only):

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<sup>5</sup> Heritage Victoria 2010, *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes*, Heritage Council of Victoria, Melbourne.

**Table 1: Banyule historical themes and examples of heritage places**

<b>New Banyule historical themes (2018)</b>	<b>Previous Banyule historical themes (Context 2012)</b>	<b>Examples of heritage places</b>
1. Wurundjeri Country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living on Country</li> <li>• Invasion and displacement</li> <li>• Aboriginal–settler relations</li> <li>• The survival of Wurundjeri culture</li> </ul>	<i>Indigenous heritage</i>	Scarred tree, Eaglemont Scarred tree, Lower Plenty Banyule Flats, Heidelberg Warringal Parklands (HO) Yarra Flats reserve, East Ivanhoe
2. Colonial settlement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing and farming</li> <li>• Orchards, vineyards and market gardens</li> <li>• Country estates</li> </ul>	<i>Early settlement</i> <i>Farming the land</i>	‘Banyule’, Heidelberg (VHR) ‘Viewbank’ homestead (HO) Charterisville (VHR) Yallambie Parklands (HO) John Batman apple tree, Greensborough Warringal Parklands (HO) Yarra Flats, East Ivanhoe
3. Transport and communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roads and bridges</li> <li>• Railway expansion</li> <li>• Bus network</li> <li>• The motor car era</li> </ul>	<i>The railway</i>	Heidelberg Road Darebin Bridge Hotel (HO) Sparks Reserve (HO) Ivanhoe Railway Station Greensborough Hotel
4. Developing industries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarrying</li> <li>• Gold-mining</li> <li>• Timber cutting</li> <li>• Manufacturing</li> </ul>	<i>Gold-mining and timber-cutting</i>	Briar Hill chimney (VHR) West Heidelberg Industrial Estate
5. Suburban development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential development</li> <li>• Commercial development</li> <li>• Civic development</li> <li>• Water supply, sewerage and drainage</li> </ul>	<i>Local government and suburban development</i> <i>Establishing towns and villages</i> <i>Retail development</i> <i>Residential Banyule</i>	Ivanhoe Manor, Ivanhoe Mount Eagle and Glenard estates, Eaglemont Beauview Estate Former Olympic Village, Heidelberg Ivanhoe Fire Station (HO) Rosanna Fire Brigade Shop, Montmorency (HO)

6. Community and cultural life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Community buildings</li> <li>• Church communities</li> <li>• Ethnic communities</li> </ul>	<i>Multicultural Banyule</i> <i>The Olympics</i>	Greensborough Primary School, Greensborough (HO) Olympic Village, West Heidelberg Mother of God Catholic Church, East Ivanhoe Former Sisters of Mercy Convent, Rosanna (HO) Amberley, Lower Plenty Former Recreation Hall, Ivanhoe (HO) Watsonia Hall, Aminya Reserve Bell Street Mall, West Heidelberg Diamond Valley Learning Centre, Greensborough East Ivanhoe Uniting Church
7. Recreation and sport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation</li> <li>• Sport</li> <li>• Holidays and tourism</li> </ul>	<i>Local government and suburban development</i> <i>The Olympics</i>	Ivanhoe Park Plenty River swimming pool, Greensborough (HO) Ivanhoe Golf Course
8. Parks and gardens and the urban landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public parks and gardens</li> <li>• Hospital and other institutional gardens</li> <li>• Street trees</li> <li>• The urban landscape</li> </ul>	<i>Public and private planting</i>	Heidelberg Park (HO) Sparks Reserve, Ivanhoe (HO) Banyule Flats (HO) Street trees, Invermay Street, Rosanna Retaining wall in median strip, Grandview Grove, Rosanna
9. Defence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Military training</li> <li>• Repatriation</li> <li>• Remembrance</li> </ul>	<i>The role of the Army</i>	Simpson Army Barracks, Watsonia ‘The Repat’, Heidelberg Ivanhoe RSL, Ivanhoe Mont Park Avenue of Honour Greensborough War Memorial Park (HO)
10. The artistic landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Heidelberg School</li> <li>• Artists, architects and radicals</li> <li>• Twentieth-century architecture</li> <li>• Landscape design</li> </ul>	<i>The artistic landscape</i>	Yarra Flats, East Ivanhoe Charterisville, Eaglemont Napier Waller house, Ivanhoe (VHR) Site of Tom Roberts’ house Elliston Estate, Rosanna (HO) Adobe houses, Napier Crescent, Montmorency (HO)

		Yallambie Parklands (HO) Marshall Garden, Eaglemont
11. Public health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hospitals</li> <li>Residential care</li> <li>Infant welfare centres</li> <li>Cemeteries</li> </ul>	<i>Hospitals in Banyule</i>	The 'Repat', Heidelberg Ivanhoe Baby Health Centre Heidelberg Baby Health Centre (HO) Marian Drummond Nurses' Home, Heidelberg (HO) Warringal Cemetery Chronic Ward, Mont Park, Macleod
12. Conserving the waterways and bushland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The early conservation movement</li> <li>Protecting the Yarra and other waterways</li> </ul>	<i>Private and public planting</i>	Banyule Flats Warringal Parklands Wilson Reserve, Ivanhoe Rosanna Parklands (HO) Banyule Billabong, Heidelberg

Note that most identified heritage places have one sub-theme as the primary historical association. Some places may be difficult to categorise, however, because they have more than one primary historical association, and these may be conflicting rather than complimentary associations.

A comparison of the 12 new Banyule themes with the 9 Victorian Themes is shown in **Table 2** below.

**Table 2: Comparing Victorian themes with Banyule themes**

<b>Victorian Historical Themes</b>	<b>Banyule historical themes (2018)</b>
1. Shaping Victoria's environment	1. Wurundjeri Country 12. Conserving the waterways and bushland
2. Peopling Victoria's places and landscape	2. Colonial Settlement
3. Connecting Victorians by transport and communications	3. Transport and communication
4. Transforming and managing the land	2. Colonial settlement
5. Building Victoria's industries and workforce	4. Developing industries
6. Building towns, cities and the Garden State	5. Suburban development 8. Parks and gardens and the urban landscape
7. Governing Victorians	9. Defence 11. Public health and hospitals
8. Building community life	6. Community and cultural life

	7. Recreation and sport
9. Shaping cultural and creative life	9. The artistic landscape

**Table 3: Place ‘types’ associated with Banyule’s historical themes**

<b>Historical Themes for Banyule [re-jig?]</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>Examples of potential place ‘types’</b>
1. Wurundjeri Country	Living on Country	camping sites meeting places scar trees
	Invasion and displacement	archaeological sites earthen/clay ovens
	Aboriginal–settler relations	ochre pits fishing spots fish traps
	The survival of Wurundjeri culture	initiation sites places of spiritual significance burial sites tracks contact sites sites of conflict
2. Colonial settlement	Farming and grazing	homesteads homestead gardens farm buildings stables windmills early roads stock routes butter factories former fence lines trees agricultural showgrounds
	Orchards, vineyards and market gardens	packing sheds wine-press buildings water pumps and water wheels water pipes fruit trees former fence lines
	Country estates	residences outbuildings private gardens

		trees
3. Facilitating transport	Roads and bridges	roads bridges hotels and lodging houses stone mileposts
	Railways	railway station buildings rail bridges railway station gardens
	Bus networks	bus depots bus stops
	The motor car era	roads motor car garages
4. Developing industries	Quarrying	quarry holes parkland
	Gold-mining	tracks and travel routes miner's huts / miner's cottages mining sites settlement sites hotels
	Timber-cutting	settlement sites timber camps timber tramways forester's huts railway sidings timber mills
	Mills and factories	flour mills timber mills commercial dairies factories
5. Suburban development	Residential development	houses and residential precincts subdivisions housing estates
	Commercial development	shops banks hotels and lodgings arcades shopping centres markets

	Civic development	town halls local libraries other local government buildings post offices court houses lock-ups
	Water supply, sewerage and drainage	dams and reservoirs water supply infrastructure channels/aqueducts pipe bridges dams and reservoirs fire brigade stations
6. Community and cultural life	Education	kindergartens primary schools secondary schools alternative education
	Church communities	churches presbyteries, manses and vicarages schools convents seminaries monasteries and retreats
	Ethnic communities	migrant hostels and refuges social clubs and gathering places shops housing estates
	Community buildings	mechanics institutes rehabite halls masonic lodges town halls public libraries boy scout/girl guide halls
7. Recreation and sport	Recreation	public parks boat sheds golf courses swimming enclosures swimming pools children's playgrounds bike tracks pony clubs



		picture theatres
	Sport	sports grounds stadiums club houses racecourses tennis clubs bowling clubs croquet lawns
	Holidays and tourism	camping sites fishing spots hotels and motels guesthouses tearooms picnic grounds
8. Parks and gardens and the urban landscape	Public parks and gardens	public parks public gardens fences and gates paths, steps and walking tracks bandstands and rotundas kiosks seating caretakers' houses trees
	Hospital and other institutional gardens	garden layouts trees and plantings
	Street trees	trees avenues
	Urban landscape	street lamps stone retaining walls and steps road surfaces pedestrian hand rails drinking fountains horse troughs
9. Defence	Military training	army barracks military training grounds army camp sites
	Repatriation	repatriations hostels and rest homes military hospitals RSL clubs war service homes

		war widows' homes
	Commemoration	war memorials avenues of honour memorial trees memorial plaques memorial parks memorial church windows
10. The artistic landscape	The Heidelberg School	artists' viewing spots artists' camps artists' studios art galleries artists' trails
	Artists, architects and radicals	houses meeting places
	Twentieth-century architecture	houses flats gardens
	Landscape design	private gardens bush gardens individual trees public parks and playgrounds
11. Public health	Hospitals	Hospitals nurses' accommodation
	Residential care	rest and respite homes aged care facilities
	Infant welfare centres	infant welfare centres
	Cemeteries	public cemeteries private burials church burial grounds lone graves
12. Conserving the waterways and bushland	The early conservation movement	bushland reserves reclaimed wetlands (river flats) billabongs memorial plaques significant plantings
	Protecting the Yarra and other waterways	public parkland nature walks/trails roadside vegetation significant trees

## **2.2 Statement of Significance for the Banyule municipality**

The City of Banyule has a rich Aboriginal history and heritage that extends back tens of thousands of years. In the face of the loss of their country by the British colonisers and the catastrophic consequences this had for Aboriginal people, and despite the efforts by the colonial authorities to ‘contain’ the Aboriginal people at designated reserves in Melbourne, the Wurundjeri continued to live in Banyule through the turmoil of the late 1830s and 1840s, through the 1850s, and up to the mid-1860s. Wurundjeri continue to live in Banyule today.

Banyule was established as an early farming district, earlier than most other suburbs of Melbourne. Endowed with significant waterways, including the Yarra and Plenty Rivers and the Darebin Creek, rich river flats and pleasant undulating country, it was highly regarded by early settlers. Banyule has played an important part in the conservation movement in Victoria, with efforts to preserve bushland and protect the Yarra banks from at least the 1920s. Across its suburbs, there are extensive parks and gardens. The beauty of the landscape inspired some of Australia’s leading artists, notably the members of the famed Heidelberg School, but also twentieth-century artists.

The suburbs of Banyule have been at the forefront of architectural design through the twentieth century, and have represented in many ways the twentieth-century ideal of Australian suburbia: namely, a detached home on a garden allotment. Architects and landscape architects have achieved distinction and produced notable innovations in design in Banyule, with an emphasis in the postwar era in developing connections between the built form with the natural environment. In many ways, Banyule can be seen to represent some important key shifts in the ways in which Australians have understood, and lived with, the natural environment.

Socially, Banyule has developed into a vibrant and diverse community. There has been, and continues to be, a strong tradition of community activity, community activism, and sporting and social clubs. The Banyule municipality has been the site of public health initiatives and social welfare since the 1880s, demonstrated particularly through the roles of the significant hospitals in the municipality, and the early public housing estates built by the Housing Commission of Victoria. It has encouraged industrial development, albeit on a limited scale.

The topography of the area, with its watercourses and river flats contrasting with timbered hills, has been a key factor in shaping the patterns of development in the municipality, and it is this fundamental underlying layer in the local environment that is reflected today in much of the rich heritage fabric of the area. The character of the natural environment, and the landscape, is a common over-arching factor in many of Banyule’s historical themes, including the importance of the river flats to Aboriginal people, the impetus for early settlers’ developing farms and orchards, the enthusiasm for recreation and tourism, the choice of site for the Austin Hospital in 1880, the development of the Heidelberg School in Australian landscape painting, the suitability of the open country for military training, the inspiration to architects and landscape designers, and the key motivating factor in the strong local movement for environmental conservation, especially along the Yarra River, that has had an influential and consistent presence since the early twentieth century.

## 2.3 Banyule Thematic Environmental History

### Introduction

This thematic history of the Banyule municipality is organised around the 12 historical themes identified in Section 2.1. It is not intended to be a comprehensive or chronological account of the municipality, but instead examines some key themes in its history since the beginnings of permanent European settlement in Victoria. The study area is confined to the municipal boundary of the City of Banyule, but discussion may at times move outside these boundaries where particular historical themes cross into neighbouring municipal areas.

### 1. Wurundjeri Country

*This section of the report has been approved by Wurundjeri Tribe. It draws on the 'Banyule Aboriginal Heritage Study', prepared in 1999 for Banyule City Council by Brendan Marshall of Austral Heritage Consultants, and produced in consultation with Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council.*

*References to Aboriginal people in the historical records have been used, which today may be considered derogatory; these references have been placed in inverted commas.*

### Introduction

The streams and hills of what is now the Banyule municipality define the country both physically and spiritually for the Wurundjeri, who were one of the five tribes of the Kulin nation. This rich tract of land was well-watered and abundant with life. *Birrarung* (the Yarra River) meandered through this country on its course to Port Phillip Bay, flowing in tight twists and turns through the area that is now suburban Heidelberg, Ivanhoe and Eaglemont. The meaning of the Aboriginal name *Birrarung* – 'river of mists' – is evident in the heavy fog that is known to settle on the Yarra Flats at Heidelberg. Periodically, there was extensive flooding through much of the lower Yarra valley, but the country around Heidelberg had many elevated areas and open grasslands, providing a habitat for a wide range of animal and bird life, and supporting a rich diversity of vegetation. In the east of the municipality, the Plenty River flows south to meet the Yarra at Lower Plenty/Viewbank. Tributaries of the Yarra include Salt Creek which rises in Macleod and Banyule Creek.

The early colonial surveyors at Port Phillip in the 1840s were directed to use 'native names' wherever possible and the Aboriginal informants in the Heidelberg area, when questioned, presumably provided a local placename for Heidelberg that surveyors recorded as 'Warringal', meaning 'eagle's nest'.<sup>6</sup> Although the other local placename 'Banyule' (the name of a homestead built in 1846) is a Wurundjeri word for 'hill', the similarity between the word 'Banyule' and 'Bunjil' (eagle) raises the question about any connection between the two words. Was there any specific connection here with Bunjil, the ancestor spirit, given the reference to an eagle's nest? If eagles make their nests on high land to enable surveillance of the ground below, then was there a particular eagle's nest that had special significance to Aboriginal people on the hill (*banyule*) where the Banyule homestead (*warringal*) was built? The wedge-tailed eagle was a significant to the Wurundjeri as one of the two totemic groups of the tribe, *Bunjil* (eagle) and *Waa* (crow).<sup>7</sup> The hill at Eaglemont, formerly known as Mount Eagle, has also been recorded as a place of Aboriginal significance. Was the placename 'Mount Eagle', used from at least the late 1850s, simply chosen as a reference to the original name of the Village of Warringal, or, again, was there a direct and specific association here with an eagle? The steep riverside estate of Mount Eagle became the suburb of 'Eaglemont' in the early 1900s. Today,

<sup>6</sup> Les Blake 1973, *Place Names of Victoria*; Wiencke 1982, p. 100. Some sources give an alternative meaning for 'warringal' as 'wild dog' or dingo jump-up, but this is probably an erroneous reference to 'warrigal', meaning 'wild dog', which is not a Wurundjeri word but instead comes from New South Wales.

<sup>7</sup> A.W. Howitt 1904, *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*.

much altered, Eaglemont remains a suburb of Melbourne, but its anglicised name, along with the local street name, The Eyrie, derives from an ancient Wurundjeri association.

### **Living on Country**

The rich country of the Banyule area has long been the domain of the Wurundjeri or Woiwurrung. The Wurundjeri believe that this land was formed by the ancestor spirit being, Bunjil the Eagle. Wurundjeri elder William Barak recounted a story relating to this area, concerning the formation of the Yarra and Plenty rivers.<sup>8</sup>

From time immemorial the Banyule area supported a population of hunting and gathering people, who had a rich cultural life and interacted with neighbouring groups for trade, ceremonial and kinship purposes. Much activity was concentrated around the watercourses, especially Birrarung, where fishing made an important contribution to peoples' diet. Fish included blackfish and mountain trout, while short-finned eels were caught in funnel-shaped traps that were placed in the water courses and billabongs at certain times of the year. The flats along Birrarung were edged with billabongs that provided food and attracted rich birdlife. The River Red Gums that graced the river flats provided bark for making canoes and various tools and weapons. Certain varieties of grasses were used in many different applications. Perishable food was stored in pits by the river to keep it cool in summer. The root vegetable murnong or yam daisy, an important food source, would have been harvested on the river flats.

The middle reach of the Yarra River, at present-day Heidelberg, was an arterial of activity for the Wurundjeri – for fishing, trade, cultural practices and recreation. The Wurundjeri made their camps along the river flats, upstream and downstream of Heidelberg. The Plenty River and the Darebin Creek were also important watercourses that provided food and other essentials, and shaped Aboriginal land-use. The junctions of the Yarra and the Plenty, and the Yarra and with the Darebin Creek were also important meeting camping and ceremonial sites.

People formed extended kinship groups (or clans) and lived together in a cluster of huts built from tree boughs and lined with bark. Many clans would come together for larger gatherings and other meetings took place at special ceremonial places. The nearby Bolin Bolin Swamp across the Yarra River at present-day Bulleen (City of Manningham) was such a place, where the seasonal eel migration attracted up to 1000 people each year. Bundoora Park (City of Darebin) was another important local place. In Heidelberg itself there were a number of camping places and corroboree sites that were in regular use at the time of white settlement and continued to be used through to the 1860s;<sup>9</sup> it can be surmised that these camping places were long established. People moved through this country on a regular basis, in accordance with the seasons and the needs of the clan or kinship group, returning to places that provided particular types of food, timber, stone or plant material, or places with special ceremonial or spiritual significance. Natural features often provided boundaries.

### **Invasion and displacement**

With the advent of British colonialism in the Port Phillip area from the early 1800s, and specifically from 1835, the Wurundjeri who occupied the country that now makes up the Banyule municipality faced a catastrophic disruption to their established way of life. Every element of life was threatened and damaged, often irrevocably: this included the availability of food and water, habitations, recreation, culture and ceremony, trade, politics, and social order and organisation. The Wurundjeri who occupied country in the Banyule area were displaced and dispossessed of their traditional lands, and forced to live on the margins of the colonial settlement. They lost access to their land and water, and were denied the means of practising their culture in the manner that they had always done. The impact of colonisation caused the decimation of the Aboriginal population that had many contributing factors: introduced

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<sup>8</sup> Shirley Wiencke 1984, *When the Wattles Bloom Again*, p. 100. This is also noted in Marshall 1999.

<sup>9</sup> Many of the Aboriginal camping and meeting places in the Heidelberg area were noted by William Thomas in the 1840s and 1850s; see Stephens (ed.) 2014, *The Journals of William Thomas*, vols 1-3.

diseases, low fertility caused by disease, cultural disintegration, frontier violence and warfare, and the overwhelming heartbreak and despair caused by loss of Country, loss of kinsfolk and the catastrophic disruption to the world they had known.<sup>10</sup>

The colonial authorities sought to institutionalise the Wurundjeri, whom they often referred to as the 'Yarra tribe', and encouraged them to live in specially designed reserves, which were all located on the Yarra River – firstly at Langhorne's Aboriginal Mission, South Yarra (1837–1839); then at William Thomas' Yarra School and Mission, near present-day Collingwood (1846–1852). Thomas was a devout Wesleyan Methodist and appointed Aboriginal protector. He often travelled with the Aboriginal people when they left the Yarra Mission for outlying camping places; these included a number of places near the Yarra River at Heidelberg, at Ivanhoe, at the junction of the Yarra and the Plenty, at 'the Plenty', and across the river at Bolin Bolin (Bulleen). As well as the 'Yarra tribe', Thomas also noted that members of the 'Goulburn tribe' (Taurnurung) were often camped near Heidelberg in the 1840s.<sup>11</sup> The Wurundjeri urged the government to grant them a reserve of land. Bulleen was considered too close to settlement. But in 1852, an Aboriginal reserve was set aside at Pound Bend, Warrandyte, not far outside of the existing boundary of Banyule, which spanned both sides of the Yarra.<sup>12</sup> This was short-lived. In 1863 many Aboriginal people of the 'Yarra tribe', along with others, moved to a new Aboriginal reserve at Coranderrk, near Healesville.



*Parish plan of Nillumbik, c.1855, showing the Reserve for Aborigines that spanned the Yarra River from Warrandyte to Eltham. Although outside the study area, this was an important place to Aboriginal people who occupied the Banyule area (source: State Library of Victoria)*

<sup>10</sup> For a good overview of the impact of British colonisation on Aboriginal life in Victoria, see Richard Broome 2005, *Aboriginal Victorians: A history since 1800* (Allen & Unwin, Crow's Nest).

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Stephens 2014, vol. 3, p. 229.

<sup>12</sup> Broome 2005, pp. 106-07; Isobel Ellender 1994, 'The Aboriginal Heritage of Eltham', p. 15; Monument Australia website.



### Aboriginal-settler relations

The Wurundjeri continued to live in the Heidelberg district during the first two decades of the Port Phillip settlement. Some Wurundjeri worked for local settlers in the late 1830s and possibly up to the 1850s. Settlers who employed Aboriginal people included Joseph Hawdon of 'Banyule', Captain Browne of 'Hartlands', and Dr Robert Martin of 'Viewbank'.<sup>13</sup> It is likely that there were other examples, but records providing this information are scant and dispersed. It is likely, for example, that Wurundjeri worked for Thomas Wills who was farming at Heidelberg. Wills was well acquainted with the Aboriginal people of Victoria. Amongst other ventures, he organised the Aboriginal cricket team's tour of England in 1868. The Aboriginal cricket team, which included players from Melbourne and across Victoria, were accommodated at Wills' house in Heidelberg and played cricket matches around Melbourne in the 1860s, including a match at Heidelberg Park in 1867.<sup>14</sup>

Some early settlers in the Heidelberg district had 'good relations' with the Wurundjeri. There are many personal testimonies of settlers' descendants recorded in newspaper articles, generally as reminiscences, of friendly relations — for example, of settlers' children playing with the children of the 'Yarra tribe' at Heidelberg. But there are also stories of the 'hostile' and 'warlike' behaviour of the local Aboriginal people. The level of antagonism between settlers and Aboriginal people increased considerably through the 1840s and there was at certain times an underlying general uneasiness amongst the settlers at Heidelberg. In 1840, the pastoral settler Armyne Bolden reported to the authorities that a number of armed Aboriginal men had gathered in his paddock at Heidelberg.<sup>15</sup> Lemuel Bolden complained in the early 1840s that Aboriginal people were taking food from his property, and Major Charles Newman complained in 1849 about Aboriginal people lighting fires in his 'enclosed paddocks'.<sup>16</sup> Antagonism between whites and blacks culminated in an incident in 1846 when a number of weapons (guns) were seized from Aboriginal people who had gathered on the Yarra Flats at Heidelberg, presumably for the purpose of plotting an attack on the settlers.<sup>17</sup> There would have been other instances of racial conflict in the Heidelberg area, some of which would have gone unrecorded. In the 1840s, John Dowling saw Aboriginal men picking up a number of 'arrows' (probably arrow heads) near the site of St John's Anglican Church in Heidelberg, but no explanation is given as to their use.<sup>18</sup> Conflict between opposing tribes, which escalated as a result of colonisation, due to social disruption and upheaval and the pressure on available resources, also had a detrimental impact.<sup>19</sup> One Wurundjeri man who had formerly been 'in the service' of Joseph Hawdon of 'Banyule' was found to have been murdered in the Western District in 1841 by an Aboriginal group.<sup>20</sup>

Some influential figures who lived in the Heidelberg district in the early settlement period played a significant part in racial discrimination towards Aboriginal people, including Captain Brunswick Smyth, head of the Mounted Police, who carried out some harsh measures against Aboriginal people, including the military ambush of a large group of 500 Aboriginal men from the 'Yarra Yarra tribe' and the 'Goulburn tribe' who had gathered on the Heidelberg Road in 1840, with 30 guns between them, about three miles from Melbourne; on this occasion many Aboriginal people were arrested and 'double ironed' in prison.<sup>21</sup> Justice Walpole Willis of the Rosanna Estate, was another well known local figure, who in 1841 had declared that squatters

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<sup>13</sup> Cannon 1983, *Historical Records of Victoria*, vol 2B, p. 586, Sarah Hayes 2014, *Good Taste, Fashion, Luxury*, p. 10.

<sup>14</sup> Stephens 2014, vol 3, pp. 516, 518; *Australasian*, 2 February 1867, p. 12.

<sup>15</sup> Cannon 1983, vol 2B, p. 732.

<sup>16</sup> Cannon 1991, pp. 60, 71.

<sup>17</sup> *Argus*, 1846.

<sup>18</sup> *Argus*, 2 February 1935, p. 6; VBDM.

<sup>19</sup> See Broome 2005.

<sup>20</sup> Cannon 1983, vol. 2B, p. 586.

<sup>21</sup> *Australasian Chronicle* (Sydney), 29 October 1840, p. 4; Cannon 1991, p. 32.



were entitled to remove Aboriginal people from their pastoral runs as they had no right to 'trespass' on a pastoral leasehold.<sup>22</sup>

### The survival of Wurundjeri culture

Upstream of the settlement, Heidelberg district remained relatively isolated and contained in the 1840s and early 1850s. The Yarra River remained a key travel route for the Wurundjeri, and a means of access to less settled country further upstream (to the north-east). The Plenty River and the Darebin Creek were also important as trade routes, and as sources of food and fresh water.

The Wurundjeri continued to live in the Heidelberg area in the 1850s and 1860s, and possibly longer. The availability of public land along the Yarra River and the river flats would have been a key reason for this. Up until the mid-1860s William Thomas often makes reference to going to Heidelberg in anticipation of finding Aboriginal people camped there.<sup>23</sup> It would also appear that there was an unofficial ration depot at Heidelberg in the early 1850s, where blankets and medicines were supplied to a small Aboriginal camp.<sup>24</sup>

White settlers have also left various records that mention the camping places and other activities of Aboriginal people in the Banyule area.<sup>25</sup> Mary Ann Baynes (née Farrell), who was a girl when her family arrived in the area in the early 1850s, recalled seeing a corroboree on top of the hill that was later occupied by the Austin Hospital.<sup>26</sup> Another early settler recalled seeing Aboriginal people near the site of the Heidelberg Repat Hospital. The farm property 'Willis Vale' in Greensborough was also known in local oral memory to have been the site of corroborees.<sup>27</sup>

A number of places along the Yarra River at Heidelberg and Ivanhoe are significant for their association with a rich Aboriginal heritage; these include the Banyule wetlands and the Warringal Flats. There are also a number of scar trees or canoe trees remaining in the Banyule area, including one at Eaglemont, which is marked with a plaque in the 1960s; another on the Plenty River at Lower Plenty; and a large group of trees at the Rosanna Parklands. Brendan Marshall (1999), in his report on the Aboriginal heritage of Banyule, notes that the municipality has a higher incidence than average of Aboriginal heritage sites.<sup>28</sup> Many local placenames are derived from the Wurundjeri language – Banyule, Warringal, Keelbundoora, Nillumbik and Yallambie – and these resonate as fragmentary reminders of the rich Aboriginal history of the area.

From the mid-nineteenth century, settlers no doubt would have encountered material objects of Aboriginal culture, such as stone tools, and timber weapons and implements, as they ploughed the Yarra Flats or walked in the bush or along the river. Sometimes these items were coveted as trophies but often they lost over time. As late as the 1950s, a young boy found a boomerang amongst the trees while playing in the bush at the back of Betty Roland's garden in Ivanhoe.<sup>29</sup> A collection of artefacts that may have been sourced from the local area was deposited with the Heidelberg Historical Society in the 1960s.

Aboriginal people had moved back to Melbourne in significant numbers by the mid-twentieth century, and many lived in the inner northern suburbs. Many took factory work and it is likely

<sup>22</sup> Thomas McCombie 1858, *A History of the Colony of Victoria*, pp. 89-90; Henry Reynolds 1998, *This Whispering in Our Hearts*, pp. 58-60.

<sup>23</sup> Stephens 2014, *The Journals of William Thomas*, vols 2 - 4; various pp.

<sup>24</sup> Cannon 1991, p. 259. Note this Heidelberg is not identified in the official records as a formal local protector's depot or ration depot.

<sup>25</sup> Stephens 2014, *The Journals of William Thomas*, vol. 1, 2.

<sup>26</sup> For example, *Advocate*, 2 March 1950, p. 12.

<sup>27</sup> *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 29 June 1934, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Brendan Marshall 1999, 'The Aboriginal Heritage of Banyule' (public edition).

<sup>29</sup> *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 2 August 1950, p. 2.

that some may have worked in the West Heidelberg industrial estate from the 1950s onwards. The City of Heidelberg was progressive in its inclusion of Aboriginal people and Aboriginal culture in the 'Australia Day' ceremonies it held in the 1950s. Aboriginal political leader and Yorta Yorta Elder, Pastor Sir Doug Nicholls was a guest speaker at these events and Aboriginal cultural practises were displayed.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> *Argus*, 1 February 1955, p. 11.

## 2. Colonial settlement

### Grazing and farming

The evolution of the landscape from ancient times shaped the ways it would later be adapted for human use. Volcanic activity and associated lava flow had caused a damming of the Yarra which led to the formation of a large lake at Darebin Creek. A bank of basalt along the Darebin Creek on the west of the municipality relates to this volcanic activity. Movements of the earth below the surface caused a number of folds and ridgelines across the municipality, which created the undulating picturesque landscape that attracted the early settlers. The land watered by the Yarra and the Plenty Rivers formed a particularly fertile tract of country.

The Heidelberg district, a pleasant stretch of hilly country in the crook of the Yarra and the Plenty Rivers, was settled as a farming district in the late 1830s. Located around 9 miles north-east of Melbourne, it was a pleasant hour's drive from the town centre. Settlers with sufficient capital who arrived at Port Phillip in the late 1830s took up pastoral leaseholds on the fertile and picturesque country alongside the Yarra River. But pastoralists only briefly 'squatted' in the Heidelberg area, as the colonial government quickly took steps to designate this land as a Settled District and threw it open for sale. The first land sale in 1837 was held in Sydney, which drew the consternation of potential buyers in Melbourne who had been eyeing off the fine country of Heidelberg. A successful purchaser at the first land sale was Sydney solicitor Edward Walker.

The first land-holders did not all reside in the district; several, including Edward Walker, were purely speculative investors. Some land was further subdivided and disposed of at a profit. Of those who did settle in the district there were a large number of 'gentlemen' settlers. Joseph Hawdon was established at 'Banyule' from 1846. R.A. Browne, who is claimed to have 'christened' the area as 'Heidelberg' — the siting of Warringal on the Yarra reminded him of Heidelberg (Germany) on the Necktar River — took up 'Hartlands' in the early 1840s. Other early gentleman settlers included D.C. McArthur, R.B. Smyth and Thomas Wills. Several of these figures were members of the embryonic but socially exclusive Melbourne Club.<sup>31</sup> Other farmers settled to the north-west of the municipality in the vicinity of present-day Bundoora. This was on the Plenty Road, the route to an emerging farming district and was dominated by Mount Cooper, which lies just outside Banyule at the north-west end.

The Heidelberg district was a particularly sought-after locality in which to settle, with its rich alluvial river flats, an abundant water supply, and a picturesque setting of hills and fine views. Early settlement patterns in the district were defined by the watercourses, the shape of the land, and the quality of the soil. Graziers and farmers eagerly took up land here, with the banks of the Yarra being a preferred location. The low-lying river flats, however, were soon found to be prone to flooding and presented the risk of stock loss and ruined crops, so grain crops and stock were generally confined to the higher ground. Early buildings were rough dwellings generally built from local timber, or sometimes from local stone. Thatch was used for roofing. Some early colonial buildings were constructed from handmade bricks — for example 'Willis Vale' on the Plenty River at Greensborough.

Landholders employed stockmen, dairymen, drivers, gardeners, chefs, and general labourers and servants. Shepherds who were employed to watch stock often lived in primitive one-room huts. Permanent settlers with sufficient means erected large homes, including Banyule, Viewbank, and Yallambie. North of Heidelberg there were also settlers along the Plenty River at Greensborough.

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<sup>31</sup> The 'gentleman' status of these settlers is assessed in Paul de Serville 1982, *Port Phillip Gentlemen*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

The early estates were largely self-sufficient entities, running a small dairy herd and with a productive garden. A range of crops were grown on more elevated land, including wheat, oats, maize, lucerne, barley and mangel, although wheat was attacked by rust in the 1860s. Vegetable crops – initially largely potatoes, but also peas and cabbages – were grown on the rich river flats, often by tenant farmers.<sup>32</sup> A number of the large estates, such as the Rosanna estate on the Plenty River, were occupied by tenant farmers. At Banyule, Hawdon leased rectangular or ‘strip’ fields to tenants, who grew crops on the upper land and used the lower river-flats for vegetable-growing.<sup>33</sup> The periodic flooding of the Yarra, which threatened the viability of any unharvested crops, was an ongoing risk to farmers, but generally potatoes proved a successful crop, drawing high yields and providing a reliable though modest income.

Through the late 1860s dairying slowly took over as the staple farming activity. With the erection of the Heidelberg Cheese Factory in the early 1870s, there was a marked shift away from potato and grain growing; by 1880, dairying was the dominant agricultural activity.<sup>34</sup> One of the largest dairy farms in the district was operated by Mr Trenoweth.<sup>35</sup>

With ample good farming land, which was well-watered and in close proximity to Melbourne, Heidelberg became the chosen site of the Victorian Agricultural Society’s annual show, from the early 1850s until at least the 1870s (when it was relocated to Ascot Vale). This gave Heidelberg district considerable prestige and drew other keen agriculturists.



Robert Hoddle, watercolour painting of Heidelberg, 1847  
(State Library of Victoria, Accession No. H31067)



K. Kennedy, pencil sketch of rural Heidelberg, 1876  
(State Library of Victoria, Accession No. H34770/19)

The demand for housing grew steadily in the early twentieth century, farming activity declined. Yet whilst agricultural production fell, the area maintained a ‘country’ feel into the 1920s and 1930s. The district remained relatively remote from the other suburbs to the south and west, bounded by the Yarra River on the south and the Darebin Creek on the west. As suburban development encroached further north, the number of farms slowly diminished. Some farms were still operating in Greensborough and Montmorency in the 1940s, such as C. Cramp’s Risedale’s Poultry Farm.<sup>36</sup> A number of pre-1851 buildings survive in the municipality that are associated with this early farming period that pre-dated the Victorian goldrushes.

### Orchards, vineyards and market gardens

The rich river flats at Heidelberg were occupied by orchardists and market gardeners from the 1840s, with the Yarra River providing a source of water supply. Other watercourses, the Darebin Creek and the Plenty River, also supported fruit and vegetable growing in the district. By the 1850s, the district was famed for its production of fruit and vegetables, and the Yarra

<sup>32</sup> *Leader*, 23 February 1867, p. 9.

<sup>33</sup> *Leader*, 27 May 1871, p. 6. See also see Context Pty Ltd 2012, ‘Warringal Parklands’.

<sup>34</sup> *Leader*, 14 January 1871, p. 6; William Senior 1880, *Travel and Trout in the Antipodes*, p. 29.

<sup>35</sup> *Leader*, 20 September 1873, p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> *Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser*, 10 May 1940, p. 6.

flats were dominated by cultivated fields. Potatoes were a chief crop in the 1850s and 1860s and for a period, Heidelberg was known to produce the best potatoes available in Melbourne.<sup>37</sup> As well as offering suitable soil, a reliable water supply and well-drained fields, the locality was close enough to Melbourne to reach major markets. In 1870 Heidelberg was described as 'inhabited chiefly by persons engaged in market gardening or vine-growing for which purpose the soil is admirably suited'. Likewise, at Ivanhoe in 1870 fruit and vegetables were 'largely cultivated in the neighbourhood'.<sup>38</sup> Hops were also grown in the early settlement period with oast houses operating at 'Banyule' and 'Plenty Station'.<sup>39</sup>

One of the most successful early orchardists was Robert Whatmough, who was established at 'Willis Vale' on the Plenty River at Greensborough in the 1840s. Whatmough was well known for his extensive range of fruit trees.<sup>40</sup> On the Heidelberg flats, there were a number of fruit growers, amongst whom Mark Sill was prominent. The bank manager David Charteris McArthur developed a prize-winning fruit orchard at 'Charterisville' on the Yarra River at Eaglemont. There remained a large quantity of fruit being grown in the district in the mid-1880s.<sup>41</sup> In the early twentieth century, a number of orchards continued to operate at Greensborough and Montmorency. Remnant fruit trees survive at Warringal Parklands. Heidelberg was the scene of some novel early endeavours in irrigation. In the early 1860s local farmer Sidney Riccardo developed an impressive irrigation system using steam power and underground pipe reticulation for irrigating his crops on the banks of the Yarra. The system was designed and installed by the Italian-born architect Alessandro Martelli.<sup>42</sup> Many Chinese immigrants who had been attracted to Melbourne during the gold rush of the 1850s successfully turned their hands to market gardening in the Heidelberg district. In the early 1900s, Chinese-run market gardens were operating on the river flats at Ivanhoe and Heidelberg, where vegetable crops were watered using pumps direct from the Yarra.<sup>43</sup> The physical remains of a Chinese water wheel survived at the Yarra Flats reserve in East Ivanhoe into the 1990s.<sup>44</sup> The Chinese also established market gardens on the Darebin Creek.<sup>45</sup>



Charles Mapstone, pencil sketch of 'Ivanhoe Lodge', 1859 (source: State Library of Victoria, Accession No. H2001.166/57)

<sup>37</sup> *Leader*, 14 January 1871, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> Robert P. Whitworth 1870, *Bailliere's Gazetteer*, pp. 180, 193.

<sup>39</sup> *Heidelberg Historical Society Newsletter*, No. 131, April 1989, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> See Jacinta Crealy 2017, *Robert Whatmough: Pioneering Victorian horticulturist*, self-published.

<sup>41</sup> *Australasian*, 21 March 1885, p. 14.

<sup>42</sup> *Age*, 4 May 1863, p. 3; *Leader*, 29 January 1870, p. 6.

<sup>43</sup> Context Pty Ltd 2012, 'Warringal Parklands'.

<sup>44</sup> Rhonda Boyle 1991, *Melbourne's Parks and Gardens*, p. 91.

<sup>45</sup> *Argus*, 6 September 1918, p. 4.



There were a number of successful vineyards further upstream from the Heidelberg district in the Yarra Valley – for example at Healesville and Yering – but several small vineyards were also established on the Warringal Flats in the 1850s.<sup>46</sup> One successful winemaker was the architect Charles Maplestone of ‘Ivanhoe Lodge’, which was located in the vicinity of the Heidelberg Repat Hospital. Maplestone was a frequent prize-winner at the annual shows of the Victorian Agricultural Society in the 1860s; he also won prizes at the Paris and London Exhibitions.<sup>47</sup> After his death, the property was subdivided.<sup>48</sup> Other settlers dabbled in grape-growing, such as J.H. Brooke of ‘Mount Eagle’ who planted an acre of vines in the early 1860s. From the early 1900s to the 1950s, the now reduced holding of ‘Charterisville’, Ivanhoe, was home of the de Castella family, including Hubert de Castella, the pioneering winemaker, and his son François de Castella, who was a viticultural expert to the Victorian Government.<sup>49</sup>

### Country estates

The district earned a reputation as a genteel farming community, with Heidelberg greatly admired as a quaint and delightful ‘English village’, not least on account of its distinctive English-style Church of England, which was picturesquely sited over-looking the Yarra River. A description in 1856 noted ‘the very picturesque and beautiful township of Heidelberg, where there are several well-built residences and neat country-seats with rich and tastefully arranged grounds, equal to many of the same character in England’.<sup>50</sup> Another observer in 1864 described Heidelberg as being ‘so beautifully situated, amidst scenery that reminds one in an uncommon degree of an English country village’.<sup>51</sup>

Several well-to-do settlers or ‘gentleman farmers’ established impressive country estates. An unusually high proportion of well-connected and prominent settlers took up estates in the Heidelberg district in the 1840s and 1850s. Alexander Sutherland, writing in the 1880s, described this set of local land-owners as ‘aristocratic’.<sup>52</sup>



*Yallambee homestead, Lower Plenty, photographed in 1962 (source: John Collins Collection, State Library of Victoria, Accession No. H97.250/2682)*



*Charles Pratt photograph of 'Amberley', Lower Plenty, c.1925-40, an early-twentieth century country estate (State Library of Victoria, Accession No. H91.160/1724)*

In the early twentieth century, prior to the Second World War, large country homes continued to be built in the area. These were grand, double-storey, architect-designed homes built for

<sup>46</sup> Context Pty Ltd 2012, ‘Warringal Parklands’; Boyle 1991, p. 92.

<sup>47</sup> There are a number of newspaper references to Charles Maplestone winning prizes for wine production through the 1860s.

<sup>48</sup> *Age*, 14 April 1992, p. 21.

<sup>49</sup> David Dunstan 1993, ‘de Castella, Francois Robert (1867–1953)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 13; Ancestry.com (de Castella family tree).

<sup>50</sup> Henry Butler Stoney 1856, *Victoria: With a description of its principal cities*, p. 33.

<sup>51</sup> *Argus*, 26 March 1864, p. 6.

<sup>52</sup> Alexander Sutherland 1888, *Victoria and its Metropolis*, vol. II.

wealthy owners and set in landscaped grounds. 'Amberley' was established on a large site on the Yarra River at Lower Plenty in the 1920s. 'Aldermaston' was established at Watsonia in the 1930s, and 'Ashmead' was built as a doctor's residence in Greensborough in the 1930s.

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### 3. Transport and communication

#### Early roads and bridges

Roads and bridges were critical in progressing settlement and road boards were amongst the first official bodies to be established in colonial Victoria. Before the first bridge was built across the Yarra at Heidelberg, a punt operated at the bottom of Banksia Street. The early sale of land in the Heidelberg district from 1838, and the emergence of the area as an important cropping and fruit-growing district, made the need for a proper road from Melbourne all the more critical. A road board was formed at Heidelberg in 1840, which was notable as the first road board in Victoria.

The Heidelberg Road, the first public road in the district and one of the first man-made roads in the Colony of Victoria, was completed in 1842.<sup>53</sup> It is believed to follow a traditional Aboriginal route. In the early 1840s, various places along this road were the location of Aboriginal camping places.<sup>54</sup> The road was constructed at the government's expense during an economic recession, and was built under the orders of Superintendent C.J. La Trobe, who stipulated that the work be carried out by 'married men'.<sup>55</sup> The first road was less than ideal and it wasn't until 1846, after the establishment of a newly constituted road trust, that the road was improved with macadamisation. A toll-keeper, employed by the Heidelberg Road Trust, occupied a small hut on the Merri Creek where his wife collected the tolls. So impressive was the completed Heidelberg Road that it became a drawcard for sight-seers on the weekends.<sup>56</sup> The Heidelberg Road Trust was only responsible for one road, however, and there was a desperate need by the mid-1850s for a properly constituted Road District. The Heidelberg Road District – the antecedent of the Shire of Heidelberg – was duly formed in 1861.<sup>57</sup>

A coach service operated from Melbourne to Heidelberg by the mid-1840s. By 1870, the coach service was provided by William Greenaway, who ran from Heidelberg to Melbourne as well as to other nearby towns, such as Templestowe.<sup>58</sup> Another important early road was the Plenty Road, which led from Melbourne to the Whittlesea district, which was an important agricultural area from the 1840s.

Other transport routes emerged as settlement increased in the district. For many decades these were not surfaced roads but instead were basic cleared tracks that became bogged in wet weather and dusty in summer. The steep inclines through much of the district, as well as the numerous river and creek crossings, posed additional challenges to those using the roads.

Greensborough made an application to form a road district in 1858 and this was proclaimed the following year.<sup>59</sup> The Eltham Road Board was also formed in 1858. The early roads encouraged further settlement and brought commercial opportunities for blacksmiths, carters and carriers, and stores as well as hotels which provided a break in the journey and an opportunity to rest and water the horses. Accessible roads also enabled a postal service to operate and small post and telegraph offices were opened in a number of localities. Most of the major roads were punctuated by a hotel, usually located at a crossing place, or at a crossroads. The Darebin Bridge Hotel, for example, was built on Heidelberg Road at the crossing of the Darebin Creek. Spark's Reserve, Ivanhoe, which is adjacent to Darebin Creek, marks an earlier

<sup>53</sup> A.G.L. Shaw 1996, *A History of the Port Phillip District: Victoria before Separation*, p. 148.

<sup>54</sup> There are many references in Stephens 2014, *The Journals of William Thomas*, to Aboriginal people camping on or near the Heidelberg Road, for example around Alphington.

<sup>55</sup> Port Phillip newspaper, 1842 (source: HHS).

<sup>56</sup> *Argus*, 29 March 1913, p. 7; Bernard Barrett 1979, *The Civic Frontier*, pp. 35-37.

<sup>57</sup> Barrett 1979, p. 198.

<sup>58</sup> Whitworth 1870; *Argus*, 12 May 1873, p. 7.

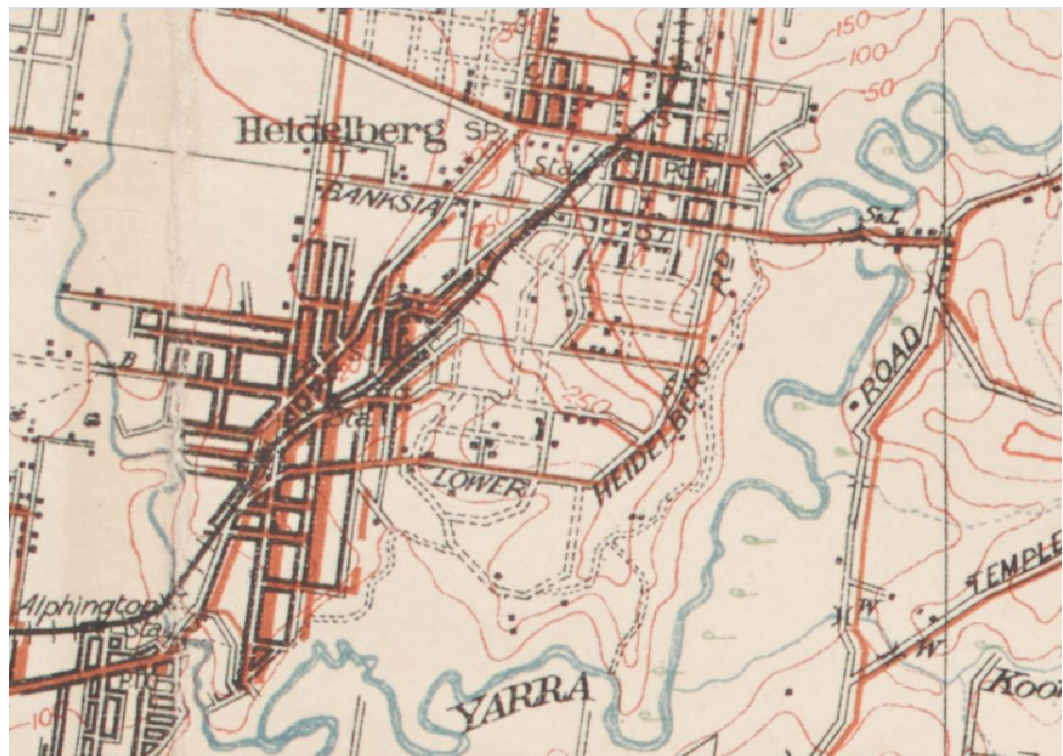
<sup>59</sup> *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1858; 1859.

route of Heidelberg Road.<sup>60</sup> A number of early masonry bridges were erected over both the Yarra and Plenty Rivers – at Heidelberg (Banksia Street); Lower Plenty; and Greensborough.

Other early roads included the Lower Plenty Road in 1856, and a road through the Rosanna Estate, which was agitated for in 1857 but not opened until 1861. The early road boards were active and productive, and in some cases roadworks benefitted from assistance from the colonial government. The cutting through Mount Eagle to form the (Lower) Heidelberg Road, a major understanding, was carried out in the early 1860s with government aid.<sup>61</sup>

A new road between Ivanhoe and Heidelberg (Studley Road) was constructed in 1881. This was in great demand owing to the numerous hills that the carters of produce had to traverse each day carrying goods to and from the city markets.<sup>62</sup> The Burke Road bridge was completed in 1926, enabling direct access to the north from Kew and Camberwell.

Horse-drawn transport was served by regular hitching posts and mile posts, which were formed from red gum stumps or cast iron. Hotels were established at major crossings where horses could be watered and rested. Local road boards, and later the local councils, provided horse troughs at busy locations, generally outside hotels, and some of these were still in use in the 1940s. One horse trough remained in Heidelberg in the late 1970s, but has probably since been removed.<sup>63</sup>



*In addition to the major roads connecting Heidelberg, the river flats were criss-crossed with informal tracks and unmade roads that provided access to this area for farming, orchards and market gardens. Detail from military survey plan 'Ringwood', dated 1915 (source: State Library of Victoria Map Collection)*

### Railways

Efforts were made in the 1880s to secure a railway connection from Heidelberg to the city, but this had not eventuated – probably largely due to the cost of construction through land that

<sup>60</sup> Context Pty Ltd 2015, 'Sparks Reserve', report prepared for City of Banyule.

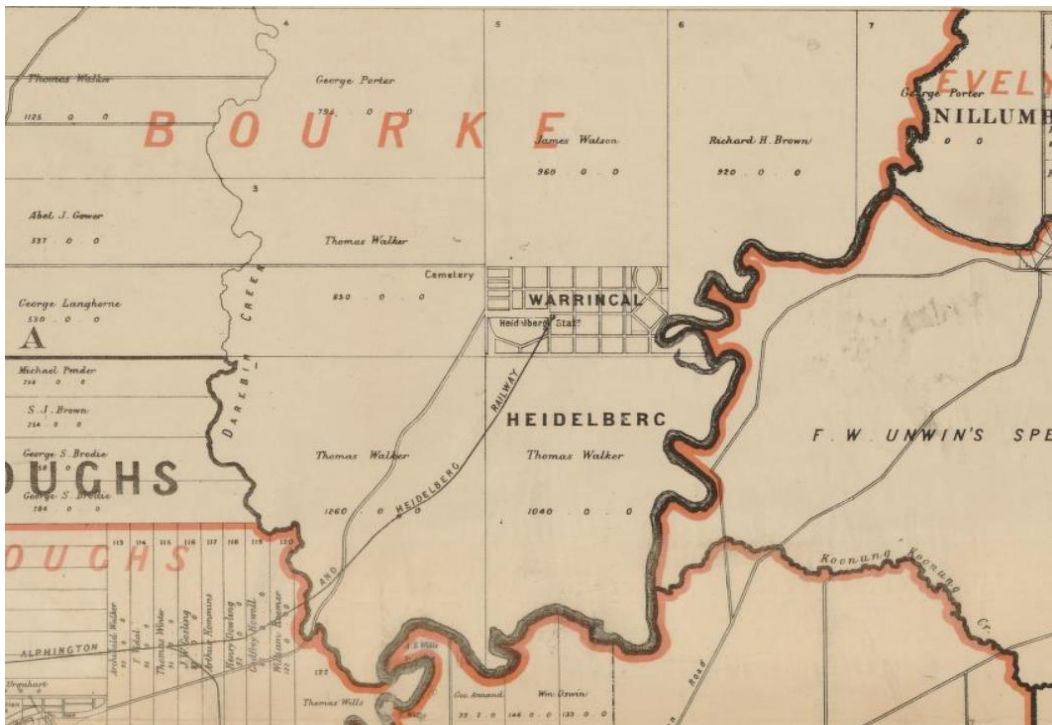
<sup>61</sup> *Argus*, 23 August 1862, p. 7.

<sup>62</sup> *Argus*, 28 June 1881, p. 6.

<sup>63</sup> Dulcie Godfrey (ed.) 1977, *Register of Environmental Assets of the City of Heidelberg*.

was hampered by the course of the river and the undulating country. In May 1888 a railway connection was made but it was such a roundabout trip out of the city that it proved to slow to be very popular. Nevertheless, this inefficient railway connection attracted sightseers as well as artists who were drawn to the Heidelberg School artists' camps in the 1880s. Eventually, a more direct railway line was built between Collingwood and Heidelberg and this was opened in 1901, the year of Federation.

The railway was then further extended to Eltham by 1904 and to Hurstbridge by 1912. The new railway station north of Heidelberg was named 'Rosanna' in 1907, after the long-established farming property of that name.<sup>64</sup> Montmorency Station was opened in 1923 which triggered development in the new suburb.<sup>65</sup> The railway continued to Greensborough in the 1920s. With the increased population and rail traffic, there was also a duplication of the line carried out in the 1920s. The railway line was electrified in 1921.<sup>66</sup>



Map showing the main road and railway line from Melbourne to Heidelberg in the 1880s (source: State Library of Victoria Map Collection)

### Bus network

A proposal to introduce trams to Heidelberg from at least the 1920s failed to eventuate, probably owing to the downturn in the economy in 1929. For this fast-growing suburban corridor of Melbourne, which was characterised by hilly country and winding roads, electric trams were far from practical. A 1930s Charterisville subdivision plan offered a 'future tram route' from the present Cotham Road terminus to across the Burke Road Yarra bridge to East Ivanhoe.<sup>67</sup> In the late 1930s the Heidelberg City Council lobbied the Government to have its local area declared a tramways bus area.<sup>68</sup>

Development of a bus route was probably delayed during World War II owing to austerity measures, but after the war buses were introduced. These were manufactured at the

<sup>64</sup> *Argus*, 26 August 1907, p. 5.

<sup>65</sup> *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 24 August 1923, p. 4.

<sup>66</sup> Rolf Boldrewood 1884, *Old Melbourne Memories*, p. 165.

<sup>67</sup> 'Shaping Banyule' community feedback, August 2018.

<sup>68</sup> *Age*, 2 July 1937, p. 13.



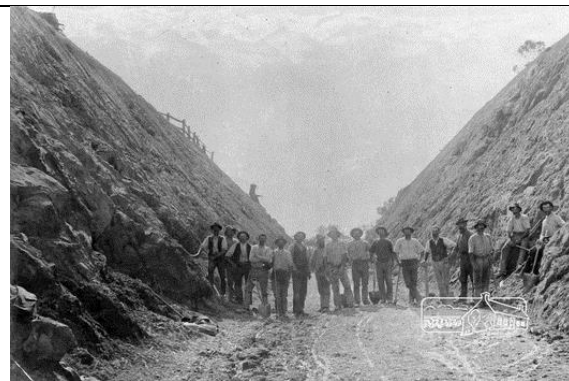
Commonwealth Aircraft Factory in the 1950s-60s. Little infrastructure of this early transport system survives. In 1954 it was proposed to run a Tramways-operated bus service from Rosanna and West Heidelberg into the city.

#### **The era of the motor car**

The appearance of motor cars in the early 1900s opened up the district more easily to visitors and commuters. In 1916, after a long period of lobbying and planning, a scenic road along the Yarra River at Ivanhoe (known as 'The Boulevard') was completed by the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works.<sup>69</sup> Supervised by Carlo Catani, who was chief engineer for roads and bridges in Victoria's Public Works Department, this new road was part of the Yarra Improvement Scheme, which sought to beautify the course of the Yarra River; this followed the beautification of the Yarra in the central city with the creation of Alexandra Avenue. The new 'Boulevard' at Ivanhoe was initially envisaged as a much longer tourist drive, that commenced at Heidelberg and continued through to Yarra Glen, but only a small section of the original plan was implemented.

The Chandler Railway Bridge that crossed the Yarra at Kew was adapted for road traffic in 1930, following the closure of the short-lived Outer Circle railway, and this provided additional road connection from Kew into Alphington and Heidelberg. It was designed to withstand the weight of freight trains.<sup>70</sup>

Widespread ownership of the motor car by the 1950s meant that the proximity of new homes to the nearest railway station was not as critical as it had been in the 1920s. Some new suburban areas in the postwar period were developed before any proper access roads were made, and this remained the case in the 1960s and 1970s, although some superior housing estates provided roads within the estates themselves.<sup>71</sup>



*Building the Eltham to Greensborough railway, 1902 (courtesy Greensborough Historical Society)*



*Timber hitching post, Greensborough (courtesy Greensborough Historical Society)*

<sup>69</sup> *Leader*, 20 February 1915, p. 39; *Weekly Times*, 23 September 1916, p. 30.

<sup>70</sup> Kenyon 1934, p. 120; 'Shaping Banyule' community feedback, August 2018.

<sup>71</sup> Trevor Smith (former Rosanna resident), pers. com., April 2018.

## 4. Developing industries

### Quarrying

Stone was the mainstay of colonial building works and was plentiful in the Heidelberg district. Volcanic activity had left deposits of basalt, and there was also sandstone in the river valley. From the 1850s, the Heidelberg Road Trust favoured the use of basalt (or bluestone) for its public buildings, drainage works and bridge and culvert construction, and generally relied on council quarries to supply the stone. In 1870 a number of quarries were operating in Heidelberg district.<sup>72</sup> A gazettal notice for quarrying at Warringal appeared in 1876, which most likely referred to basalt for public works; the Warringal quarry was in operation in 1909.<sup>73</sup>

In the 1890s, during works on the construction of the Watts River (Maroondah) Aqueduct, a series of quarries were established along the course of the channel north of Greensborough.<sup>74</sup>

The site for this may have been near the corner of Shaw Street and Livingstone Street in Ivanhoe where there were several quarries operating in 1915.<sup>75</sup> A Heidelberg City Council quarry remained in operation in 1954. Reid's Lightweight Aggregate Quarry was operating in Greensborough in the 1950s.<sup>76</sup>

### Gold-mining

Whilst no really significant gold discoveries occurred within the Banyule municipality, there were certainly efforts made to this end. Gold-mining endeavours were carried out near St John's Anglican Church in Heidelberg in the 1850s, but with little success.<sup>77</sup> There was considerable gold-mining activity in neighbouring district of Warrandyte (Andersons Creek Diggings) and further north on the Plenty River in the 1850s. Auriferous land was being mined on the Plenty River at Greensborough in 1863.<sup>78</sup> Greensborough was used as a travel stop for gold miners heading to goldfields to the north – at Panton Hill and Queenstown (St Andrews) – and the small settlement benefitted from the passing business. Through much of the nineteenth century gold-mining operations continued at Warrandyte, only a few miles to the east of Heidelberg.

Hard economic times drew a rush of hopeful prospectors. A small amount of mining was carried out in the Greensborough district along the Plenty River in the 1890s and early 1900s.<sup>79</sup> During the Depression of the 1930s, hopeful gold prospectors took to the road, armed with picks and shovels, eager to try their luck in the hill country north of Melbourne. During this time, small clusters of canvas tents appeared along the road, from Greensborough through to Panton Hill and St Andrews, where gold miners had set up camp.<sup>80</sup>

### Timber-cutting

With timber the major fuel for domestic use, wood carters provided an important service in early Melbourne. In the 1840s and 1850s the wooded areas around Heidelberg and further north along the Plenty River were exploited by timber cutters. Timber workers would have set up temporary saw pits on unoccupied land; sawyers, splitters and carters were employed getting the timber to Melbourne.

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<sup>72</sup> Whitworth 1870, p. 180.

<sup>73</sup> *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1876; also 1909.

<sup>74</sup> *Australasian*, 31 July 1886, p. 29.

<sup>75</sup> MMBW Detail Plan No. 2463, Municipality of Heidelberg, 1915 (source: SLV).

<sup>76</sup> Museum Victoria – Collections.

<sup>77</sup> Newspaper reference, Trove.

<sup>78</sup> *Herald*, 1 September 1863, p. 2.

<sup>79</sup> *Bendigo Advertiser*, 14 June 1897, p. 4; *Australian Handbook* 1903, quoted in Victorian Places website.

<sup>80</sup> *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 20 February 1931, p. 8.

Timber in Melbourne had become scarce by the 1850s, and some local municipalities had enacted laws preventing the cutting of timber in the immediate vicinity of townships. Timber-cutting was prohibited in the Warringal (Heidelberg) Township in the 1850s.<sup>81</sup> Wood cutters pushed further north and east into the hills outside Melbourne. Timber cutters and carters based in Greensborough continued to cart timber to Melbourne in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Charles Rouch began working as the foreman at a timber mill in Heidelberg around 1890. He purchased the business in the early 1900s and developed it as one of the largest timber import operations in Victoria.<sup>82</sup> Tom Daniher dominated the local timber and hardware trade from 1950s his premises on Lower Heidelberg Road.

### Mills and factories

Being principally an agricultural district, industrial development was minimal around Heidelberg in the nineteenth century. The processing of grain was an important local initiative, however, and efforts to erect a steam flour mill at Heidelberg were made as early as 1843. A flour mill was operating on the flat by 1845, and this continued to operate at least until the 1860s.<sup>83</sup> There were also a number of flour mills operating further upstream on the Plenty River from the 1840s, but these were abandoned once the Yan Yean reservoir was constructed in the mid-1850s.<sup>84</sup>

An early large-scale manufacturing operation in Heidelberg was the Heidelberg Cheese Factory, which opened in 1871. This ambitious undertaking was erected just 300 feet from the Yarra River on land leased from the government. The factory was designed by architect Charles Robinson in accordance with the latest hygienic principals in milk processing, and was managed by a former owner of the successful Warrnambool Cheese Factory. The Heidelberg Cheese Factory operated on the co-operative principal, which was an innovative approach at the time given that co-operative dairy factories didn't become widely established in Victoria until the late 1880s and early 1890s.<sup>85</sup>

The Heidelberg Gasworks, established on the Yarra bank between Banksia Street and Yarra Street in 1887, was rare in the area as a large industrial site. It was physically dominating complex with its two enormous gasometers and provided employment for a large number of workers. The gasworks operated until the late 1950s.<sup>86</sup>

While small concerns like dairies and foundries operated in the town centres, the Heidelberg municipality had generally discouraged industry through the nineteenth and early twentieth century, seeking to minimise any noxious activity or 'nuisance' that would jeopardise both public health and the celebrated charm of the locality. For example, there were few if any commercial brickworks established in the area. Brickworks were established at various places along the Yarra by the 1850s, however, including at Bulleen, which was not far from Heidelberg on the opposite side of the Yarra. The lack of commercial brickworks partly related to the possible lack of suitable clay, but also to the local council's discouragement of factories and brickworks. Holzer's brickworks in Hawthorn, for example, attempted to open a roofing tile factory in Ivanhoe in the c.1920s but this was firmly opposed by the City of Heidelberg.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>81</sup> *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1850s.

<sup>82</sup> *Argus*, 12 September 1934, p. 6.

<sup>83</sup> *Courier* (Hobart), 14 June 1845, p. 4. Note that it had been abandoned by the 1880s.

<sup>84</sup> Whitworth 1870, p. 411; Tony Dingle and Helen Doyle 2003, *Yan Yean: Melbourne's early water supply*, p. 13.

<sup>85</sup> *Leader*, 14 January 1871, p. 6; Donald S. Garden 1972, *Heidelberg: The land and its people, 1838–1900*, opposite pp. 121–22.

<sup>86</sup> 'The Gasworks, Heidelberg', Wikinorthia.net.au

<sup>87</sup> Pottery factory to manufacture Wunderlich tiles discouraged; *Heidelberg News and Greensborough and Diamond Creek Chronicle*, 31 October 1914.

Manufacturing experienced significant growth in Melbourne in the 1920s, and by the 1930s and 1940s light manufacturing had pushed out of its traditional manufacturing base in the inner suburbs and into the wider suburban area. Some areas in Banyule were developed for this use, including Briar Hill where a timber mill was established in 1941. The Briar Hill Timber & Trading Company milled timber sourced from the nearby hills and won a contract to supply timber for the Olympic Village Project in Heidelberg in the mid-1950s.<sup>88</sup> A light industrial area also emerged along Para Road, Montmorency, where factories included the Para Road Plasterboard Company.

In the postwar era, there was a new focus on the decentralisation of industry. An extensive industrial area, designed for light manufacturing operations, was established in West Heidelberg immediately after World War II. Motor car assembly also took place here, with a French company assembling Renault and Peugeot cars at a factory in West Heidelberg here from 1966 until the 1990s.<sup>89</sup>



*Chimney at Briar Hill timber mill, erected 1941 (courtesy: Greensborough Historical Society)*

#### **Further references:**

Annear, Robyn: <http://www.egold.net.au/biogs/EG00201b.htm>

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<sup>88</sup> Advertisement for the Briar Hill Timber & Trading Co. Pty Ltd, c.1956, from Eltham District Historical Society, online resources.

<sup>89</sup> The Peugeot Car Club in Melbourne holds a photo of the former factory in West Heidelberg.





graced the other comparable middle-class suburbs of Melbourne (such as Kew and Hawthorn) during the boom years of the late 1880s. 'Ravenswood' in Ivanhoe, commenced in 1891, was a rare exception. More common than mansions in Heidelberg and Ivanhoe and the surrounding area were surviving early homesteads that were formerly attached to farm land.



*'Newlands', a gentleman's villa built on the steep hill of Banksia Street, Heidelberg, in 1891 (source: State Library of Victoria, Accession No. H2014.952)*



*'Ravenswood', Ivanhoe, built in 1891 (courtesy Heidelberg Historical Society ref. P 3750/1)*

The completion of a more direct railway connection to Heidelberg in 1901 greatly influenced suburban growth in Heidelberg and Ivanhoe, and a number of Edwardian residences reflect this. The turn of the twentieth century also saw the rise of the Garden Suburb movement, which had originated in England in the late-nineteenth century. This was particularly evident in Ivanhoe and Eaglemont where the natural landscape inspired more organic street layouts, notably in Walter Burley Griffin's visionary design for the Mount Eagle and Glenard estates in c.1912 and 1916 respectively. Rather than emulate the model of a uniform grids of streets that prevailed on the flat land of Melbourne's inner suburbs, and to some extent in the original plan for the 'Village of Warringal' (1840), these newly developed areas embraced the natural topography to determine street formats.

There was a significant suburban expansion in Melbourne in the 1920s, due to population growth and the economic growth that accompanied industrial development; the war years had stalled development but by 1920 building and construction had been reinvigorated. The period from the 1920s to the early 1930s saw the greatest number of houses erected in the former Heidelberg municipality with a total of 3151 new homes built between 1921 and 1933.<sup>94</sup> Heidelberg itself was further developed with new housing subdivisions, and the more distant farming areas of Rosanna, Greensborough and Montmorency also began to carve out housing estates from the existing orchards and paddocks. In 1923, the Corrie Estate in Rosanna offered 65 'choice allotments'.<sup>95</sup> The 1920s also saw the beginning of a rise in the rates of home ownership, made possible by favourable new home financing opportunities. The more salubrious residential areas within the City of Heidelberg were sought after by the wealthy middle class and were sought-after residential areas. In 1928, Ivanhoe was dubbed the 'Queen of the Melbourne Suburbs'.<sup>96</sup>

Domestic life and, consequently, home design had changed dramatically since the late nineteenth century. The new 'servantless' homes mostly had an inside bathroom and laundry and in Heidelberg at least, an inside toilet (the outer areas were not sewered). The 1920s saw

<sup>94</sup> Allom Lovell 1999, 'Banyule Heritage Study: Building Citations A-K', p. 28.

<sup>95</sup> Newspaper article, 1923.

<sup>96</sup> *Herald*, 5 December 1928, p. 12.

the rise of the affordable single-storey timber bungalow, which was built extensively through Melbourne's middle-ring suburbs under the State Savings Bank of Victoria's credit foncier scheme, instituted under the *Housing and Reclamation Act* of 1920. Under this scheme, prospective home-buyers could select a house design from the Bank's standard pattern books. The State Bank's architect, W. Burrige Leith, provided a number of styles that followed the design principals of the Californian Bungalow as well as other popular interwar styles. A large number of detached timber-framed State Bank houses were erected in Ivanhoe, Heidelberg and Greensborough. The Heidelberg City Council imposed a 'brick only' ruling, which prohibited the erection of timber bungalows in an effort to ensure 'quality' constructions, and this caused a degree of consternation amongst some who saw this as unjust.<sup>97</sup> The typical State Bank house had a front and rear garden, and some included a garage for a motor car. More affluent home-owners erected larger bungalow styles; these were still generally single-storey but with heavy styling through the use of external boards, decorative external finishes such as shingles and bay windows, and deep verandahs in the 1920s. In the late 1920s, there were around 10-12 State Bank houses built each year in Heidelberg. Altogether, around 300 'State Bank houses' were erected in the former Heidelberg municipality during the interwar period; this included State Bank houses built under the credit foncier scheme, State Bank houses financed independently, and houses erected as War Service Homes for returned soldiers. The enterprising commercial builder A.V. Jennings, working with architect Edgar Gurney, built two large housing estates in Ivanhoe in the 1930s; these were mass-produced homes but, built in brick, they were more upmarket than the typical State Bank house.

A number of war service homes were erected in the Heidelberg municipality. The first group of houses were built in 1921, following a scandal over alleged inappropriate land acquisition. Senior military figure J. Tait who was appointed to superintend the War Service Homes program in Victoria, had purchased a site in Heidelberg from a close family member and this land was considered unsuitable for building. Nevertheless, 14 houses were erected by the War Service Homes Commission in the early 1920s on a site in Heidelberg Road. These houses, which were erected on land described as 'lots 2, 3, 4 and 5 Heidelberg Road', were 'bigger than the ordinary type of soldiers' home', and as a result these were more expensive and out of the reach of many ex-servicemen.<sup>98</sup> Additional war service homes were subsequently built within the City of Heidelberg through the 1920s by individual applicants with finance and house designs provided through the State Bank of Victoria.<sup>99</sup>

While Heidelberg was well established, the country to the north of Heidelberg was largely open paddocks and sparsely settled. By the 1920s the pressure of suburban growth was slowly being felt and a number of subdivisions took place in Rosanna, Montmorency and Greensborough, heralded by the arrival of the electrified railway. Although without established connections to water supply, sewerage, gas or electricity, the proximity of the Yan Yean water supply and the new 'Morwell scheme' of electricity meant that these services would be readily connected to new house blocks. Real estate agents in the farming country around Greensborough and Montmorency drew eager home buyers out to view the paddock that was their prospective home sites, often luring buyers with the offer of a free ride to the building site in a motor car. Many prospective house owners keenly took up the chance to acquire an affordable block on the frontier of suburbia. One real estate firm at Montmorency established an office close to the railway station to increase their visibility to rail commuters.<sup>100</sup>

The construction of the Watts River aqueduct in the 1890s by the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) also introduced the alluring potential of the city water supply being tapped into in the as yet undeveloped area of Greensborough. In 1909 a proposed new

<sup>97</sup> Butler 1985, p. 31.

<sup>98</sup> *Age*, 24 August 1921, p. 8.

<sup>99</sup> For example, see applications for new homes published in *Herald*, 3 June 1925, p. 15 and 12 August 1925, p. 5.

<sup>100</sup> Newspaper article, 1923.



residential subdivision advertised the Yan Yean water supply as a drawcard of the new area.<sup>101</sup> Situated 13 miles from the city, Greensborough was a long way outside of the MMBW's jurisdiction and so although the water supply was a boon there was no underground sewerage pipes until the 1970s. Other land sales in Greensborough in the early 1900s instead offered rural blocks. The Greensborough Railway Station Estate offered 10-acre blocks and boasted that some well-known business men had built residential villas and weekend retreats on adjoining land, and advertised the suitability of small farms for pigs and poultry, and for fruit-growing.<sup>102</sup>

While many areas within the municipality of Banyule were becoming part of suburban Melbourne by the 1920s there remained large areas of farmland. Until the mid-twentieth century some of these outlying areas were regarded as being in 'the country'.

In the immediate years after World War II, there was an acute shortage of housing in Melbourne. Home-building had stagnated during the war years due to wartime austerity measures and a lack of building materials and labour. The end of the war also saw a large influx of immigrants into Melbourne, and combined with the return of thousands of soldiers from military service, and the resultant spike in marriage rates and the birth rate, this led to a serious housing crisis. The number of households far exceeded the number of available homes.<sup>103</sup> In response, the Victorian Government established emergency camps, such as Camp Pell at Royal Park, and Watsonia Camp (located at the Watsonia Army Barracks). At the same time, the slum abolitionists had been working to move people out of the 'slum' areas of Melbourne, and to this end the Housing Commission of Victoria (HCV) had planned for a large housing estate to be built at West Heidelberg in the early 1940s. The HCV increased its production of new affordable homes in the mid-1940s. The estate at West Heidelberg was the largest housing estate constructed by the HCV at that time.<sup>104</sup> Many of the houses were built as 'pre-fab' concrete, which were assembled at what is now the Holmesglen College of TAFE. Other houses on the estate were constructed of brick. Many of those who were moved to the new estate had been relocated from Melbourne's inner suburbs. Once the houses built for the Olympic Village in Heidelberg were no longer occupied by athletes, they too were co-opted by the HCV for use as public housing.



*Staff in the office of Frank Heath, architect, Housing Commission of Victoria, gathered around a plan of the proposed new housing estate at West Heidelberg, c.1940-42 (source: State Library of Victoria Accession No. H2016.152/36)*

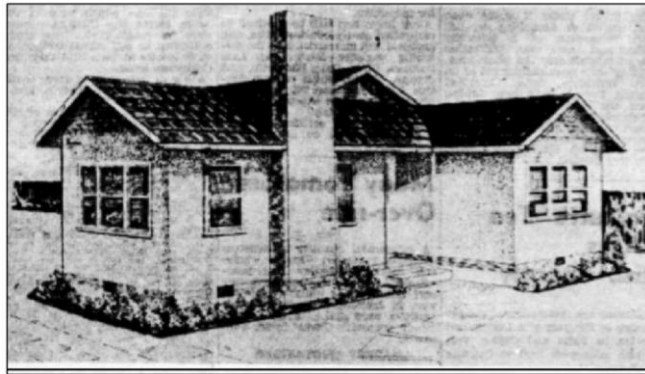
<sup>101</sup> 'Greensborough Township Estate' (plan), 1909 (State Library of Victoria).

<sup>102</sup> Railway station estate c 190-? (State Library of Victoria).

<sup>103</sup> Howe 1991, p. 71.

<sup>104</sup> *Argus*, 21 April 1945, p. 6.

Other measures were introduced to remedy the housing shortage. One was the commercial development of pre-fabricated houses, including the popular Myer House; several Myer Houses were built in Ivanhoe and probably also in other neighbouring suburbs.<sup>105</sup> There was also a shift in the immediate postwar years to smaller, more efficient and more economical house designs. The popular Small Homes Service was run as a regular newspaper column in the *Age* by prominent architect Robin Boyd. The high demand for new homes created a lucrative opportunity for prominent businessman Sol Green and the Lord Mayor's Food for Britain campaign who organised to raffle for two newly built modern homes in 1946 — one of which was located in Rosanna. Raffle ticket holders were restricted to war widows. The coveted charity house in Bellevue Avenue, Rosanna (now demolished), described as a 'gothic villa', was designed by the notable architect Marcus Barlow.<sup>106</sup>



*Advertisement for the popular pre-fabricated house, the Myer House, available from Myer Store (Argus, 16 January 1947)*

Postwar prosperity shaped by the 'long boom' of 1945-1971 enabled large-scale suburban expansion in the outlying suburbs of Melbourne. During the 1950s and 1960s, a period of unprecedented high housing affordability, the suburban dream was now within the reach of more Melburnians than ever before.<sup>107</sup> New land for housing was opened up in the then outer-ring suburbs of Melbourne, including Rosanna, Montmorency and Lower Plenty, and these areas comprising orchards and paddocks were slowly transformed into suburbia. Infrastructure was slow to keep up with new residential development, and most new home-buyers were faced with a block that had no services connected for several years.

Houses built on the urban fringe attracted those with affordability in mind as well as those seeking a retreat from the congestion of the built-up urban metropolis. The urge to get away from the city saw many buying up blocks in the 1940s and 1950s. The new outer suburban areas were shaped by new fashions in design, which were both functional and stylistic. Brick was preferable if buyers could afford the extra cost. By the 1950s, much of the new housing was built using the fashionable new cream or oatmeal bricks.

In the postwar period, many outer suburban areas were popular for project homes. Some areas of Banyule, notably Lower Plenty, which had formerly been occupied by farms and orchards, were developed for larger, more luxurious homes set on large blocks. Commercial builders and developers included A.V. Jennings (with architect Edgar Gurney), H. and M. Sibbel, and Morris and Lucas.

### **Commercial development**

From the period of early settlement small local stores provided basic needs. Villages usually included a hotel, a general store, and a blacksmith. Early hotels included the Old England

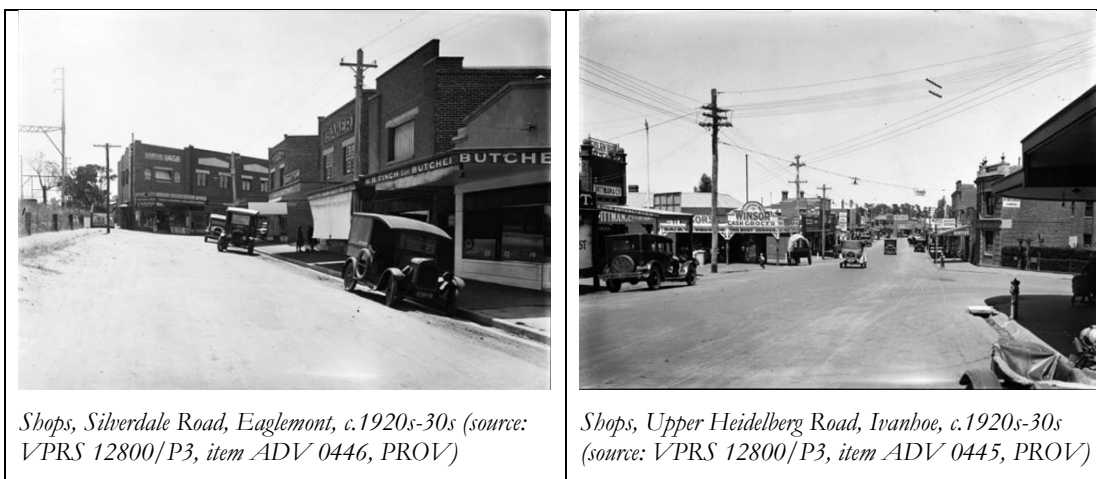
<sup>105</sup> *Argus*, 14 June 1947, p. 6.

<sup>106</sup> *Argus*, 20 August 1946, p. 3; *Argus*, 11 October 1946, p. 2.

<sup>107</sup> See Kate Darian-Smith (ed.), *Memory and History in 20th-Century Australia*.

Hotel in Heidelberg (1847), the Darebin Bridge Hotel and the Greensborough Hotel. From the early 1900s, suburban development was boosted by the arrival of the railway, and this attracted a larger variety of shops and commercial enterprises. The Burgundy Street shopping centre in Heidelberg and the Ivanhoe shopping centre on Heidelberg Road flourished and expanded through the early twentieth centuries.

In the 1930s, shops were provided in some housing estates, notably in those developed by A.V. Jennings in East Ivanhoe. Small groups of cluster shops were incorporated into later postwar developments. In the postwar period shops were upgraded; shopping arcades were also built, such as the Greensborough arcade. In the 1970s and 1980s large drive-in shopping centres replaced some areas of shopping strips.



### Civic development

Civic life began in the municipality with the formation of the Heidelberg Road Trust in 1840, followed by the Heidelberg Road Board in 1861. These bodies were chiefly concerned with road building and provided little other civic services. The formation of the Shire of Heidelberg in 1870 saw the construction of the first town hall. The Shires of Diamond Creek and Eltham followed a similar course of development.

To maintain law and order, the Victorian Government provided sites and funding for the establishment of local police stations, lock-ups and court houses. An early example of a police quarters, built in 1859, survives at Heidelberg.

Later civic services included infant health centres, public libraries and various new council offices. The Heidelberg Children's Library, which was innovative for its time, was established in the 1930s. Public libraries included Ivanhoe Library, opened in 1965; Rosanna (opened 1973); and Watsonia (opened 1988).

### Water supply, sewerage and drainage

Early settlers established themselves near the Yarra and Plenty Rivers and would transport barrels of water to their properties. Some large properties, such as Ravenswood, established a private supply line from the Yarra River.<sup>108</sup> Water from the rivers was also used for crop irrigation and for watering stock.

Houses in the City of Heidelberg were first connected to Melbourne's water supply in the late 1880s; the Austin Hospital had requested a connection in 1887 which was granted.<sup>109</sup> The more outlying areas like Montmorency, Greensborough, Macleod, Bundoora and Watsonia,

<sup>108</sup> 'Shaping Banyule' community feedback, August 2018.

<sup>109</sup> Kenyon 1934, p. 120; *Evelyn Observer*, 18 February 1887 (from HHS newsletter).

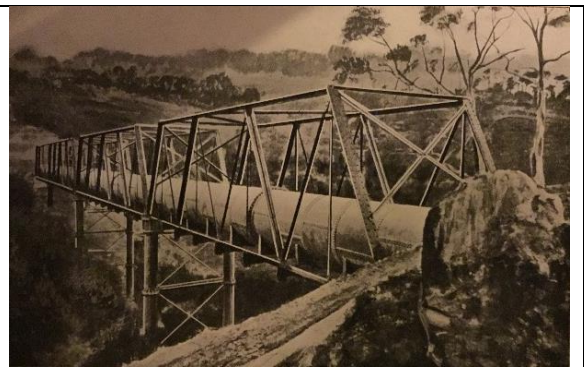
however, took longer to be connected. The construction of a weir on the Watts River at Healesville in 1891 had allowed the MMBW to tap into a larger supply provided by the Yarra catchment. This supply was conveyed from Healesville to South Morang via the Maroondah Aqueduct, which passed close to Greensborough. On account of their proximity to the aqueduct, settlers in Greensborough could elect to create their own connection to the Maroondah water supply.<sup>110</sup> The opportunity of a connection to the Maroondah Aqueduct, which was considered superior to the original Yan Yean water supply, was used as an incentive to entice settlers to the area in the early decades of the twentieth century.<sup>111</sup> Water supply in the suburban area of Heidelberg and Ivanhoe was improved by the MMBW in 1911 with the construction of a circular masonry and concrete reservoir on Upper Heidelberg Road, Heidelberg.<sup>112</sup>

A closed sewerage system was not constructed in the City of Heidelberg until the early 1900s, this was built by the MMBW which had instigated a sewerage scheme for Melbourne in 1897. The jurisdiction for the MMBW, however, was set at 10 miles, so while Heidelberg was included in the scheme (though subject to a delay in implementation), the outlying areas of Greensborough and even Rosanna were not. When these suburbs were developed in the postwar period, home builders were required to build their own septic system.<sup>113</sup> Greensborough was eventually sewered in the c.1960s-70s. Parts of East Ivanhoe were also not sewered until the late 1960s.<sup>114</sup>

As Heidelberg was further developed in the late-nineteenth century, drainage problems were ongoing. The steep inclines in Heidelberg caused waste from higher ground to fall and pool on the lower ground. Waste from the Hospital for Incurables (Austin Hospital), which was situated on a hill, ended up in a drainage channel that had an outlet in the Yarra River. This posed a public health problem as dairy cattle downstream that were grazing on the riverbank and drinking contaminated water, which was then thought to be the cause of illness amongst those in inner Melbourne who were consuming milk from those cattle.<sup>115</sup> A new scheme devised in the 1890s to drain the village of Heidelberg involved the construction of a bluestone drainage channel in Heidelberg Park.<sup>116</sup>



Bluestone bridge over the Salt Creek, Heidelberg Park (Context 2018)



Pipe bridge, Greensborough, carrying the Maroondah Aqueduct (MMBW, Melbourne Water Supply, 1915)

<sup>110</sup> Tony Dingle and Carolyn Rasmussen 1991, *Vital Connections*.

<sup>111</sup> See various real estate advertising in local newspapers for Greensborough and Rosanna.

<sup>112</sup> *Argus*, 23 February 1911, p. 9; MMBW Detail Plan No. 2639, Municipality of Heidelberg, dated 1926 (State Library of Victoria).

<sup>113</sup> Museum Victoria - Collections.

<sup>114</sup> 'Shaping Banyule' community feedback, August 2018.

<sup>115</sup> *Age*, 13 August 1897, p. 3.

<sup>116</sup> *Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 15 April 1898, p. 3.



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## 6. Community and cultural life

### Education

There were a large number of government schools erected through the nineteenth century, some short-lived. The Victorian Government initially operated under the National School system with the Heidelberg National School opening in 1850. Other government schools were erected at Ivanhoe and Greensborough in the 1850s. A new Heidelberg State School was opened in 1878.<sup>117</sup>

Suburban expansion in the 1920s, triggered by the new electric rail connection and the general demand for housing, prompted the development of a number of new state (primary) schools: for example at Montmorency in 1923; Briar Hill in 1927; and Rosanna in 1940. After the Second World War, population growth placed pressure on existing schools and prompted the opening of a number of new state schools, for example at West Rosanna, West Heidelberg, and Greenhills. State high schools were also erected in the postwar years, including at West Heidelberg, Macleod (1954), Banyule and Watsonia (1962). The Heidelberg Technical School was completed in 1954.<sup>118</sup>

The provision of adult (secondary) education commenced in 1973 with the establishment of the Diamond Valley Learning Centre in Greensborough. This alternative education facility occupied a timber building that had been used as Lobb's Tearooms in the 1920s. The Centre was aimed almost exclusively at women who had left secondary school early, and who sought to return to education to complete the Higher School Certificate (HSC); for many this was a springboard to tertiary education or employment opportunities. The Diamond Valley Learning Centre was run largely by women in the 1970s and 1980s, including the publisher Di Gribble, who sought to redress the gender inequity in education. The Diamond Valley Learning Centre offered a service that was unavailable elsewhere and was the first community-based adult education service in Victoria.<sup>119</sup>



*Diamond Valley Learning Centre, Greensborough, (formerly Lobbs Tea Rooms)*

<sup>117</sup> *Argus*, 30 April 1878, p. 6.

<sup>118</sup> *Age*, 4 May 1954, p. 3.

<sup>119</sup> Diamond Valley Learning Centre: <https://www.dvlc.org.au/about/dvlc-history/>; Peter Rushbrook, 'Adult Education', eMelbourne: <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00035b.htm>.

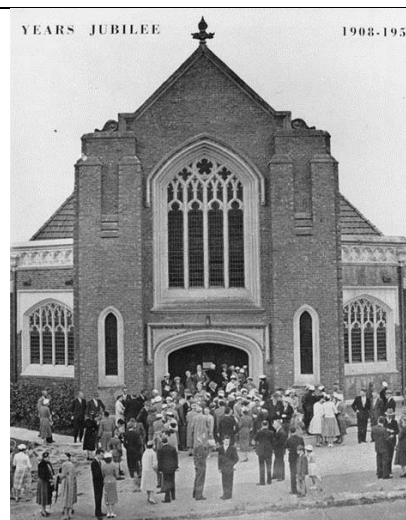
## Church life

Local churches, like local schools, were the mainstay of early community life and played an important role in social connections. Their construction usually came about at the behest of a local group seeking to put down roots for the future. Various denominations were established in the Heidelberg area by the 1850s. The Anglican Church of St John's was established in Heidelberg in the 1840s – the town plan of 1840 had taken into account this pre-existing church overlooking the riverbank. The Presbyterians built their first church at Heidelberg around 1850 and a new church in 1900.<sup>120</sup> The Knox Presbyterian Church was erected in Ivanhoe in 1908 and the building replaced in 1927. Elsewhere in Banyule, new churches were erected as settlements grew large enough to sustain their own building. In Greensborough an early Methodist congregation was established by 1850, with a new brick building erected in 1872; an Anglican church was erected in Greensborough in 1870.

There was only a handful of denominational schools in the district: a Catholic church–school was established in Heidelberg in c.1850; a short-lived Wesleyan School operated in Rosanna Road in the c.1860s; and the Anglican church–school of St Faith's was established in Montmorency in the early 1920s.



*St Katherine's Anglican Church and cemetery at St Helena, photographed by Victorian Railways in the 1950s (source: State Library of Victoria Accession No. H91.50/1573)*



*Jubilee of Knox Presbyterian Church, Ivanhoe in 1958 (source: Picture Victoria, from Heidelberg Historical Society)*

The first Catholic Church (and school) in Heidelberg was a rudimentary timber structure known as St Monica's, which was erected in 1852 on a site set aside in 1850.<sup>121</sup> This was replaced in 1859 with a new bluestone Gothic Revival church building designed by the eminent Melbourne architect William Wardell. In 1905, Irish nuns, the Sisters of Mercy, established a convent at Heidelberg to provide teaching staff for a Catholic secondary school (Our Lady of Mercy), initially for both girls and boys. A Catholic boys' school also operated at 'Lucerne' in Alphington (outside the study area).<sup>122</sup> The presence of Catholic schools attracted more Catholics to the area.

Whilst the Protestant denominations had dominated in the district in the early decades of settlement, the Catholic population grew substantially in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The Catholic Church in Melbourne (and across Victoria) underwent a widespread

<sup>120</sup> *Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 14 December 1900, p. 3.

<sup>121</sup> *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1850; *Tribune*, 23 May 1914, p. 7.

<sup>122</sup> *Advocate*, 2 March 1950, p. 12.

building program in terms of churches and schools from the period after World War I and up until the 1960s under the strong and energetic leadership of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr Daniel Mannix. Catholics gained numerical strength in the early to mid-twentieth century and as they enjoyed greater educational opportunities, and joined the ranks of the middle class, many moved to the Heidelberg–Ivanhoe district. By the 1950s and 1960s, the Catholic parishes of Ivanhoe and East Ivanhoe were well resourced. This was also the heyday of the Catholic Social Studies Movement run by B.A. Santamaria, which did much to strengthen the Catholic Church during that time. Additional convents were established at this time, including an establishment for the Sisters of the Apparition in West Ivanhoe, and ‘Casa Maria’ at Watsonia.<sup>123</sup> Postwar Italian migration to the area also strengthened the local Catholic population. The Catholic hospital, the Mercy Hospital for Women, relocated from East Melbourne to Heidelberg in the 1990s.



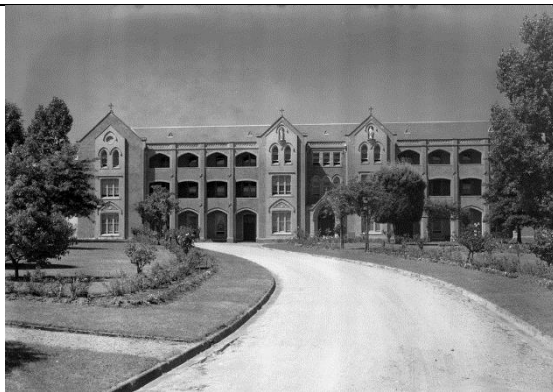
*Seminarians at the Jesuits' Loyola College, Watsonia, in the 1950s, working in the vegetable garden (courtesy Greensborough Historical Society)*

The expansion of the Catholic Church was particularly notable in the suburbs of Banyule, where in addition to the regular parish churches and schools several large Catholic institutions were also established: this included the Jesuits' seminary Loyola College, which opened in 1934; Odyssey House seminary, which was completed in 1952; the Christian Brothers' Training College, which was established at 'Amberley', in Lower Plenty; and the Sisters of Mercy Convent, and the novitiate at Rosanna, which was opened in 1930.<sup>124</sup> In addition, the Christian Brothers' Parade College (a Catholic boys' secondary school) moved to extensive grounds in Bundoora in the 1960s, taking its name from its original school site in Victoria Parade, East Melbourne. It is unusual that such a large number of Catholic institutions were established in one municipality, and this development partly reflects the relative affordability of large areas of land but also suggests a concentration of Catholic activity in Melbourne's northern and north-east suburbs.

<sup>123</sup> *Age*, 9 June 1951, p. 10; National Trust of Australia (Vic.) Register 'Casa Maria' (demolished).

<sup>124</sup> *Advocate*, 30 October 1930, p. 7.





*Former Novitiate of the Sisters of Mercy, Rosanna (State Library of Victoria, Accession No. H92.20/3383)*



*Catholic seminary 'Odyssey House', Lower Plenty, completed in 1952 (source: Banyule Heritage Database)*

There was also significant growth in the non-Catholic denominations with the dramatic boost to the local population in the postwar period. A Methodist Sunday School in West Heidelberg that catered for the new residents of the Housing Commission estate operated out of a factory building in the 1950s in the absence of a church building.<sup>125</sup>

### Community buildings

Early community meeting places were often the local hotel or an early homestead. As local centres grew they lobbied for government funding for church halls, mechanics institutes and other public buildings.

Rechabite Halls were established in several suburbs including Heidelberg, Ivanhoe, and Greensborough (where the Rechabite Hall was known as the Greensborough Hall) and these were also important community activity centres. A Recreation Hall was erected in Lower Heidelberg Road, Heidelberg, in 1892 (which later became a Masonic Hall) and this was a major centre for community events.

A community hall was proposed for Heidelberg in 1899, and shortly after the Healesville Mechanics Institute and Free Library was opened.<sup>126</sup> A library at Ivanhoe was erected in the 1970s to a notable Modernist design.

Theatres and cinemas also provided community with meeting places. In 1944: St John's Hall, at the Heidelberg Repat was opened as a community facility, not restricted to the patients. More recently, the Banyule Theatre has been established at the former Banyule High School site, continuing a long tradition of dramatic arts in Heidelberg.

### Community groups

There have been countless community groups established in the municipality over the years, covering a range of interests, including sporting groups, service clubs, private clubs, and progress associations. One local group, the Boulevard Improvement Association in Ivanhoe, organised local residents along the Boulevard to showcase their homes with a Christmas lights display in the early 1960s; this took in homes from Darebin Creek to Burke Road.<sup>127</sup> This annual event, now over fifty years old, has attracted crowds of sightseers to the Boulevard each year.

<sup>125</sup> *Age*, 23 January 1954, p. 8.

<sup>126</sup> Pam Baragwanath 2000. *If These Walls Could Speak*.

<sup>127</sup> *Age*, 15 December 1961, p. 2; City of Banyule website.

There has been strong community interest in the arts, with a number of long-term arts groups operating in Banyule. This includes a literary group that has operated from the 1920s, the Ivanhoe Dramatic Club (est. 1910), the Heidelberg Choral Society (est. 1920), Heidelberg Symphony Orchestra (over 40 years old), the Heidelberg Theatre Company (est. 1952) and the Heidelberg District Artists' Society (fl. 1950s-60s). Historical societies are also strong in Banyule, with the Heidelberg Historical Society and the Eltham District Historical Society both established in 1967, and the Greensborough Historical Society established in 2010. There has also been strong community support for the protection of heritage places in Banyule (including both historic buildings and significant environmental sites) and a number of local heritage groups have been active in this area. This has included community campaigns to protect the historical Banyule estate and the ongoing efforts to protect the viewsheds associated with the Heidelberg School. (Further discussion of local environmental groups is given in Chapter 12).

### Ethnic communities

As was the case across much of colonial Victoria, the early farmers in the Heidelberg district were predominantly British, Scottish and Northern Irish Protestant families of modest capital. The middle class continued to be predominantly Protestant with Irish Catholics making up the bulk of the labouring class. The first substantial Catholic landowner in the district was Thomas Farrell.<sup>128</sup> From the early 1900s there were also Chinese in the district, a number of whom worked as market gardeners on the river flats. There was also a small German community in Heidelberg from the late nineteenth century.<sup>129</sup>

Melbourne welcomed a large influx of European migrants in the postwar period, with large numbers arriving from Italy and Greece. There was a great influx of migrants to Melbourne's then 'outer' suburbs in the 1950s and 1960s, where property prices were more affordable. Italian migrants were a dominant postwar ethnic group and settled in large numbers in the suburbs of Banyule. In the 1960s a particular strain of 'Mediterranean influenced' postwar domestic architecture emerged in the suburbs of Banyule, built for the immigrants mainly from Italy, as it did in neighbouring outer suburbs like Doncaster and Bulleen.

The houses built by this new wave of migrants drew on nostalgic influences from home as well as fulfilling modern needs. Typically, these postwar homes built by immigrant families from Italy were large, double-storey brick constructions. They featured decorative elements and a form that was resonant with dwellings in Italy, often with a low-pitched gabled roof, decorative balustrading, exterior plasterwork, and Romanesque windows. They were often built on an elevated ground with a terraced garden and with a carport incorporated under the house.



*Borsari House, Ivanhoe, built in 1967-68 (photo courtesy Steven Barlow, Heidelberg Historical Society)*



*Postwar home, Rosanna (Context 2018)*

<sup>128</sup> *Advocate*, 2 March 1950, p. 12.

<sup>129</sup> Heidelberg Historical Society, pers. com., April 2018.

Nino Borsari, Italian immigrant and Olympic cyclist, built a grand home in 1967-68 on the Boulevard in Ivanhoe. This was self-consciously Italian, echoing the style of a northern Italian farmhouse, but it used concrete rather than stone as the chief building material. The Borsari house served as an informal meeting place for the local Italian community.<sup>130</sup>



*Advertisement for Costas Paving, c.1954 (Heidelberg State School Centenary, 1854-1954, p. 21)*

More recent immigrants have found accommodation in West Heidelberg, some at the former Olympic Village, where rents are more affordable.

Ethnic communities have established community meeting places and clubs across the municipality. The East Ivanhoe Uniting Church has been used by various ethnic groups from the 1990s.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Steven Barlow, Heidelberg Historical Society, pers. com., April 2018.

<sup>131</sup> 'Shaping Banyule' community feedback, August 2018.



## 7. Recreation and sport

### Recreation

In the nineteenth century, the hilly country around Heidelberg and as far as Greensborough, was a popular place for recreation, including camping, fishing, boating, bushwalking and picnicking. The open country was used for hunting or coursing into the early 1900s – this was a popular pastime of Melbourne's aspiring landed class who would gather before the hunt at the Old England Hotel on Heidelberg Road.<sup>132</sup>

The pleasant scenery, extensive parklands and access to the rivers and creeks made Heidelberg and the neighbouring localities popular places to visit for day trips. The rivers and streams offered boating and fishing, or were simply pleasant places to ramble. Describing Heidelberg in 1901, one journalist declared: 'Here the evil-smelling, much-abused Yarra of the inner city is always lovely with wattle groves upon its banks and giant gum trees at its edge'.<sup>133</sup> Easily accessible from Melbourne by rail from 1901, many visited the district to enjoy picnics and rambles in the bush. Factory workers from inner-city Melbourne, including employees from Kitchens' soap factory in Port Melbourne and the Nugget Boot Polish factory, enjoyed annual staff picnics in the rural environs of Greensborough in the early 1900s.<sup>134</sup> Workers from Kinnears Ropeworks enjoyed their first annual picnic and sports day at Heidelberg in 1907.<sup>135</sup>

From the late-nineteenth century there were various recreational opportunities along the Yarra bank at Heidelberg, including tea rooms and boats for hire.<sup>136</sup> Catherine Durham kept a tea gardens on the Yarra River at Eaglemont in 1880.<sup>137</sup> There were dedicated public swimming areas in the rivers: for example at Sills Bend at Heidelberg and in the Plenty River at Greensborough, where a pool was commenced in 1926 and completed using susso labour during the Depression of the 1930s.<sup>138</sup> With Melbourne's bayside beaches a considerable distance away, the rivers were important as swimming places. With this in mind, a local scout group, known as the Ivanhoe Sea Scouts, was formed on the Yarra bank at Ivanhoe in the early 1900s.<sup>139</sup>

At Yallambie and later at Greensborough there was a keen fishing community on the Plenty River where trout and other fish species was plentiful. The Greensborough and District Anglers' Club on Para Road, Greensborough, formed in 1926, is possibly the longest running angling club in Victoria.<sup>140</sup>

In the postwar period, horse sports were popular, especially horse-riding and pony clubs. The former Horseland store in Main Street, Greensborough (now closed), was a local landmark for many years on account of the large fibre-glass model of a horse mounted on top of the shop.

<sup>132</sup> See for example, *Leader*, 26 July 1902, p. 16.

<sup>133</sup> *Weekly Times*, 21 December 1901, p. 15.

<sup>134</sup> *Williamstown Chronicle*, 23 December 1911, p. 2; *Emerald Hill Record*, 8 September 1945, p. 3.

<sup>135</sup> Photographs of Kinnears Ropeworks picnic at Heidelberg in 1907 are held in the State Library of Victoria Picture Collection; see Accession Numbers H2013.88/1-15.

<sup>136</sup> Context Pty Ltd 2012, 'Warringal Parklands'.

<sup>137</sup> *Argus*, 2 April 1880, p. 7.

<sup>138</sup> *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 26 March 1926, p. 2.

<sup>139</sup> 'Shaping Banyule' community feedback, August 2018. Ivanhoe Sea Scouts website: <http://www.ivanhoeseascouts.org/>

<sup>140</sup> Greensborough and District Angling Club: <https://yallambie.wordpress.com/tag/plenty-river-fishing/>; *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 3 December 1926, p. 2.



*The original premises of the Greensborough and District Angling Club (source: Yallambie blog at Wordpress)*

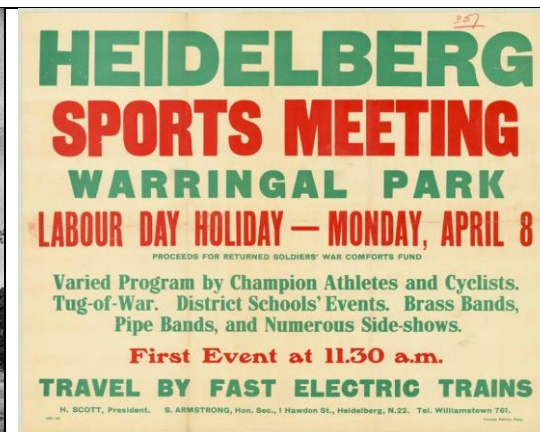
### Sport

Sports meetings were an early development of the towns and villages and an important social event. Cricket matches and horse-racing took place at Heidelberg Park from the 1850s. In 1861, local sportsman Thomas Wills organised an Aboriginal cricket team from his home in Heidelberg. The team toured Australia and England, and played a match at the Heidelberg cricket ground in 1867.<sup>141</sup>

Football clubs were established from the late nineteenth century. Tennis was played in Melbourne from the 1880s amongst members of fashionable society. Early local tennis clubs were formed at Eaglemont and Ivanhoe in 1912.<sup>142</sup> Other organised sports were lawn bowls and croquet. Local sports clubs were usually allocated space at the local public park or recreation reserve for the constructions of playing fields and facilities. The Heidelberg Bowling Club was formed in 1914 and were granted a lease of railway land off Burgundy Street.<sup>143</sup> As new suburbs developed sporting clubs were formed and sought public land on which to erect club houses and facilities.



*Golfers at the Old Bent Tree, Rosanna Golf Course, 1952 (courtesy Heidelberg Historical Society)*



*Advertisement for a Sports Meeting at Warringal Park in 1940 (courtesy Heidelberg Historical Society)*

<sup>141</sup> *Australasian*, 2 February 1867, p. 12.

<sup>142</sup> Morris Scott 1989, 'History of the Eaglemont Tennis Club', *Heidelberg Historical Society Newsletter*, no. 131, April 1989. Ivanhoe Tennis Club website: <http://ivanhoetennis.net/100-years/>

<sup>143</sup> *Heidelberg News*, 1914.

Golf became a popular leisure activity in the early 1900s, with golf courses laid out on large areas of river-fronting public land. The Rosanna golf course, established in 1912 on the Salt Creek, amidst majestic River Red Gums, was described by the 1920s as a 'neglected Eden'.<sup>144</sup> The Yarra Yarra Golf Club operated for a period at Rosanna where club members erected a brick clubhouse. Subsequent golf clubs used former homesteads for club houses, for example at Ivanhoe Golf Club (by 1915) and Heidelberg Golf Club (1927).

The Heidelberg area received a great impetus for sporting activity with the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games, when the City of Heidelberg hosted the guest athletes and played a central role in this significant international sporting event. The Olympic Village erected in Heidelberg was the first purpose-built Olympic village in the world, accommodating almost 5000 athletes.<sup>145</sup>

### Holidays and tourism

Heidelberg was regarded as a pleasant beauty spot and favourite place of resort through the nineteenth century. What drew visitors was the quiet rural charm of the area, which was in sharp contrast to the hustle and bustle of the city. The Old England Hotel was a popular destination, and is Melbourne's oldest surviving hotel outside central Melbourne. Withers & Sons offered motor tours to Heidelberg and Greensborough in c.1911-14, with the attractions noted being the Hospital for Incurables the Mont Park Mental Asylum.<sup>146</sup> Once Heidelberg had a direct railway connection built in 1901, more sightseers came to Heidelberg. It was especially popular in Springtime, when the wattle and wildflowers were in full bloom, and city visitors would return home with armfuls of flowers.<sup>147</sup>

<p><b>Greensborough Hotel</b></p> <p>KINGLAKE ROAD . . . GREENSBOROUGH</p> <p>'PHONE : G'BORO 32</p>  <p>A new brick building with all modern conveniences Motorists specially catered for . . . First-class Meals, and only Best Brands of Wines and Spirits stocked</p> <p>TARIFF: MODERATE</p> <p>J. HOLOHAN - - - - - PROPRIETOR</p>	<p><b>GRANDVIEW</b> : GREENSBOROUGH</p> <p>IN THE COUNTRY - CLOSE TO THE CITY</p>  <p>Comfortable accommodation . . . Excellent Table Morning and Afternoon Teas . . . Supper Breakfast Trays . . . Poultry . . . Cream</p> <p>BILLIARDS, TENNIS, RIDING SCHOOL ADJACENT</p> <p>MODERATE TARIFF</p> <p>Mrs. E. DRAKEFORD GREENSBOROUGH 195</p> <p>'Phone:</p>
<p><i>Advertisement for the Greensborough Hotel, taken from the Country Hotels and Boarding House Guide 1933-34 (source: Greensborough Historical Society)</i></p>	<p><i>Advertisement for the Grandview Guesthouse, Greensborough, c.1920s (courtesy: Greensborough Historical Society)</i></p>

<sup>144</sup> *Age*, 4 August 1923, p. 15.

<sup>145</sup> Geoffrey Ballard, 'Olympic Village': <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM01090b.htm>

<sup>146</sup> Withers & Sons, *Beautiful Melbourne, Motor Char-a-banc Trips, 1911-1914*.

<sup>147</sup> *Leader*, 10 January 1914, p. 58.

In the early twentieth century the picturesque countryside and the ‘country feel’ of parts of outer Banyule – especially Greensborough and Montmorency – made this an attractive place for holiday-makers and was not too distant from Melbourne. Greensborough was popular in the early 1900s as a weekend or holiday resort, with tea rooms and guesthouses such as ‘The Grandview’ on offer.<sup>148</sup> By the 1930s the novelty of ‘camping out’ was also popular.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> *Hurstbridge Advertiser* 19 October 1923, p. 2; examples included Lobbs Tea Rooms; Grandview Guesthouse, Greensborough.

<sup>149</sup> *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 1 April 1932, p. 5.



## 8. Parks and gardens and the urban landscape

### Public parks and gardens

A large area of river flats along the Yarra River at Heidelberg was retained as Crown land in the nineteenth century, largely because the land was flood prone, and this enabled a rich legacy of public parkland in the municipality, comprising parks and gardens, playing fields, golf courses and nature reserves. The largest of these reserves was the extensive Heidelberg Park, which was marked on an early map of 1839, but was not set aside for public recreational purposes until 1872.<sup>150</sup> Part of the Heidelberg Park was originally intended, or at least referred to for a period in the late-nineteenth century, as a botanic garden. This site is discussed further in Chapter 10.

Outside of Heidelberg proper, however, very little Crown land had been set aside for parkland or recreation, and consequently the local council and local residents worked to acquire private land for this purpose. The council purchased land for Ivanhoe Park in 1911 and a site for Greensborough Park by 1913.<sup>151</sup> The pressure of significant suburban development in the 1920s prompted the City of Heidelberg to make provisions for new public parks; in Ivanhoe, for example, it acquired land for Wilson Reserve (1924) and Sparks Reserve (1927).<sup>152</sup> Other local public parks and gardens were established at Rosanna, Watsonia, Montmorency and Eaglemont. A rare provision for public parkland was made by Walter Burley Griffin in his subdivisions for the Mount Eagle and Glenard Estates in the 1910s; here Griffin and planner Peter Keam set aside seven central public parks that have since been protected and managed by covenants.<sup>153</sup>

Postwar suburban expansion to the north and east of the municipality necessitated additional areas for public parks, which needed to be acquired as freehold or co-opted in some other way. At Greensborough the former Holmes market garden was taken over by the MMBW in 1963 for sewerage and drainage purposes, and developed as a park, known as Willinda Park.<sup>154</sup>

### Hospital and institutional gardens

Following the nineteenth-century fashion for hospital gardens (developed for example at Beechworth Hospital, Stawell Hospital, Horsham Hospital and the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum), the new Hospital for Incurables (the Austin Hospital) at Heidelberg was also originally designed with a setting of an expansive landscaped garden. Providing pleasant surroundings for patients was considered an important aspect for their well-being. Melbourne's leading landscape designer William Guilfoyle provided a layout for the site at Heidelberg in 1881,<sup>155</sup> which followed closely his earlier plans for hospital gardens at Stawell and Horsham.

There was significant landscaping carried out at the Heidelberg Repat from the 1940s onwards. Other institutions, notably church establishments, also developed significant garden. The grounds of the Jesuit novitiate, Loyola College, Watsonia, which opened in 1934, includes a number of significant trees.

<sup>150</sup> Boyle 1991, p. 92; *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1872; 1853 gazettal.

<sup>151</sup> *Argus*, 11 December 1911; *Evelyn Observer and Bourke East Record*, 26 September 1913; *Heidelberg News & Greensborough, Eltham and Diamond Creek Chronicle*, 21 July 1917.

<sup>152</sup> A number of examples are given in Kenyon 1934, *Heidelberg: The City of Streams*, p. 167.

<sup>153</sup> See 'Mount Eagle Estates Common Parks' CMP 2011, section 3 Assessing the Significance of the Parks, pp. 12-14.

<sup>154</sup> Rosie Bray, 'The Willinda Park Story'.

<sup>155</sup> *Argus*, 6 October 1881, p. 10.

### Street trees

Banyule has a rich collection of significant street tree plantings. Some of the earliest street trees in the Shire of Heidelberg were planted by ex-councillor Peter Fanning in 1881.<sup>156</sup> In some cases, trees that survive from the pre-settlement period, for example River Red Gums that are over 200 years old, have been retained as street trees.

In the early 1900s some of the existing conifers from the Mount Eagle Estate in Eaglemont were retained as part of the new development. Elm trees planted for the Brookes estate were adopted as street trees in Walter Burley Griffin's Eaglemont subdivisions in the 1910s. Remnant trees from the Charterisville estate in Ivanhoe were also later adapted as street trees.

A wide variety of trees have been planted as street trees in Ivanhoe; among them are the pencil conifers in Marshall Street. Several streets in Rosanna were planted with a range of species in the 1930s, including Mount Street (Cabbage Tree Palms); Invermay Grove (Lemon-scented Gums); and Darvall Road (Yellow Gum). In West Heidelberg, a planting of Spotted Gums along Southern Road dates to the postwar era.<sup>157</sup>

The Heidelberg City Council organised 1000 new street trees to be planted in 1937, but due to a lack of local funds this relied on the co-operation of citizens; planting and watering was a community effort.<sup>158</sup>

### Urban streetscape

The aesthetic character of Heidelberg, Ivanhoe and Eaglemont as emerging suburbs in the 1900s was shaped by their existing appeal as rural beauty spots. Whilst a large number of trees were removed for suburban development, there was some retention of remnant vegetation, notably along the river bank where public land had been set aside. The slow pace of development in the nineteenth century ensured a 'village' atmosphere was retained in Heidelberg and this was to some extent encouraged in early planning decisions. While the early plan for 'The Village of Warringal' (1840) was more or less a traditional grid, many of the later roads were laid out in sympathy with the landscape, following the contours of the land on the steep bank of the Yarra. Steep roadsides were often bolstered with high retaining walls, faced with stone (usually basalt) that was possibly local to the area. The subdivisions of Walter Burley Griffin at Eaglemont set a high bar for the municipality in terms of developing a close connection between houses and their setting in the landscape. There was a strong focus on parkland from the early 1900s, and often these areas included remnant indigenous vegetation.

In the interwar and postwar period, as many of the suburbs of Banyule experienced significant growth, there remained a strong adherence to principals of tree retention and the provision of public open space. Stone retaining walls were constructed in newer areas, such as Rosanna and Greensborough, and handrails of steel piping along steep sections of footpath were also provided. In pockets of Montmorency and Rosanna where postwar homes were designed in close affinity with the natural environment, there are often no footpaths or front fences. Bush gardens flow freely across property boundaries and to the roadside.

The strong influence of the conservation movement and naturalistic design for homes and gardens in the postwar era represented a degree of continuation with the celebrated 'rustic' character of Heidelberg municipality in the nineteenth century, which probably owed more to economic forces than to conscious planning. By the twentieth century however this rustic character was rare in suburban Melbourne and vigorously defended by local residents. There has been longstanding resident activism, for example, to prevent surfacing The Boulevard

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<sup>156</sup> Newspaper article, 1881.

<sup>157</sup> Godfrey 1977 documents a number of other street tree plantings, many of which survive. See also <https://www.banyule.vic.gov.au/Council/Environment-and-Sustainability/Trees-and-Plants/2018-Community-Calendar-Significant-Trees>

<sup>158</sup> *Age*, 31 March 1937, p. 6.

between Mossman Drive and MacArthur Road so that the bucolic character of this stretch of road can be retained.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> 'Shaping Banyule' community feedback, August 2018.



## 9. Defence

### Military training

From the mid-nineteenth century, the open hilly country of the Heidelberg district had been popular with hunting and shooting parties. Early settler Joseph Hawdon had established his own private rifle range at 'Banyule' which guests made use of. Being relatively close to Melbourne and offering a variety of terrain and vegetation, Heidelberg also became a favoured district for military training. The Heidelberg Rifle Range opened in 1900, and military training took place in the area in the early 1900s. The Light Horse school of instruction camped at Heidelberg in 1904.<sup>160</sup>

The enthusiasm for military training was boosted with the establishment of the Citizens' Military Forces (CMF) in 1912, which was introduced under new federal legislation by Alfred Deakin. This saw the introduction of compulsory military training for young men aged 14-21. A 'military school' was established at Heidelberg in 1912, known as the Heidelberg Camp.<sup>161</sup> The open bushland of the Heidelberg district provided the setting for military drills, tactical exercises and signalling practise. A large military training camp for the CMF was held during Easter 1913 at a site north of Heidelberg, near Mont Park. The officers in attendance included (Sir) John Monash, who superintended over 1000 young men. The natural and man-made features of the landscape featured in military exercises, with one infantry battalion in 1913 carrying out a military manoeuvre near the Maroondah Aqueduct.<sup>162</sup>

With the onset of World War I, military training became more critical. A military camp was established at Heidelberg in 1915-16, probably on the same site as the training camp used in the early 1900s. Here, a large canteen and huts were erected. A miniature rifle range was also built at Heidelberg in 1916.<sup>163</sup>



*Red Cross group at the Rechabite Hall, Greensborough, during the First World War (courtesy Greensborough Historical Society)*

<sup>160</sup> *Leader*, 21 November 1908, p. 29; *Herald*, 13 December 1904, p. 4.

<sup>161</sup> *Herald*, 20 August 1912, p. 8.

<sup>162</sup> *Herald*, 26 March 1913, p. 5.

<sup>163</sup> *Heidelberg News*, 12 August 1916, p. 2; Cummins 1986, *Heidelberg Since 1836*.

The commencement of World War I saw the rallying of women on the homefront. Through the work of the Red Cross, women of all ages were busily occupied knitting socks, organising fetes, and sourcing provisions for soldiers. Local branches of the Red Cross were formed in many suburbs, including Ivanhoe and Heidelberg.

Despite moves to replace German placenames with more British names across many towns and suburbs of Australia during World War I, there was little local support for a name change for Heidelberg. Local residents felt that the name Heidelberg had important historical associations with the beginnings of settlement in the area.<sup>164</sup> In the new residential subdivisions of the 1920s, street names honoured some of the leading figures in the Great War; in West Heidelberg there is Haig Street, Monash Street, and Churchill Street.

The Australian Army purchased a large property known as 'Yallambie' in 1941. This site included the double-storey brick residence, named 'Aldermaston', of the progressive Melbourne psychiatrist Ainslie Meares; this house was English style brick home, designed by Melbourne architect Leslie Forsyth in 1936. It had previously formed part of the estate of Thomas Wragge.<sup>165</sup> Known as the Watsonia Military Camp, this complex was heavily utilised during the Second World War and included an enlistment depot. Women in the Heidelberg district also worked on the homefront during the Second World War, with many joining the Women's Voluntary National Register; in 1939, 300 local women were taking classes in first aid and home nursing at various school rooms, local halls and soldiers' halls across the district.<sup>166</sup>

The Watsonia Army Camp was further developed in the 1950s and 1960s during the Cold War era, and into the 1980s. Buildings erected included barracks, a signalling centre, and a communications centre with a satellite dish. This site is now known as the Simpson Army Barracks. The former Meares' residence is now used to accommodate the Army Music School. A portion of land was excised from the Watsonia Military Camp in the 1970s as a site for the Watsonia Radiation Laboratories, which was a leading institution for research into radiation for treating cancer. A further section has been excised for private housing.

### Repatriation

A number of military hospitals and rest homes for returned soldiers were established in Melbourne during and immediately after the Great War of 1914-18. An early military hospital was established at the Mont Park Mental Hospital at Macleod in 1915 (this is largely outside the study area).

On returning home to civilian life, returned soldiers formed local RSL clubs. Clubs were formed at Heidelberg, Ivanhoe and Greensborough, and later at Montmorency. RSL clubs offered support and camaraderie, and lobbied for benefits on ex-servicemen's behalf. RSL groups also raised funds to establish club rooms and rest homes. A returned soldiers' hall was opened in Banksia Street, Heidelberg in 1934.<sup>167</sup> The Ivanhoe RSL was endowed with the large mansion residence 'Clairvue'. In Watsonia, an RSL Hut was established in the 1940s, using a tin hut donated from the Watsonia Army Barracks.<sup>168</sup> The RSL clubs also lobbied for War Service Homes to be built in local areas. In 1936 a public trust was established to undertake the building of war service homes in Heidelberg.<sup>169</sup> There was also a War Widows' Rest Home opened in Waterdale Road. Calls were again made for War Service Homes to be built following the Second World War. A proposal for a large War Service Home estate at Watsonia (on the site of the army camp) failed to come to fruition.

<sup>164</sup> *Heidelberg News and Greensborough and Diamond Creek Chronicle*, 19 September 1914.

<sup>165</sup> 'Yallambie: Telling tales of life in the suburb': <http://yallambie.wordpress.com>

<sup>166</sup> 'Heidelberg Women are Ready for Defence', *Herald*, 4 May 1939, p. 30.

<sup>167</sup> *Argus*, 29 October 1934, p. 16.

<sup>168</sup> Allom Lovel 1999, vol 1, p. 72.

<sup>169</sup> *Gippsland Times*, 10 December 1936.

The existing military hospital at Mont Park was stretched beyond capacity and was unable to meet wartime demand. Land for a new military hospital was selected at Heidelberg in 1940, at a site known as Spira's Paddock.<sup>170</sup> The building was opened in 1941. The extensive modern complex was dominated by a large multi-storey main wing facing Banksia Street that accommodated 600 men. A large modern kitchen was equipped with the latest appliances, as well as novel electrically heated trolleys to deliver hot meals to patients. The nurses in residence were accommodated in bungalows separated by laundries, with 14 nurses to a hut.<sup>171</sup> The home for convalescent soldiers at Heidelberg was later known as the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and known locally as simply 'the Repat'. It was taken over by the Army in c.1942.

### **Remembrance and commemoration**

There was a strong military tradition in the Heidelberg area. In 1905 a picnic was held at Heidelberg for the veterans of the Royal Navy.<sup>172</sup> In the 1920s, a classroom at the Ivanhoe State School was decorated with images from the Boer War.

Following the great loss of life during the First World War, local communities in Banyule, as elsewhere in Victoria, sought to pay tribute to the men and women who had served in the war and who had made the ultimate sacrifice. Fund-raising began in each suburb to erect a suitable memorial: a place where communities could honour the dead but also a place where families, deprived of the opportunity to bury their loved ones or attend a funeral, could find some comfort in a physical marker of loss and grief. Typically, as at Heidelberg and Greensborough, a simple stone memorial was erected. At Eaglemont a memorial fountain was erected. A local citizen donated land for a war memorial park at Heidelberg in the 1920s. A war memorial was also installed in Wilson Reserve, Ivanhoe.

One of the earliest memorial gestures in the district was the planting of an avenue of honour at the Mont Park Military Hospital (then known as No. 16 Australian General Hospital) at Macleod in 1919. The trees selected were Sugar Gums (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*), native to South Australia, and were planted by patients at the military hospital to remember their fellow soldiers who had been killed at war. Hugh Linaker, who had designed the landscaping of Mont Park, supervised the tree plantings. A memorial garden was also laid out at the Repat Hospital.

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<sup>170</sup> *Age*, 2 March 1940, p. 28.

<sup>171</sup> *Age*, 1941.

<sup>172</sup> Newspaper article, 1905.

## 10. An artistic landscape

### The Heidelberg School

From the mid-nineteenth century, Heidelberg and the surrounding country, especially around the Yarra, had provided a place of beauty and repose from the crowded built-up city. From as early as the 1840s artists had sketched scenes of the river and landscape. The area had continually drawn praise for the beauty of its scenery. One writer in 1870, for example, described the windings of the Yarra through the timbered country was considered ‘extremely beautiful and picturesque’.<sup>173</sup> In the 1860s and 1870s, some of the colony’s leading landscape painters had produced some admired bucolic scenes of Heidelberg, including Eugène von Guérard (*The Yarra Ranges Seen from a Hill near Heidelberg*, 1858) and Louis Buvelot (*Winter Morning near Heidelberg*, 1866 and *View near Heidelberg*, 1866). These were romantic views that were influenced by the ways in which landscapes were depicted in Europe, but at the same time provided inspiration to a future generation of artists.



Eugene von Guérard, *The Yarra Ranges Seen from a Hill near Heidelberg*, 1858 (source: National Gallery of Victoria)



Louis Buvelot, *Winter Morning near Heidelberg*, 1866

A new approach to painting the Australian landscape emerged in the late 1880s when a talented group of impressionists formed an artists’ colony at Eaglemont, where they worked in the manner of the French impressionists — *en plein air* (in the open air). Here, they captured for the first time the colour and light of the Australian landscape: the muted grey-greens of the eucalypts and straw yellow paddocks, bathed in golden light.

The group occupied a large somewhat derelict property at Eaglemont that was part of the Charterisville estate. This was situated close to the river and offered views of the river and the distant hills. The site had a tangled, unkempt garden with fruit trees and a ruined fountain, and provided an ideal and inspiring setting for landscape painters. Heidelberg was something of a backwater in the 1880s. With no direct rail connection to Melbourne, it was relatively isolated from the city and still considered to be ‘in the country’. Here, suburban expansion was yet to happen. The wider area was characterised by paddocks and gentle hills with pockets of bushland; large areas of the river front were already reserved from sale as Crown land. The locality offered both idyllic rural scenery and affordable rent: both were ideal conditions for an artistic community.

Led by Arthur Streeton, this group of impressionists etched the name of Heidelberg on the national stage and the national psyche through a style of painting that became known as the ‘Heidelberg School’. This group had risen to prominence with the famous ‘9 x 5’ exhibition held at Buxton’s Rooms in Swanston Street in 1887, where members exhibited small

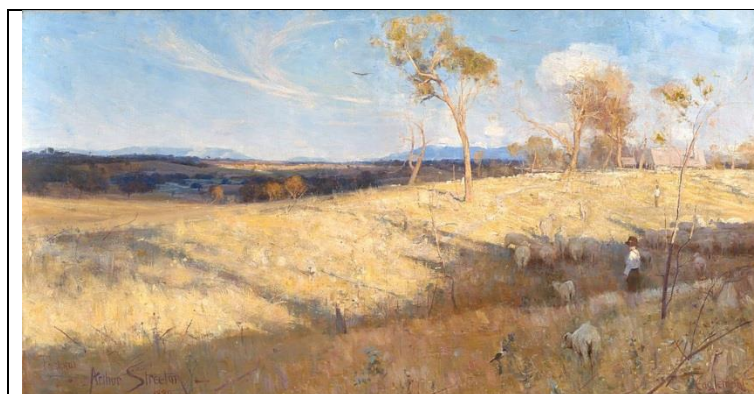
<sup>173</sup> *Australasian*, 16 April 1870, p. 9.



landscapes on cigar box lids. This exhibition met with mixed reviews, but the group later went on to critical acclaim. Whilst the subject matter was not confined exclusively to the Heidelberg area, the artists that congregated at Eaglemont produced some of their best work here. Streeton's works painted at Eaglemont included 'Golden Summer, Eaglemont'; 'Near Heidelberg'; and 'Still Slides the Stream', all completed in 1889.

In the 1890s Walter Withers established a studio at Cape Street, Heidelberg.<sup>174</sup> He later established a second artists' camp at Heidelberg when he took up the lease for house owned by Charles Davies, who was a brother-in-law of the artist David Davies. Those artists who frequented the 'camp' at Eaglemont included Frederick McCubbin, John Longstaff, and E. Phillips Fox as well as Davies. There were others who joined the group, drawn by the 'art atmosphere and the camaraderie of the "Camp"'.<sup>175</sup> Significant works produced during this second period included 'Moon Rise' by Walter Withers and 'Tranquil Waters' by E. Phillips Fox.

The river landscape was central to the Heidelberg School and many of its members lived along the river at Eaglemont and other spots at different times, including Charles Condor and Tom Roberts (at Eaglemont), and Walter Withers (at Heidelberg and Eltham). This combination of accessible Australian bushland and artistic talent brought to fruition an artistic expression of the Australian bush that hadn't previously been achieved. This new interpretation of the Australian bush achieved at the Eaglemont artists' camp, developed in tandem with the rise in Australian nationalism in the 1890s and represented, along with the literature of the *Bulletin* School of writers, the emergence of a new romantic nationalism that was an important cultural precursor to Federation in 1901. The *Golden Summers* exhibition, held at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1987, was the first major retrospective of the Heidelberg School.



Arthur Streeton, *Golden Summer, Eaglemont* 1889



Arthur Streeton, *Near Heidelberg*, 1889.

### Artists, architects and radicals

In the early 1900s, artists continued to be drawn to the area, including Napier Waller and his first wife Christian (née Yandell) in Fairy Hills, Ivanhoe; in later years local artists included William Blamire Young.<sup>176</sup> Now on the fringe of suburbia, but easily accessible from Melbourne by rail, parts of the country around Heidelberg, Eaglemont and Greensborough were considered the essence of the Australian bush. The rustic charm of Charterisville continued to inspire artists and the garden was used for the outdoors scenes of Charles Tait's pioneering feature film, *The Story of the Kelly Gang*, in 1906.<sup>177</sup> Whilst much of the new suburban area was broadly conservative, a community of radical thinkers emerged in Heidelberg and

<sup>174</sup> Context 2014, p. 25.

<sup>175</sup> Rob W. Harvie, Letter to the Editor, *Herald*, 12 August 1919, p. 10.

<sup>176</sup> *Age*, 31 August 1940, p. 23.

<sup>177</sup> 'Shaping Banyule' community feedback, August 2018.

Ivanhoe. They were drawn to this semi-rural area at the edge of the suburbs. The natural beauty and topography of the area was a key factor but the community that developed then attracted like-minded people.

As well as artists, the Heidelberg district attracted writers, including Betty Roland, and a wider circle of bohemians and political radicals that included the prominent socialist Tom Walsh, who lived for a time with the British feminist Adela Pankhurst on Heidelberg Road. The architects Walter Burley Griffin and Margaret Mahony Griffin made a home for a time in Ivanhoe and had a wide circle of artistic friends, including the MacGeorges of Fairy Hills. In the 1930s and 1940s, an influential circle of artists was based at Heide, across the river at Bulleen; this group included John and Sunday Reed, and Sidney Nolan. In addition to being the inspiration for the Heidelberg School, this stretch of country alongside the Yarra became in the mid-twentieth century the focus for another highly significant artistic circle. Although based on the other side of the river, there were close connections between Heide and Heidelberg. Sidney Nolan, for example, advertised his works for sale in the window of a newsagency in Burgundy Street, Heidelberg, in the 1940s.

Through the mid-twentieth century, a number of notable architects and designers lived in the area, including Frederick Romberg and Alistair Knox (briefly). The Modernist furniture designer Fred Ward lived in Glenard Drive, Eaglemont. Grant and Mary Featherston, who were leading industrial designers, lived in Fairy Hills, Ivanhoe, from the late 1960s in a house designed by Robin Boyd.



*Socialists' picnic held at Heidelberg Park in 1906, photographed by William G. Small (source: State Library of Victoria, Accession No. H96.160/1388)*



## Twentieth-century architecture

The notable Melbourne architect Harold Desbrowe-Anneer completed a number of houses in the Banyule area, including a group of three at The Eyrie, Eaglemont, as well as others in Ivanhoe and Rosanna. His notable Arts and Crafts designs used half-timbering, roughcast, casement windows and bracketed window hoods.<sup>178</sup>

The suburbs of Ivanhoe, Eaglemont and Heidelberg led the way in the interwar period as exponents of modern architecture. Here there is a high proportion of finely executed interwar houses, including English Revival, Californian Bungalow and Moderne styles. The availability of large blocks of land situated in prime riverfront positions or elevated hilly country made this area highly attractive for new home builders.

The City of Heidelberg also carried out a number of civic projects in this period, including the new Heidelberg Civic Centre and shire offices, the Heidelberg baby health centre, and street tree planting that was in sympathy with the design precepts of the ideal suburb. The suburb of Heidelberg won the 'Ideal Suburb' competition several times in the 1920s.<sup>179</sup>

Walter Burley Griffin had established a high benchmark with his residential work on his Glenard and Mount Eagle Estates, completed in 1916, which included the Griffins' own house, Waller House. Griffin's estates were notable for the retention of trees, roads that followed the contours of the landscape, and central community parks for which covenants were written into the land titles for this subdivision.<sup>180</sup> Napier Waller, the artist and designer, and his wife Christine, also an artist, moved to the area in the 1920s. Later, Ivanhoe was home to A.V. Jennings (briefly), the market leader in suburban housing estates, chose to build his own eclectic home in his Beauville Estate in Heidelberg.<sup>181</sup>



*Artists' impression of new residence in Mountain View Rd, Rosanna (source: Herald, 17 October 1934, p. 16)*



*English Revival residence in Rosanna, built c.1930s (Context 2018)*

In the mid-twentieth century, architects and landscape designers turned to the natural environment, and to functionality and lifestyle as key influences. Significant Modernist architects such as Robin Boyd, Frederick Romberg, Marcus Barlow and Peter McIntyre, who led the way in Australian home design from the 1950s to the 1970s, were all commissioned to design private homes in the suburbs of Banyule. There were many others, including Sidney E. Smith, Charles Duncan, Peter Jorgenson and Neil Clerehan. Modernist homes in Eaglemont, Ivanhoe, East Ivanhoe, Rosanna and Lower Plenty were closely engaged with their immediate physical locality and reflected a new sensibility for the Australian environment. The houses of

<sup>178</sup> Harriet Edquist 2007, *Pioneers of Modernism: the Arts and Crafts movement in Australia*, p. 37.

<sup>179</sup> Butler 1985.

<sup>180</sup> Godfrey 1977.

<sup>181</sup> Butler 1985; Garden 1992, *Builders to the Nation*. Note that Jennings briefly occupied his display home in Ivanhoe, but then built a two-storied house in Burke Road North where he lived much longer (from 'Shaping Banyule' community feedback, August 2018).

Boyd and others were typically built into the landscape, and engaged with the natural environment, rather than surmounted upon it to maximise views. They were introspective and subtle rather than overly decorative or monumental. Many homes were cleverly positioned on steep slopes, amidst existing vegetation, and architects responded to the setting through attention to windows, decking and sight lines, and in some cases, internal layouts.

A closer engagement with the natural environment also brought an enthusiasm for mud brick construction that emerged around Eltham and Montmorency in the late 1940s. This movement was led by Alistair Knox with a number of local collaborators, and continued steadily into the 1970s. Knox had visited houses by John Harcourt, the pioneer mud-brick builder in Rosanna, and he built his first mud brick house at Montmorency in 1947.<sup>182</sup> His influence soon extended beyond Eltham and Montmorency into the suburbs of Lower Plenty, Rosanna, and the more suburban Heidelberg and Ivanhoe. Knox worked to a strict and all-encompassing ideology of living with nature. This fitted stylistically and ideologically with the earlier landscape treatments of Edna Walling, as well as Ellis Stones, and the architecture of Robin Boyd – all of whom have left their mark on the suburbs of Banyule. A number of examples of Knox houses survive, such as the Abbey House in Rosanna.

The natural environment of the ‘bush suburbs’ of Banyule invited and encouraged this approach to building and living with the environment. Merchant Builders’ landmark Elliston Estate was an achievement in residential design that successfully balanced built form with the natural environment. With the landscaping designed by Ellis Stones, the name of the estate ‘Elliston’ was chosen in recognition of his critical contribution. An emphasis on environmentally minded design ties in with Banyule’s strong history of landscape conservation. The ethos of environmentalism has infiltrated the local area, most particularly in residential design but to some extent in public or civic spaces, and in community buildings such as churches.

In addition to the bold Modernist designs and mud brick homes, there were other popular postwar styles. These included the fashion for Hollywood-style glamour and flamboyance, which saw expansive double-storey brick homes replete with balconies and outdoor terraces (eg. Mountain View Road, Rosanna; there are other examples in East Ivanhoe); the American-style Cape Cod home with steep tiled roof and dormer windows (eg. 21 Somerleigh Crescent, Greensborough), and the austere Georgian Revival style (eg. 1 Bristol Street, Heidelberg), and the International style. The typical architect-designed postwar dwelling offered a standard range of new mod-cons and modernised internal arrangements.

The postwar period saw a radical shift in the design ethos of the typical suburban homes. Architects challenged some long-held elements of design, which met with conflict from the more conservative middle ground. There was a significant departure by architects away from the traditional pitched and tiled roof of Melbourne’s middle suburbs, which became a contested local issue and led to the Heidelberg Council voting in 1951 on a resolution to ban flat roofs and insist on pitched roofs.<sup>183</sup>

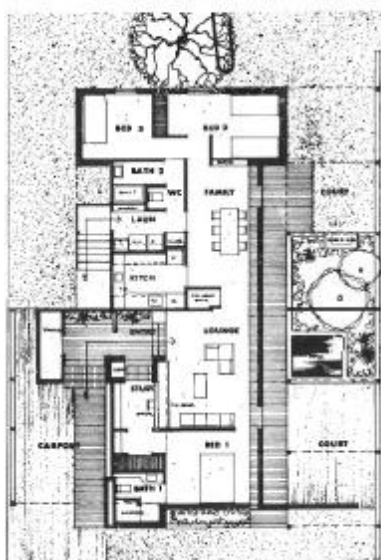
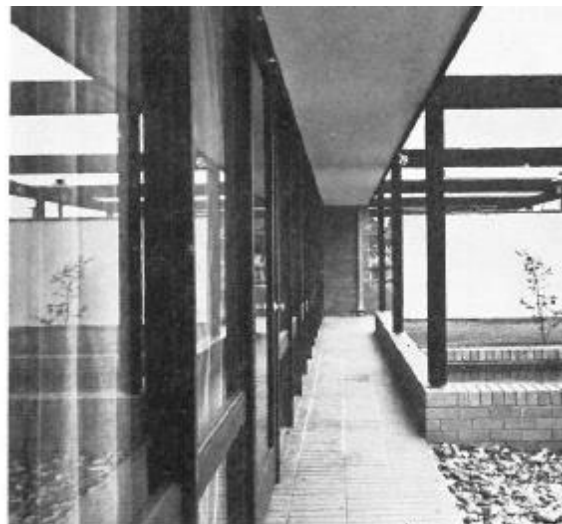
It was not only the design of residential buildings that were reimaged in this period, but also public buildings and churches. A number of churches in Banyule were built to inspired Modernist designs in the postwar period, including examples in Montmorency (Alistair Knox); Ivanhoe East (Frederick Romberg); and Ivanhoe (Mockbridge Stahle & Mitchell). These Modernist church designs re-interpreted in striking ways some traditional ecclesiastical components, such as spires, roof lines, stained glass windows and gothic elements.

<sup>182</sup> ‘Shaping Banyule’ community feedback, August 2018.

<sup>183</sup> *Age*, 24 April 1951, p. 7.

*In these  
prize-winning designs  
the accent is on  
Gas appliances*

*Prize-winning project house  
built at the Yallambie estate.*



*Feature article on a prize-winning Modernist home in Yallambie, published in 1968 (Project Homes, 1968)*





*The opening of the Methodist Church, Greensborough, in 1966 (courtesy Greensborough Historical Society)*

### Landscape design

The rich soil in the Heidelberg district and the plentiful water supply enabled the development of substantial and often ambitious homestead gardens. Nineteenth-century homestead gardens followed the fashion of the period in terms of plant choice, with conifers and other exotics being favoured. One of the earliest was the garden at 'Yallambie', north of Heidelberg on the Plenty River, which is believed to have been laid out by Edward La Trobe Bateman. La Trobe Bateman made a series of sketches of the property in the early 1850s.<sup>184</sup> The garden of D.C. McArthur at 'Charterisville' was also a site of notable horticultural endeavour; McArthur produced prize-winning fruit and his wife was an early apiarist.<sup>185</sup> Two Scottish gardeners and plantsmen, John Arthur and John McEwin and their families, came to Melbourne as assisted immigrants in 1839 on the *David Clarke* and both settled in Heidelberg. Botanist and landscape gardener John Arthur established a nursery and orchard at 'Yarra Farm', Heidelberg, in 1840. He was employed in the early 1840s as gardener to Captain Smyth before being appointed in 1846 as the first curator of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens; here he selected and planted the first trees for the gardens.<sup>186</sup> McEwin, a gardener and botanist, established an early nursery in Heidelberg near the Yarra River.<sup>187</sup>

A remarkable early example of a grand local garden was the stately hilltop garden of the Mount Eagle Estate, developed by J.H. Brooke, MLA, in the late 1850s. Brooke's gardener was the noted Scots gardener William Ferguson, who planted the hilltop estate with a variety of Old World conifers and other exotics such as Elms. These trees were at that time the height of good taste but were highly scarce in the colonies and greatly sought after. Ferguson secured a number of rare conifers that could only be seen on Brooke's estate, and created an impressive nineteenth-century landscape that drew the admiration of visitors.<sup>188</sup> Brookes' vision was to ornament the hilltop in picturesque style in preparation for the addition of a suitably grand house, but this plan did not come to fruition. When the Mount Eagle Estate was subdivided in the early 1900s, many of the trees planted by William Ferguson were retained, and these survive today in the private suburban gardens of Eaglemont.

<sup>184</sup> See images in State Library of Victoria Pictures Collection.

<sup>185</sup> *Victorian Agricultural and Horticultural Gazette*, vol. III, no. 25, 21 March 1859, p. 9.

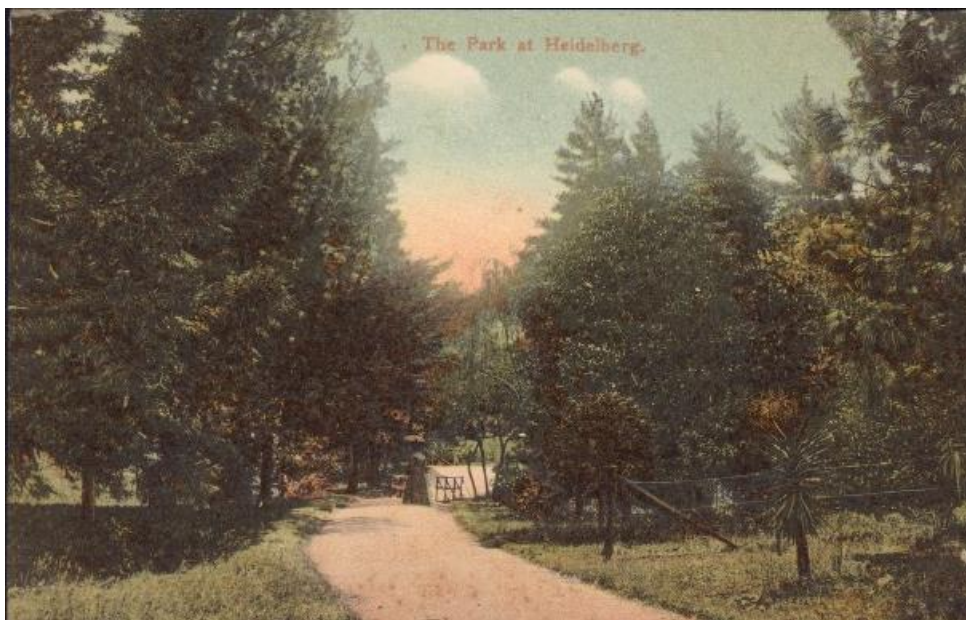
<sup>186</sup> Daniel Bunce 1850, *The Australian Manual of Horticulture*, p. 52; A.S. Kenyon 1934, *Heidelberg: The City of Streams*, pp. 83, 85.

<sup>187</sup> *Australasian*, 11 June 1932, p. 4.

<sup>188</sup> Paul Fox 2001, *Clearings*.

The eminent landscape designer and director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, William Guilfoyle, was commissioned by the Heidelberg Shire to draw up a plan for laying out the Heidelberg Park, which had been permanently reserved in the 1870s. Guilfoyle's colleague Robert P. Whitworth prepared a plan for the park under Guilfoyle's supervision.<sup>189</sup> Guilfoyle and Whitworth had previously collaborated in drawing up the plans for a number of other public gardens, including the Koroit Botanic Gardens, the Stawell Hospital Gardens and the Horsham Hospital Gardens.<sup>190</sup>

Former city councillor, Peter Fanning, took on the task of 'ornamenting and planting of the Heidelberg Park' in accordance with Guilfoyle's plan and won praise from the Council for his 'skillful and attentive' work. Fanning established the paths and a rustic bridge, presumably in accordance with Guilfoyle's plan.<sup>191</sup> The plan is not known to have survived but many elements of the gardens have a strong Guilfoylean flavour, including the pine collection, the serpentine paths and the ornamental bridge over the Salt Creek.<sup>192</sup> The gardens and the broader site of the Heidelberg Park was highly regarded and was a popular place of resort. In 1883, when it faced the threat of the new railway from Alphington, it was described as one of the most beautiful places in the colony.<sup>193</sup> By the 1890s the gardens boasted 'a hundred and one other specimens, all going to form a charming picture to the eye'.<sup>194</sup>



*The Park at Heidelberg, c1910s-20s (source: State Library of Victoria Accession No. H87.206/216)*

Home gardeners were well catered for in the 1920s with B.V. Rossi's Roseland Rose Farm and the Enid Nursery, both in Ivanhoe. The Enid Nursery site was sold and developed as an A.V. Jennings housing estate in the 1930s. The typical domestic garden of the interwar and postwar era featured a layout of flower beds, lawn, one or more specimen trees (usually exotic), and pathways with a front fence in a style to match the house. Yet whilst the standard domestic garden predominated, the emergence of more progressive styles, concurring with a new approach to the landscape and design, was keenly evident in the Heidelberg and surrounding area in the early 1900s. This new approach to the landscape movement was intrinsic to the

<sup>189</sup> *Argus*, 27 April 1880, p. 7.

<sup>190</sup> Robert Percy Whitworth 1880. *Guide to Melbourne*. Helen Doyle, Richard Aitken and Pam Jellie 1999. 'Koroit Botanic Gardens Conservation Management Plan', prepared for Moyne Shire.

<sup>191</sup> *Argus*, 12 August 1881, p. 3; *12 Rambles in Heidelberg*.

<sup>192</sup> See historical images of the Heidelberg Park and Botanic Gardens held HHS, Butler 1985.

<sup>193</sup> *Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 17 February 1883, p. 2.

<sup>194</sup> *Collingwood Mercury*, 17 January 1895, cited in *Heidelberg Historian*, No. 166, February 1995, p. 6.



design ethos of the new architecture of the early twentieth century, which saw a greater focus on the landscape context, the retention of native vegetation, and the use of natural building materials. Walter Burley Griffin who led this movement, eschewed the containment of fences and instead believed in an open landscape, his philosophy being that ‘the whole landscape is his’.<sup>195</sup>

An unusually high level of engagement with the natural landscape is central to the history of suburban development in the municipality. The natural beauty of the area was what drew many early settlers and later, home-buyers, and this quality in the urban landscape is a strong thread. Throughout the Banyule municipality there is evident a strong emphasis on tree planting and on tree retention. Native gardens predominate in many parts – for example at Briar Hill, Montmorency and Greensborough. It is common to see mature gums that pre-date a home standing in the front garden. In some cases, pre-existing trees have determined the design of the residence. Subdivision layouts follow the contours of the land rather than a pre-determined grid that prevailed in the nineteenth century. It was typical of subdivisions developed after the 1960s that electricity cabling was placed underground. These newer areas, for example in Montmorency, have also often forgone footpaths for a bush frontage. Natural materials, such as basalt boulders and railway sleepers, are used for front fences and as decorative features in private gardens. Rock-faced retaining walls are also common across the municipality, which are used both on private properties and on public roadways and divided roads, presumably constructed by the former City of Heidelberg in the c.1930s-1960s. Rock retaining walls were built by the former City of Heidelberg to create divided roadways in Eaglemont, Ivanhoe and Rosanna (for example, in Grandview Grove, Rosanna).

In the southern parts of the municipality, in Eaglemont and Ivanhoe, many of the residential areas have a strong interwar character and private gardens continue to reflect this. The emergence of a naturalistic approach to suburban gardens and a reliance on ‘native’ plants, first popularised in the 1920s and 1930s and developed through the twentieth century, has led to a mix of garden styles in the earlier established areas. Several gardens were designed by Edna Walling, who adopted a naturalistic approach, using used stone paving, dry stone walls.

Postwar homes of the 1950s-1970s continued to favour the traditional suburban front garden, comprising massed floral beds and ornamental specimen trees, such as conifers and deciduous varieties. Postwar Italian immigrants had a preference for large homes on an elevated site with terraced garden beds and rockeries, and ornamental pencil pines. Rosanna presents a mixture of both the traditional suburban gardens of the mid-twentieth century and the new native garden or bush garden. There are strong themes of interwar planting in Mountain View Road, Darvall Road and Invermay Grove. a mixture of English-style gardens (with conifers c. 1930s) mixed with the later embracing of native trees and bush gardens, for example at the Elliston Estate in Rosanna. Lower Plenty also presents a harmonious juxtaposition of different landscape styles, with many properties featuring low English-style hedge rows and exotics, largely conifers, while neighbouring properties retain indigenous trees and native bushland.

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<sup>195</sup> Quoted in Butler 1985, p. 130.

## 11. Public health

### Hospitals

Little is known of the health provisions in the district before the 1880s, but there would have been available in Heidelberg the usual services of local doctors and midwives. In 1880 a significant donation would establish Heidelberg as an important medical centre. The large sum of £5000 was provided by Elizabeth Austin (née Phillips Harding) of 'Barwon Park', Winchelsea, for the purpose of building a Hospital for Incurables. This bequest came in response to the high mortality rate from infectious diseases in Victoria in the nineteenth century, and the prevailing fear of contagious disease. Until her death in 1910, the founder Elizabeth Austin continued to have a close role in the management of the hospital.

The new hospital was constructed in 1881-82 to a design by English-born architect George Raymond Johnson. It was a large complex that dominated the surrounding area. Other notable architects associated with the site included John Beswicke, who designed the gate lodge, and E.H. Carleton, who designed the Marion Drummond Memorial Nurses' Home in 1913.

The site for the new hospital at Heidelberg occupied an elevated position overlooking the township and with distant view of the surrounding hills and the river valley. There was a strong belief in the nineteenth century in the health-giving properties of fresh air and elevated position. The Melbourne physician Thomas Embling emphasised the importance of the beauty of the locality in aiding the well-being of those inflicted with incurable diseases – patients who entered the hospital would not be discharged.<sup>196</sup>



*The Hospital for Incurables at Heidelberg, photographed by J.W. Lindt in the 1890s (State Library of Victoria Accession No. H42622/26)*

In 1881, Melbourne's leading landscape designer William Guilfoyle offered to prepare a plan for laying out the hospital grounds at Heidelberg and to superintend the work of laying them out.<sup>197</sup> Hospital gardens were considered an important (and necessary) component of the hospital design, with pleasant surroundings being of paramount importance for patients. Guilfoyle had previously designed hospital gardens at Stawell and Horsham in 1880-81.<sup>198</sup> The hospital gardens have virtually been obliterated with developments to the site over the years;

<sup>196</sup> Thomas Embling, Letter to the Editor, *Australasian*, 20 August 1881.

<sup>197</sup> *Argus*, 6 October 1881, p. 10.

<sup>198</sup> Doyle et al. 1999, 'Koroit Botanic Gardens Conservation Management Plan'.

some of the remnant trees, possibly dating to Guilfoyle's original layout, were removed in the 1990s.

The Hospital for Incurables was originally intended for the poor and those afflicted with incurable diseases. Over time, however, with the advance of medical science, and as cures were developed for the previously incurable diseases, the hospital took on new roles. In 1927 it was renamed the Hospital for Chronic Diseases.<sup>199</sup> The Austin Hospital, as it was later known, expanded through the twentieth century, and Heidelberg became important as a centre for public health. The original complex, built in 1882, was demolished in the 1970s and has been replaced by updated hospital buildings.



*Nurses in the grounds of the Austin Hospital, Heidelberg, early 1900s (source: Humphrey McQueen 1978, Social Sketches in Australia, p. 65)*

There were other hospitals in the district in the mid-twentieth century, including Airlie private hospital in Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe, and the Diamond Valley Community Hospital, Greensborough, which was opened in 1942. The Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (the 'Repat'), established in 1941, is discussed in detail in Chapter 9 'Defence'. The Catholic-run Mercy Hospital for Women moved from East Melbourne to Heidelberg in the 1990s and merged with the Austin Hospital.

In the mid-1970s, a portion of Commonwealth-owned land in Watsonia was excised from the military camp as a site for the Watsonia Radiation Laboratories, which were established to research and develop radiation therapy, which was still a relatively new form of cancer treatment. This was the main radiation research facility in Victoria at the time.

<sup>199</sup> Emma Russell, 'Austin and Repatriation Medical Centre', Encyclopedia of Melbourne: <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00108b.htm>.



*The Repat, Heidelberg, 1959 (source: National Archives of Australia)*



*Soldiers at the Heidelberg Repat, c.1944 (source: State Library of Victoria, Accession No. H99.201/1194)*



*Diamond Valley Hospital in Grimsbow Street, Greensborough, now demolished (courtesy Greensborough Historical Society)*



*Airlie Maternity Hospital, Ivanhoe (courtesy Heidelberg Historical Society ref. P0010)*

### Residential care

There is a long tradition of residential care in the district, with a number of aged care homes. As with small private hospitals, it was common for such establishments to operate from former residences. The mansion house 'Ravenswood' in Ivanhoe was used in the 1950s as a 'Home for Lonely Women'.<sup>200</sup> The Churinga residential care centre for mentally handicapped children operated in Greensborough, initially occupying a former homestead, 'Saxham', from 1967 until 1990.<sup>201</sup> The Rotherwood Rest Home operated in Heidelberg in the c.1920s-40s.

<sup>200</sup> Heidelberg Historical Society, ref. P2350.

<sup>201</sup> Wikinorthia: <https://wikinorthia.net.au/churinga/>; Allom Lovell 1999, 'Banyule Heritage Study', Citations A-K, vol. 2.





*Rotherwood Rest Home, Heidelberg, depicted in a postcard c.1920s-1950s (source: State Library of Victoria Accession No. H32492/6574)*

### Infant welfare centres

The early baby health centres that were established in Heidelberg and Ivanhoe demonstrate the socially progressive position of the Heidelberg City Council in the 1920s and 1930s in terms of infant health. A leading advocate of baby health centres was Nellie Ibbott, a local councillor for Heidelberg (and one-time mayor) whose influence was critical to this development.<sup>202</sup> The garden setting for the Heidelberg Baby Health Centre reflected prevailing values about the benefits to well-being provided by pleasant surroundings. By 1940 there were also baby health centres at West Heidelberg and Greensborough.<sup>203</sup>

### Cemeteries

Many of the early colonial settlers in the district were buried on the properties they occupied. Aboriginal people would also have been buried in the area but there is little record of where these burial places were. The early settlers often reserved a small portion of their land as a private family burial ground. These survive on some old properties, for example at Yallambie on the Plenty River. At St Helena, a private cemetery survives in the churchyard of St Katherine's Anglican Church yard that was consecrated in the 1850s. The grave of Heidelberg School artist Walter Withers is here.

The first public cemetery in Heidelberg was established in 1854 at what was then Warringal Village. The Warringal Cemetery records only exist from 1911, but a large number of early settlers were buried here. It is possible that Aboriginal people were also buried here in the mid-1850s. Another much smaller cemetery is in Hawdon Street, Heidelberg, which was set aside as a private burial ground in 1849.<sup>204</sup> The Greensborough Cemetery was established in 1863. Cemeteries were also established at the Heidelberg Repat Hospital and also possibly at Loyola College and other religious establishments. A memorial garden is maintained at the Mercy Hospital for Women.

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<sup>202</sup> Jean Baker 1996, 'Ibbott, Nellie Grace (1889–1970)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 14, Melbourne University Press, Carlton.

<sup>203</sup> *Age*, 6 August 1940, p. 3.

<sup>204</sup> Butler 1985, pp. 179–80.



## 12. Conserving the waterways and bushland

### The early conservation movement

At the time of British settlement along the lower Yarra in the 1830s and 1840s — from Sandridge (Port Melbourne) and through to Richmond, Kew, Bulleen and Heidelberg — the river flats were characterised by rich wetlands, with a network of swamps or billabongs that were teeming with life. The broad river valley and river delta area was an important food bowl for the Aboriginal people, attracting animals, fish and bird life. Tim Flannery has likened the lower Yarra to ‘a sort of temperate Kakadu’.<sup>205</sup> European settlers, however, did not look favourably on the wetlands, except perhaps as an ideal place (given the prolific birdlife) for sportsmen to go shooting. The prevailing nineteenth-century view was that the swamps were dangerous to public health, and settlers sought to drain swampy ground wherever possible to increase the available farming land.<sup>206</sup>

Whilst the *raison d’être* of colonial settlement at Port Phillip was agricultural expansion and material progress, the ‘new country’ was also valued for its scenic qualities. Whilst much of the land was cleared for grazing and farming, areas of bushland remained, especially along the watercourses. A growing appreciation of the Australian landscape emerged from the late nineteenth century, buoyed by and probably indirectly influencing the growing mood of Australian nationalism and the federal movement in the 1890s. Popular movements such as the Australian Natives’ Association, the early encouragement of ‘national parks’ in the 1880s, and publications like Russell Grimwade’s *The Gum Tree* all lent their support to the preservation of quintessential bushland around Melbourne.

The recognised natural beauty of the Heidelberg district that had attracted early settlers was regarded by many as something to value and preserve. There were local efforts to preserve the scenic quality and amenity of the parklands – for example in the 1880s there was strong local opposition to the new railway from Heidelberg to Ivanhoe crossing through the prized Heidelberg Park. In the 1880s and 1890s, the Heidelberg School of artists did much to popularise the beauty of the Australian bush, and in particular the Heidelberg area.

### Protecting the Yarra and other waterways

The early reservation of much of the Yarra riverbank in Melbourne in the 1850s protected the immediate riverfront to some degree, chiefly from the risk of private ownership and control of the water supply, but much of this land was initially leased largely for cropping, grazing and market gardens, and generally was largely denuded of its native vegetation. Some areas, more by chance than intention, nevertheless survived as bushland through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth.

By the 1890s efforts were made to re-design the course of the Yarra itself. In the early twentieth century, local efforts began in Heidelberg and Ivanhoe to preserve the riverfront and the river flats as public parkland. The Heidelberg district, being on the fringe of suburbia, offered areas of bushland relatively close to the city. The first area to be protected was the 7-acre site of Wilson Reserve in Ivanhoe, which was purchased by the community and reserved by the City of Heidelberg as a public park in 1924. It was named after ‘Skipper’ Wilson who was scout master for the Ivanhoe Sea Scouts which occupied this site from 1909.<sup>207</sup>

In the early twentieth century, the Heidelberg and wider district had remained relatively free of the excessive polluting of the Yarra that occurred downstream. Yet by the mid-twentieth century, the ecological health of many of the riverside reserves in Melbourne were compromised or threatened by land-use policies, and local action groups sought to have these

<sup>205</sup> Tim Flannery (ed.) 2002, *The Birth of Melbourne*, p. 8.

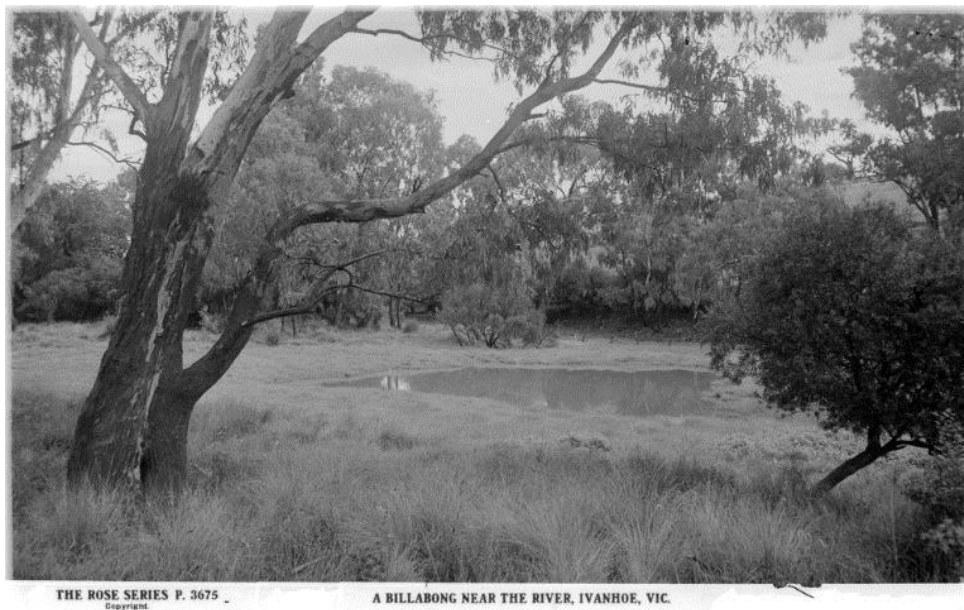
<sup>206</sup> Maya Ward 2011, *The Comfort of Water*, p. 113; Flannery 2002, p. 14.

<sup>207</sup> Boyle 1991, p. 90.

areas protected. The City of Heidelberg in several cases acquired freehold land on the river for use as public parkland. In the early twentieth century, the community and in some cases the local council made strenuous efforts to preserve single trees or stands of trees that were considered important. In 1910, for example, a group was formed for the Protection of the Old Red Gum Tree at Heidelberg.<sup>208</sup>

The postwar era saw a growing awareness of environmental concerns and the establishment in 1955 of the River Parklands Protection League, of which Ellis Stones was the first president. Christopher Bailey was also a key figure in their early work. Stones and others were involved in acts of civil disobedience in the mid-1950s where they undid the council's efforts to drain Horseshoe Billabong. In the 1970s, there were several successful local conservation campaigns, for example, to protect the natural environment of the Banyule Flats at Heidelberg. Other active local conservation groups including the Warringal Conservation Society (formed in 1970), Friends of Wilson Reserve and Rosanna Parklands Protection Association. Local conservation groups have been active in environmental protection (such as monitoring pollution), re-vegetating with indigenous species, and stewardship.<sup>209</sup>

The Yarra precinct has attracted keen conservation efforts from outside the local area. Wider environmental campaigns include those of the Save the Yarra League in the 1950s and 1960s,<sup>210</sup> the 'Clean up the Yarra' campaign in the early 1970s, and the 'Give the Yarra a Go' campaign, run by the *Age* newspaper in the early 1980s. In the 1950s and 1960s the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works, which managed the waterways in the Melbourne metropolitan area, became increasingly concerned with the health of the lower and middle Yarra, and in 1974 adopted a policy to develop metropolitan parklands including along the Yarra River corridor.<sup>211</sup>



Postcard view: a billabong near the Yarra River at Ivanhoe (source: State Library of Victoria Accession No. H32492/5082)

The construction of the Eastern Freeway in the early 1970s, which impinged on the Yarra near Heidelberg, was another driving force for strong local action from conservationists. In 1972, the Valley Freeway Action Group, presided over by Alan Bunbury, was successful in arguing

<sup>208</sup> Evelyn Observer and Bourke East Record, 19 August 1910, p. 3.

<sup>209</sup> 'Shaping Banyule', community feedback, August 2018.

<sup>210</sup> *Age*, 16 March 1964, p. 3.

<sup>211</sup> Dingle and Rasmussen 1991, pp. 327-28.

against a new freeway (the F18), which was an extension of the Eastern Freeway along the river valley to Greensborough. Instead the designated area was made into park land. Alan Bunbury was later chair of the Middle Yarra Advisory Council, which was an advisory group to the MMBW on parklands and development.<sup>212</sup>

In the 1990s a successful campaign was waged to protect the Darebin Parklands from being used as a public tip.

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