

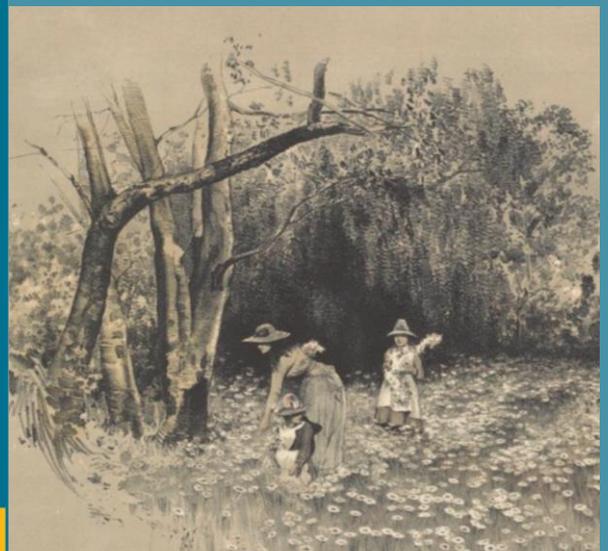
people place heritage

CONTEXT

BANYULE THEMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY

Revised draft report
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Prepared for
City of Banyule



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The time scale

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 beginning 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 and Eltham Historical Societies 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,¹ 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 draft report has been produced without direct consultation with the relevant Traditional Owner group, the Wurundjeri, but draws on the report titled ‘Banyule Aboriginal Heritage Study (public edition)’, prepared by Brendan Marshall of Austral Heritage Consultants in February 1999. This work was commissioned by the City of Banyule and prepared in consultation with Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council.

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 relies on the notion of ‘shared’ or co-existing heritage values, as expounded in the recent work, ‘Shared Heritage Values’, produced by Context (2015) jointly for the Heritage Council of Victoria and the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council.

The incorporation of Aboriginal heritage places into the draft Thematic Framework is nonetheless problematic to the extent that it presents and interprets element of Aboriginal heritage from a non-Aboriginal perspective. There have been several reports (on public access) that have surveyed the Aboriginal heritage of the area, however, and these have been drawn on to assist in the preparation of this report.² In addition, one of the recommendations in the Brendan Marshall report of 1999 was for closer scrutiny of the William Thomas journals, which has been done in this current report; this was possible due to the timely publication of

¹ Notably Graeme Butler 1985, ‘Heidelberg Conservation Study’ and Allom Lovell 1999, ‘Banyule Heritage Study’.

² 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.

the journals in 2014.³ 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.

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

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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
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)

³ Marguerita Stephens 2014, *The Journals of William Thomas*, 4 volumes, Victorian Centre for Aboriginal Languages, Fitzroy.

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, along with the previous set of historic themes (2012) from which they were adapted, were modelled on the document *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes* (Victorian Themes), which was developed for Heritage Victoria in 2010.⁴

It is envisaged that this framework will serve as a useful tool to better understand the historical context of the 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. The 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, 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 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):

⁴ Heritage Victoria 2010, *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes*, Heritage Council of Victoria, Melbourne.

Table 1: Banyule historical themes and examples of heritage places

New Banyule historical themes (2018)	Previous Banyule historical themes (Context 2012)	Examples of heritage places
1. Aboriginal Country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living on Country • Invasion and displacement • Aboriginal-settler relations • The survival of Aboriginal cultural heritage 	<i>Indigenous heritage</i>	Scarred tree, Eaglemont Scarred tree, Lower Plenty Banyule Flats, Heidelberg Warringal Parkland Yarra Flats reserve, East Ivanhoe
2. Settling on the land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grazing and farming • Orchards, vineyards and market gardening 	<i>Early settlement</i> <i>Farming the land</i>	‘Banyule’, Heidelberg (VHR) ‘Viewbank’ homestead (HO) Charterisville 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"> • Roads and bridges • Railway expansion • Bus network • The era of the motor car 	<i>The railway</i>	Heidelberg Road Darebin Bridge Hotel Sparks Reserve (HO) Ivanhoe Railway Station Greensborough Hotel
4. Developing industries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarrying • Gold-mining • Timber cutting • Brickworks • Manufacturing 	<i>Gold-mining and timber-cutting</i>	Briar Hill chimney (VHR) West Heidelberg Industrial Estate
5. Suburban development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential development • Government services • Commercial development • Supplying essential services 	<i>Local government and suburban development</i> <i>Establishing towns and villages</i> <i>Retail development</i> <i>Residential Banyule</i>	Ivanhoe Manor, Ivanhoe Mont Eagle Estate, Eaglemont Beauview Estate Olympic Village, Heidelberg Ivanhoe Fire Station (HO) Rosanna Fire Brigade Shop, Montmorency (HO)

<p>6. Community and cultural life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community buildings • Church communities • Education • Ethnic communities 	<p><i>Multicultural Banyule</i> <i>The Olympics</i></p>	<p>Greensborough Primary School, Greensborough (HO) Olympic Village, West Heidelberg St John 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</p>
<p>7. Recreation and sport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation • Sport • Holidays and tourism 	<p><i>Add here</i></p>	<p>Ivanhoe Park Plenty River swimming pool, Greensborough (HO) Ivanhoe Golf Course</p>
<p>8. Parks and gardens and the urban landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public parks and gardens • Hospital gardens • Street trees • The urban landscape 	<p><i>Public and private planting</i></p>	<p>Heidelberg Park (HO) Sparks Reserve, Ivanhoe Banyule Flats (HO) Street trees, Invermay Street, Rosanna Retaining wall in median strip, Grandview Grove, Rosanna</p>
<p>9. Defence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military training • Repatriation • Remembrance 	<p><i>The role of the Army</i></p>	<p>Simpson Army Barracks, Watsonia ‘The Repat’, Heidelberg Ivanhoe RSL, Ivanhoe Mont Park Avenue of Honour Greensborough War Memorial Park (HO)</p>
<p>10. The artistic landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local artists • Architectural expression • Landscape design 	<p><i>The artistic landscape</i></p>	<p>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</p>
<p>11. Public health</p>	<p><i>Hospitals in Banyule</i></p>	<p>The ‘Repat’, Heidelberg</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitals • Residential care • Infant welfare centres • Cemeteries 		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		Banyule Flats Warringal Parklands Wilson Reserve, Ivanhoe Rosanna Parklands (HO) Banyule Billabong, Heidelberg

Note that most identified heritage places fit with one sub-theme being the primary historical association. But some places may be difficult to categorise 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

Victorian Historical Themes	Banyule historical themes
1. Shaping Victoria's environment	1. Aboriginal Country 12. Conserving the waterways and bushland
2. Peopling Victoria's places and landscape	2. Settling on the land
3. Connecting Victorians by transport and communications	3. Transport and communication
4. Transforming and managing the land	2. Settling on the land
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

Historical Themes for Banyule	Sub-themes	Examples of potential place ‘types’
1. Aboriginal Country	Living on Country	camping grounds meeting places scar trees
	The survival of Aboriginal cultural heritage	archaeological sites earthen/clay ovens ochre pits fishing spots fish traps initiation sites places with spiritual significance burial sites tracks contact sites sites of conflict camping sites
2. Settling on the land	Farming and grazing	homesteads homestead gardens farm buildings stables 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
	Country estates	Residences Private gardens
3. Facilitating transport	Roads and bridges	roads bridges hotels and lodging houses
	Railways	railway stations rail bridges

	Bus networks	Bus depots
	The era of the motor car	roads Motor car garages
4. Developing industries	Quarrying	quarries
	Brick works	clay pits
	Quarrying	quarry holes parkland
	Gold-mining	tracks and travel routes hotels miner's huts / miner's cottages mining sites mullock heaps settlement sites
	Timber-cutting	settlement sites timber camps timber tramways forester's huts railway sidings timber mills
	Mills and factories	factories flour mills timber mills commercial dairies
5. Suburban development	The suburban ideal	houses and residential precincts subdivisions housing estates
	Government services	local government buildings post offices court houses
	Education	primary schools secondary schools alternative education
	Commercial development	shops arcades shopping centres markets
	Supplying essential services	dams and reservoirs water supply infrastructure channels/aqueducts pipe bridges dams and reservoirs fire brigades

6. Community and cultural life	Church communities	churches Presbyteries, manses and vicarages schools convents seminaries monasteries and retreats
	Ethnic communities	social clubs and gathering places shops housing estates
	Community buildings	mechanics institutes rechabite halls masonic lodges town halls public libraries
7. Recreation and sport	Recreation	Public parks boat sheds golf courses swimming enclosures swimming pools children's playgrounds bike tracks pony clubs
	Sport	sports grounds racecourses tennis clubs bowling clubs
	Holidays and tourism	camping sites fishing spots hotels guesthouses tearooms picnic grounds
8. Parks and gardens and the urban landscape	Public parks and gardens	fences and gates paths, steps and walking tracks bandstands and rotundas kiosks seating caretakers' houses trees
	Hospital gardens	garden layouts

		trees and plantings
	Street trees	trees avenues
	Urban landscape	street lamps stone retaining walls and steps road surfaces pedestrian hand rails
9. Defence	Military training	army barracks military training grounds
	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	Local artists	artists viewing spots artists' camps artists' studios art galleries
	Architectural expression	houses flats gardens
	Landscape design	private gardens individual trees
11. Public health	Hospitals	hospitals nurses accommodation
	Residential care	rest 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	Conservation movement	bushland reserves reclaimed wetlands (river flats) billabongs memorial plaques
	Nature reserves	public parkland nature walks/trails roadside vegetation significant trees

2.2 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.

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, Aboriginal people continued to occupy places in Banyule through the turmoil of the late 1830s and 1840s, through the 1850s, and up to the mid-1860s.

Banyule has an unusually early establishment relative to other suburbs of Melbourne and an important early farming history. Endowed with significant waterways, including the Yarra and Plenty Rivers, 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 later 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. Architects and landscape architects have achieved distinction and produced notable innovations in design in Banyule, with an emphasis in the postwar era in melding 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, social clubs and sporting groups. The Banyule municipality has been the site of public health initiatives and social welfare, 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/or 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 settlers' early farming and fruit-growing endeavours, 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, that has been a notable force since the early twentieth century.

1. Aboriginal Country

This section of the report draws on the 'Banyule Aboriginal Heritage Study', prepared by Brendan Marshall of Austral Heritage Consultants in 1999. This work was 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; where possibly 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 Aboriginal population. 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 Heidelberg 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. There was frequent 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.

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'.⁵ 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 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, much altered, Eaglemont remains a suburb of Melbourne, but its anglicised name, along with the local street name, The Eyrie, derives from an ancient Indigenous cultural tradition.

Living on Country

The rich country of the Banyule area was for thousands of years the domain of the Wurundjeri or Woiwurrung, one of the five language groups that form the Kulin Nation. 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.⁶

For 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 was an integral element of peoples' diet. Fish included blackfish and mountain trout, while short-finned eels were caught in funnel-shaped traps that

⁵ 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 a reference rather to 'warrigal' which not a Wurundjeri word and comes from New South Wales.

⁶ Shirley Wiencke 1984, *When the Wattles Bloom Again*, p. 100. This is also noted in Brendan Marshall 1999.

were placed in the water courses and billabongs at certain times of the year. The river flats 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 to make fibres for many different applications. Perishable food was stored in pits by the river to keep it cool in summer. The root vegetable Murnong 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. Many campsites were located 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 with the Plenty and with the Darebin Creek were also important meeting places.

People formed extended kinship groups and lived together in a cluster of huts built from tree boughs and lined with bark. Many groups 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 various 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;⁷ 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: food sourcing and diet, habitation, recreation, culture and ceremony, trade, politics, and social order and organisation. The Aboriginal people who lived in the Banyule area were displaced and dispossessed of their traditional lands, and forced to live on the margins of the 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 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.⁸

The colonial authorities sought to institutionalise the Wurundjeri, whom they also 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 nominated 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 people of the

⁷ Many of the Aboriginal camping and meeting places in the Heidelberg area are recorded by William Thomas; see Marguerita Stephens (ed.) 2014, *The Journals of William Thomas*, vols 1-3.

⁸ For a good overview of the impact of British colonisation on Aboriginal life in Victoria, see Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: A history since 1800* (Allen & Unwin, Crow’s Nest, NSW)

‘Goulburn tribe’ were often camped near Heidelberg.⁹ From 1852 there was also a short-lived Aboriginal reserve at Pound Bend, Warrandyte, not far outside of the existing boundary of Banyule, which spanned both sides of the Yarra.¹⁰ 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, it was an important place to Aboriginal people who occupied the Banyule area (source: State Library of Victoria)

Aboriginal–settler relations

The attitudes of settlers towards Aboriginal people were probably mixed. Aboriginal men are known to have worked for settlers in the area in the 1840s and possibly the 1850s – this included Joseph Hawdon of ‘Banyule’, R.A. Browne of ‘Hartlands’, and Dr Robert Martin of ‘Viewbank’.¹¹ There were probably others, such as Tom Wills. 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 cricketers, 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 1867.¹²

Some early settlers may have had ‘good relations’ with the Aboriginal people. There are many personal testimonies of settlers’ descendants recorded in newspaper stories, 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 ‘hostile’ and ‘warlike’ behaviour of the local Aboriginal people. Certainly, it would seem that the level of antagonism between

⁹ See, for example, Stephens 2014, vol. 3, p. 229.

¹⁰ Isobel Ellender 1994, ‘The Aboriginal Heritage of Eltham’, p. 15; Monument Australia website.

¹¹ Cannon 1983, *Historical Records of Victoria*, vol 2, p. xx), Sarah Hayes 2014, *Good Taste, Fashion, Luxury*, p. 10.

¹² Stephens 2014, vol 3, pp. 516, 518; *Australasian*, 2 February 1867, p. 12.

settlers and Aboriginal people increased considerably through the 1840s and that there was at certain times an underlying general uneasiness amongst the settlers at Heidelberg. 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'.¹³ 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.¹⁴ 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 Church in Heidelberg, but no explanation is given as to their use.¹⁵ Conflict between opposing tribes, which escalated as a result of colonisation, social upheaval and pressure on available resources, also had a detrimental impact. One Aboriginal man who had formerly been 'employed' by Joseph Hawdon of 'Banyule' was found to have been murdered in the Western District in 1841 by an Aboriginal group.¹⁶

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; many Aboriginal people were arrested and 'double ironed' in prison.¹⁷ Justice Walpole Willis of the Rosanna Estate, was another local figure, who in 1841 had declared that squatters were entitled to remove Aboriginal people from their pastoral runs as they had no right to 'trespass' on a pastoral leasehold.¹⁸

The survival of Indigenous cultural heritage

Aboriginal people co-existed with the new settlers to varying degrees for the first two decades of the Port Phillip settlement. Upstream of the settlement, Heidelberg district remained relatively isolated in the 1840s and early 1850s. The Yarra River remained a key travel route for Aboriginal people, 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.

Aboriginal people continued to live in the 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. William Thomas makes a number of references to going to Heidelberg in anticipation of finding some Aboriginals there as late as the mid-1860s.¹⁹ It would appear that there was an unofficial ration depot at Heidelberg, where blankets and medicines were supplied to a small Aboriginal camp in the early 1850s.²⁰

White settlers have also left various records that mention the camping places and other activities of Aboriginal people in the Banyule area.²¹ Mary Ann Baynes (née Farrell), who was a

¹³ Cannon 1991, pp. 60, 71.

¹⁴ Add ref.

¹⁵ *Argus*, 2 February 1935, p. 6; VBDM.

¹⁶ Add ref. Stephens 2014.

¹⁷ *Australasian Chronicle* (Sydney), 29 October 1840, p. 4; Cannon 1991, p. 32.

¹⁸ Thomas McCombie 1858, pp. 89-90; Henry Reynolds 1998, *This Whispering in Our Hearts*, pp. 58-60.

¹⁹ Stephens 2014, *The Journals of William Thomas*, vol.?, p. x

²⁰ Cannon 1991, p. 259. Note this Heidelberg has not been identified in the official records as a formal local protector's depot.

²¹ Stephens 2014, *The Journals of William Thomas*, vol. 1, 2.

girl when her family arrived in the area in the early 1850s, recalled seeing a corroboree on top of the hill that is now occupied by the Austin Hospital.²² 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 Aboriginal corroborees.²³

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.²⁴ Many local placenames taken from Aboriginal language – Banyule, Warringal, Keelbundoora, Nillumbik and Yallambie – resonate as but fragmentary reminders of the rich Aboriginal history of the area.

From the mid-nineteenth century, settlers no doubt encountered artefacts of Aboriginal culture, such as tools and weapons, 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, the young boy found a boomerang amongst the trees while playing in the bush at the back of Betty Roland's garden in Ivanhoe.²⁵ A collection of artefacts that may have been sourced from the local area was deposited with the Heidelberg Historical Society in the 1960s.²⁶

Aboriginal people 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 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 man Sir Doug Nicholls spoke at these events and cultural practises were displayed.

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²² *Advocate*, 2 March 1950, p. 12. [add 1932 ref]

²³ *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 29 June 1934, p. 1.

²⁴ Brendan Marshall 1999, 'The Aboriginal Heritage of Banyule' (public edition).

²⁵ *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 2 August 1950, p. 2.

²⁶ Item no. xx, HHS.

2. Settling on the land

Grazing and farming

Heidelberg – a pleasant stretch of hilly country in the crook of the Yarra and the Plenty Rivers – was settled as a country district. 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 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' — Warringal on the Yarra reminded him of Heidelberg (Germany) on the Necktar — 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 exclusive Melbourne Club.²⁷

The Heidelberg district was a particularly sought-after place 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 kept to the higher ground. Early buildings were rough dwellings that were built from local timber, or from local stone or handmade bricks. Shepherds who were employed to watch stock often lived in primitive one-room huts. In addition, the large landholders employed stockmen, dairymen, drivers, gardeners, chefs, and general labourers and servants. 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. The large Rosanna estate was let to tenants in the 1860s and 1870s.

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.²⁸ A number of the large estates, such as Banyule, leased rectangular or 'strip' fields to tenants, who grew crops on the upper land and used the lower river-flats for vegetable-growing.²⁹ 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 large 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

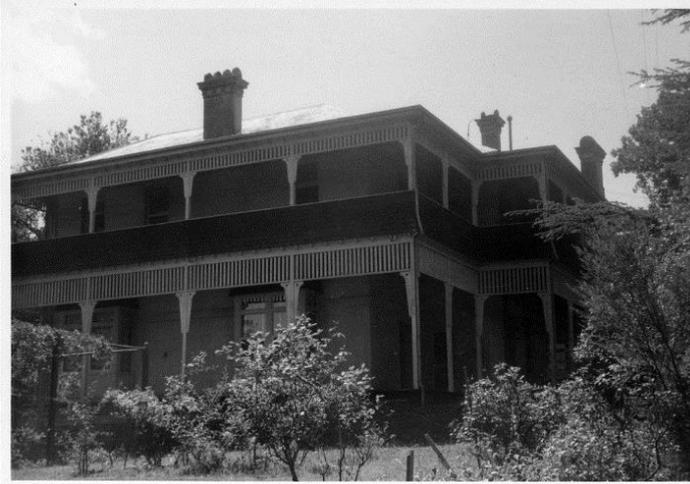
²⁷ The 'gentleman' status of these settlers is assessed in Paul de Serville, *Port Phillip Gentlemen*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

²⁸ *Leader*, 23 February 1867, p. 9.

²⁹ *Leader*, 27 May 1871, p. 6. See also see Context 2012, 'Warringal Parklands', p. xx

from potato and grain growing; by 1880, dairying was the dominant agricultural activity.³⁰ One of the largest dairy farms in the district was operated by Mr Trenoweth.³¹

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. This gave Heidelberg district considerable prestige and drew other keen agriculturists.



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

As pressure steadily grew for housing 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, farms slowly diminished. Some farms were still operating in Greensborough and Montmorency in the 1940s, such as C. Cramp's Risedale's Poultry Farm.³²

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 used as 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 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.³³ As well as offering suitable soil, a reliable water supply and well-drained fields, the locality was close enough to Melbourne to reach to 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'.³⁴

One of the most successful early orchardists was Robert Whatmaugh, who was established at 'Willis Vale' on the Plenty River at Greensborough in the 1840s. Whatmaugh was well known

³⁰ *Leader*, 14 January 1871, p. 6; William Senior 1880, *Travel and Trout in the Antipodes*, p. 29.

³¹ *Leader*, 20 September 1873, p. 7.

³² *Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser*, 10 May 1940, p. 6.

³³ *Leader*, 14 January 1871, p. 6.

³⁴ Whitworth 1870, p. 180.

for his extensive range of fruit trees.³⁵ On the Heidelberg flats, there were a number of fruit growers, among whom Mark Sill was prominent. D.C. McArthur had a prize-winning fruit orchard at Charterisville on the Yarra at Eaglemont.

Many Chinese immigrants who had been lured to Melbourne during the gold rush in 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.³⁶ The physical remains of a Chinese water wheel survived at the Yarra Flats reserve in East Ivanhoe into the 1990s.³⁷ Chinese market gardens were also operating on the Darebin Creek.³⁸

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 at Heidelberg. The system was designed and installed by the Italian-born architect Alessandro Martelli.³⁹

There remained a large quantity of fruit being grown in the district in the mid-1880s.⁴⁰ In the early twentieth century, a number of orchards continued to operate at Greensborough and Montmorency. Remnant fruit trees survive at Warringal Parklands.

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.⁴¹ One successful winemaker was the architect Charles Maplestone of ‘Ivanhoe Lodge’, who was a frequent prize-winner at the annual shows of the Victorian Agricultural Society during the 1860s.⁴² He also won prizes at the Paris and London Exhibitions in the 1860s. After his death, the property, which was in the vicinity of the Heidelberg Repat Hospital, was subdivided.⁴³ Other settlers dabbled in grape-growing, such as J.H. Brooke of ‘Mount Eagle’ who planted an acre of vines in the early 1860s.

Country estates

The district earned a reputation as a genteel farming community, with Heidelberg regarded with great affection as a quaint and delightful ‘English village’, not least on account of its English-style Church of England sited picturesquely over 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’.⁴⁴ 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’.⁴⁵

Several well-to-do settlers 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’.⁴⁶

³⁵ Aitken and Looker (eds) 2000, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, p. xx.

³⁶ Context 2012, ‘Warringal Parklands’.

³⁷ Rhonda Boyle 1991, *Melbourne’s Park and Gardens*, p. 91.

³⁸ Dulcie Godfrey (ed.) 1977, Register of Environmental Assets of the City of Heidelberg, p. xx.

³⁹ *Age*, 4 May 1863, p. 3; *Leader*, 29 January 1870, p. 6.

⁴⁰ *Australasian*, 21 March 1885, p. 14.

⁴¹ Context 2012, ‘Warringal Parklands’; Boyle 1991, p. 92.

⁴² There are a number of newspaper references to Maplestone winning prizes for wine through the 1860s.

⁴³ *Age*, 14 April 1992, p. 21.

⁴⁴ Henry Butler Stoney 1856, *Victoria: With a description of its principal cities*, p. 33.

⁴⁵ *Argus*, 26 March 1864, p. 6.

⁴⁶ Alexander Sutherland 1888, *Victoria and its Metropolis*, vol. II, p. xx.

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



Robert Hoddle, *Watercolour of Heidelberg 1847* (State Library of Victoria)



‘Amberley’ in Lower Plenty represents an early-twentieth century country estate (State Library of Victoria)

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3. Transport and communication

Early roads and bridges

The earliest routes from Heidelberg to Melbourne, in part following the course of the Yarra, would most likely have been well established Aboriginal tracks. It is also believed that the first public road to Heidelberg, formed in 1841-42, followed the approximate route of a traditional Aboriginal route. In the early 1840s, various places along this road were the location of traditional Aboriginal camping places.⁴⁷

Roads and bridges were of critical importance in progressing settlement and road boards were amongst the first local groups to be established. 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 desirability of the district for settlers made the need for a proper road from Melbourne all the more urgent. A road board was formed at Heidelberg in 1840 – the first such board in Victoria.

The Heidelberg Road, the first major road in the district and one of the first man-made roads in the Colony of Victoria, was completed in 1842.⁴⁸ It 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'.⁴⁹ The first road was less than ideal and it wasn't until 1846 with a newly constituted road trust committee that the road was improved with macadamisation. A toll-keeper, employed by the Heidelberg Road Trust for this major road, 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.⁵⁰ 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 1861.⁵¹

A coach service operated from Melbourne by the mid-1840s. By 1870, the coach service was provided by Greenways, who ran from Heidelberg to Melbourne as well as to other nearby towns, such as Templestowe.⁵²

Other transport routes emerged as settlement increased in the district. These were not surfaced roads, but 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.⁵³ The Eltham Road Board was also formed in 1858. The early roads encouraged further settlement and brought commercial opportunities for blacksmiths, carters and stables, and stores as well as hotels which provided a break in the journey and an opportunity to rest and water the horses. 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 the road at Darebin Creek, marks an earlier route of Heidelberg Road.⁵⁴ A

⁴⁷ There are many references in Stephens, *The Journals of William Thomas* (2014) to Aboriginal people camping on or near the Heidelberg Road, for example around Alphington.

⁴⁸ A.G.L. Shaw 1996, *A History of the Port Phillip District: Victoria before Separation*, p. 148.

⁴⁹ Port Phillip newspaper, 1842 (source: HHS).

⁵⁰ *Argus*, 29 March 1913, p. 7; Bernard Barrett 1979, *The Civic Frontier*, pp. 35-37.

⁵¹ Barrett 1979, p. 198.

⁵² Whitworth 1870, p. xx.

⁵³ *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1858; 1859.

⁵⁴ Context 2015, 'Sparks Reserve', report prepared for City of Banyule.

number of masonry bridges were erected over the Yarra and the Plenty Rivers – at Heidelberg, 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 of roadworks benefitted from assistance from the colonial government. The cutting through Mount Eagle to form the (Lower) Heidelberg Road, for example, a major undertaking, was carried out in the early 1860s with government aid.⁵⁵

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.⁵⁶

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 given a break. Local road boards, and later the local councils, provided horse troughs at useful locations in the towns, generally outside hotels, and these were still in use in the 1940s. One horse trough remained in Heidelberg in the late 1970s, but has probably since been discarded.⁵⁷

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 was hampered by the river course and hills. 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. Eventually a railway was built between Collingwood and Heidelberg and this was opened in 1901, the year of Federation. The railway line was electrified in 1921.⁵⁸

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.⁵⁹ Montmorency Station was opened in 1923 which triggered development in the new suburb.⁶⁰ The railway continued to Greensborough in the 1920s. With the increased population and rail traffic, there was also duplication of the line carried out in the 1920s.

Bus network

There was a proposal to introduce trams to Heidelberg from at least the 1920s but this failed to eventuate, probably owing to the downturn in the economy in 1929. For this fast-growing suburban corridor of Melbourne, where the land was considerably hilly and was characterised by winding roads, electric trams were not practical. In the late 1930s the Heidelberg City Council lobbied the Government to have its local area declared a tramways bus area.⁶¹ Development of a bus route was probably delayed during World War II owing to austerity measures in manufacturing, but after the war buses were introduced. These were manufactured at the 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.

⁵⁵ *Argus*, 23 August 1862, p. 7.

⁵⁶ *Argus*, 28 June 1881, p. 6.

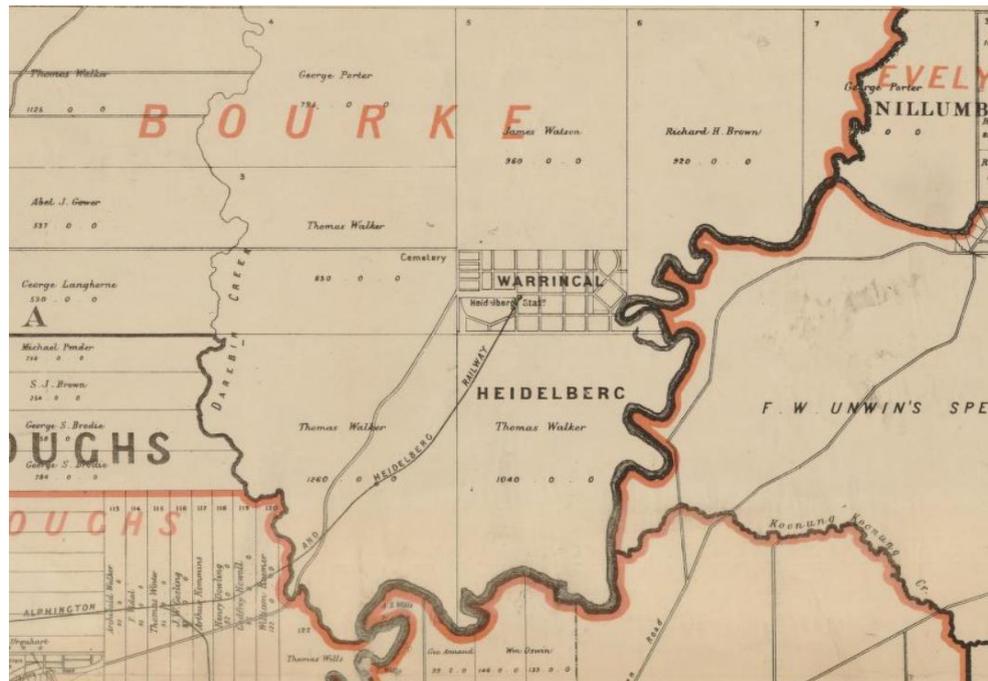
⁵⁷ Godfrey 1977.

⁵⁸ Boldrewood 1884, *Old Melbourne Memories*, p. 165.

⁵⁹ *Argus*, 26 August 1907, p. 5.

⁶⁰ *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 24 August 1923, p. 4.

⁶¹ *Age*, 2 July 1937, p. 13.



Map showing main road and railway line, 1880s (source: State Library of Victoria)

The era of the motor car

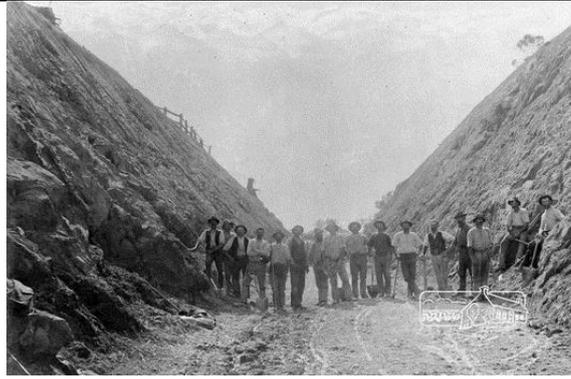
A new focus on motor cars opened the district up more easily to visitors and commuters. After a long period of lobbying, a scenic road along the Yarra River at Ivanhoe (known as ‘The Boulevard’) was completed by the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works in 1916.⁶² Supervised by engineer Carlo Catani, this was part of wider efforts to beautify the course of the Yarra River, which followed the beautification of the Yarra in the central city with the creation of Alexandra Avenue. The new road was initially envisaged as a much longer tourist drive, to commence at Heidelberg and continue through to Yarra Glen, but only a small section of the original plan was implemented. Additional work was carried out on this road in the 1930s using sustenance (‘susso’) labour.

The Chandler Highway Bridge that crossed the Yarra at Kew was adapted for road traffic in c.1920s, following the closure of the short-lived Outer Circle railway, and this provided additional road connection from Kew into Alphington and Heidelberg.

The widespread ownership of the motor car by the 1950s meant that the proximity of 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.⁶³

⁶² *Leader*, 20 February 1915, p. 39; *Weekly Times*, 23 September 1916, p. 30.

⁶³ Trevor Smith, pers. com., April 2018.



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



*Hitching post, Greensborough (courtesy Greensborough
Historical Society)*

4. Developing industries

Quarrying

Stone was the mainstay of building works and was plentiful in the district. Volcanic activity had left deposits of basalt, and there was also sandstone in the river valley. From the 1850s, the Heidelberg Council favoured basalt (or bluestone) for its public buildings, drainage works and bridge and culvert construction, and generally relied on council quarries to supply the stone. 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 1909.⁶⁴

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.⁶⁵

The site for this may have been near the corner of Shaw Street and Livingstone Street in Heidelberg where there were several quarries operating in 1915.⁶⁶ There was still a council quarry in operation in Heidelberg in 1954. Reid's Lightweight Aggregate Quarry was operating in Greensborough in the 1950s.⁶⁷

Brickworks

A number of early colonial buildings in the study area were constructed from hand-made bricks – for example 'Willis Vale' on the Plenty River at Greensborough. However there were few if any commercial brickworks established in the local area. There were brickworks operating 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 River. The lack of brickworks partly related to the possible lack of suitable clay, but also to the local council's discouragement in the nineteenth and early twentieth century of factories and brickworks, which were then considered a 'nuisance'. 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.⁶⁸

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 near St John's Anglican Church in Heidelberg in the 1850s, but with little success.⁶⁹ There was considerable gold-mining activity in neighbouring district of Warrandyte (the Andersons Creek Diggings) and further north on the Plenty River in the 1850s. Greensborough was used as a travel stop for gold miners heading to gold fields 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. There was also quartz-mining activity at Greensborough.⁷⁰

Hard times often prompted a rush of hopeful prospectors. A small amount of mining carried out in the Greensborough district along the Plenty River in the 1890s and early 1900s.⁷¹ 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, there

⁶⁴ *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1876; also 1909.

⁶⁵ *Australasian*, 31 July 1886, p. 29.

⁶⁶ MMBW Detail Plan No. 2463, Municipality of Heidelberg, 1915 (source: SLV).

⁶⁷ Museum Victoria – Collections.

⁶⁸ Pottery factory to manufacture Wunderlich tiles discouraged; *Heidelberg News and Greensborough and Diamond Creek Chronicle*, 31 October 1914.

⁶⁹ Add ref.

⁷⁰ *Herald*, 1 September 1863, p. 2.

⁷¹ *Australian Handbook* 1903, quoted in Victorian Places website.

could be seen, from Greensborough to Panton Hill and St Andrews, small clusters of canvas tents where gold miners had set up camp.⁷²

Timber-cutting

With timber the major fuel for domestic use, wood carters were an important service for 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.

Timber in Melbourne had become scarce by the 1850s, and many 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.⁷³ Wood cutters pushed further north and east into the hills outside Melbourne in search of timber. Timber cutters and timber carters based in Greensborough in the early decades of the twentieth century continued to bring timber to Melbourne.

Charles Rouch began working as 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 importers of timber in Victoria.⁷⁴ From his premises on Lower Heidelberg Road, Tom Daniher dominated the local timber and hardware trade from the 1950s.

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.⁷⁵ 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.⁷⁶

The first 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 a novel approach at the time as co-operative dairy factories didn't become established in Victoria until the late 1880s.⁷⁷

The Heidelberg Gasworks, established in 1887, was a physically dominating complex on the Yarra riverbank with two enormous gasometers. The large site occupied land between Banksia Street and Yarra Street. It provided employment for a large number of men and operated until the late 1950s.⁷⁸

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. Small concerns like dairies and blacksmiths foundries, however, operated in the main town centres.

⁷² *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 20 February 1931, p. 8.

⁷³ *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1850s.

⁷⁴ *Argus*, 12 September 1934, p. 6.

⁷⁵ *Courier* (Hobart), 14 June 1845, p. 4. Note that it had been abandoned by the 1880s.

⁷⁶ Whitworth 1870, *The Victorian Gazetteer*, p. 411; Dingle and Doyle 2003, *Yan Yean*, p. 13.

⁷⁷ *Leader*, 14 January 1871, p. 6; Garden 1972, opposite pp. 121-22.

⁷⁸ 'The Gasworks, Heidelberg', Wikinorthia.net.au

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.⁷⁹ A light industrial area was also designated on 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, 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.⁸⁰



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

Further references:

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

⁷⁹ Advertisement for the Briar Hill Timber & Trading Co. Pty Ltd, c.1956, from Eltham Historical Society, online resources.

⁸⁰ The Peugeot Car Club in Melbourne has advised that they have a photo of the factory in West Heidelberg.

5. Suburban development

Residential development

Heidelberg, established as a farming district in the 1840s, retained a strong rural identity through the nineteenth century. The small urban centre, which was laid out on a plan prepared in Sydney in 1840,⁸¹ remained a ‘village’ through the 1860s to the 1880s. Heidelberg was consistently described as a quiet country village. To the north, Greensborough was even more sparsely settled, to the extent that there was even a bushranger scare in the district in the 1860s, with Robert Burke holding up settlers in their homes and travellers on the road.⁸²



'The Village of Warringal', plan prepared in Sydney in 1840 (Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

Whilst the suburbs to the east of Melbourne were developing in the 1880s, Heidelberg and its neighbouring localities didn't follow the typical transformation common to other Melbourne localities that led to a tight grid of single detached houses on uniform blocks. There were visions during the boom years of the 1880s of Heidelberg leaving behind its rural identity and becoming more suburban; there were a number of speculative residential developments proposed and land was subdivided for this purpose in Heidelberg and Ivanhoe. But ultimately extensive development failed to come to fruition until the early 1900s, largely due to the failure of an efficient rail link to Melbourne in the 1880s. Without a reliable transport link to Melbourne, demand for housing in the area stagnated. Arguably, it was this slow pace of growth that enabled Heidelberg and the neighbouring localities to retain and ultimately preserve elements of its rural character.

There were few lavish mansion residences built in Heidelberg and Ivanhoe of the kind erected in other comparable middle-class suburbs of Melbourne (such as Kew and Hawthorn) during

⁸¹ *New South Wales Government Gazette*, 1840.

⁸² *Trove*, 1866

the boom years of the 1880s. 'Ravenswood' was a notable exception, and there were a handful of grand Victorian homes in Ivanhoe, such as 'Sherwood'.⁸³



'Ravenswood', Ivanhoe (source: Heidelberg Historical Society ref. P 3750/1)

The completion of a 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. This was particularly evident in Ivanhoe and Eaglemont where the natural landscape inspired more organic street layouts, notably in Walter Burley Griffin's bold design for the 'Glenard' and 'Mont Eagle' estates in c.1912. 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 course of the waterways and the topography to determine street formats.

There was a significant suburban expansion in Melbourne generally in the 1920s, due to population growth and economic growth with industry; the war years had stalled development markedly but by 1920 building and construction had been invigorated. 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 1933.⁸⁴ 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'.⁸⁵ 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 areas of the City of Heidelberg were confined to the wealthy middle class and were sought-after residential areas. Ivanhoe in 1928 was dubbed the 'Queen of the Melbourne Suburbs'.⁸⁶

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 the rise of the affordable single-storey timber bungalow, which was built extensively through Melbourne's middle suburbs under the State Savings Bank of Victoria 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 book. The State Saving Bank's architect, W. Burrige Leith provided a number of styles that followed the design

⁸³ Butler 1985, p. xx.

⁸⁴ Allom Lovell 1999, 'Banyule Heritage Study: Building Citations A-K', p. 28.

⁸⁵ trove, 1923.

⁸⁶ *Herald*, 5 December 1928, p. 12

principals of the Californian Bungalow. 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 timber bungalows in an effort to ensure 'quality' constructions, and this caused a degree of consternation amongst some who saw this as unjust.⁸⁷ The typical State Bank house had a front and back 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 stylising 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 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 Heidelberg municipality. The first lot 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 in the early 1920s on a site on Upper Heidelberg Road.

While Heidelberg was well established, the country to the north of Heidelberg was largely open paddocks and sparsely settled. But 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 electric train. Although without a connection to water, sewerage and gas, house blocks were advertised for sale and many took up the chance to acquire an affordable block in the soon to be new suburbia. 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. Deane (real estate agents) established an office close to the railway station at Montmorency to increase their visibility to rail commuters.⁸⁸

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 residential subdivision advertised the Yan Yean water supply as a drawcard of the new area.⁸⁹ 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.⁹⁰

While many areas within the municipality of Banyule were becoming part of suburban Melbourne by the 1920s there were still large areas that remained farmland and were sparsely settled. Until the mid-twentieth century these outlying areas considered to be considered to be 'the country'.

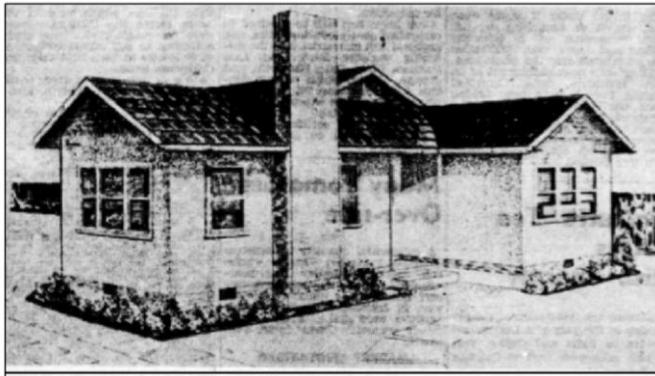
⁸⁷ Butler 1985, p. 31.

⁸⁸ Trove, 1923.

⁸⁹ 'Greensborough Township Estate' (plan), 1909 (State Library of Victoria).

⁹⁰ (Railway station estate c 190-? SLV).

In the immediate years after World War II, there was a critical shortage of housing. Home-building had stagnated during the war years due to wartime austerity measures and a lack of building materials. Following World War II there was a large influx of immigrants to Melbourne, which combined with the return of thousands of soldiers from military service and the resultant spike in marriage rates and new babies, led to a serious housing crisis. The number of households far exceeded the number of available homes.⁹¹ In response, the Victorian Government established emergency camps, such as Camp Pell at Royal Park, and later at the Watsonia Army Barracks. At the same time, the slum abolitionists were keen to move people out of the 'slum' areas of Melbourne, and to this end the Housing Commission of Victoria (HCV) planned for a large housing estate to be built at West Heidelberg. 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.⁹² The houses were built as 'pre-fab' concrete, and were assembled at what is now the Holmesglen College of TAFE. 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 finished with, they too were co-opted by the HCV for use as public housing.



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

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.⁹³ There was also a postwar shift to a more economical and efficient smaller house, with the Small Homes Service run as a regular newspaper column in the *Age* by prominent architect Robin Boyd. The high demand for new homes was a lucrative situation for businessman Sol Green and the Lord Mayor's Food for Britain campaign who organised to raffle two newly built modern homes in 1946: one in Brighton and one in Rosanna. Raffle ticket holders were restricted to war widows. The charity house in Bellevue Avenue, Rosanna (now demolished), described as a 'gothic villa', was designed by notable architect Marcus Barlow.⁹⁴

Postwar prosperity shaped by the 'long boom' of 1945-1971 enabled dramatic 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.⁹⁵ New land for housing was opened up in the then outer-ring suburbs of Melbourne, including Rosanna, Montmorency and Lower Plenty, and these areas were slowly transformed from orchards and paddocks into suburbia. Infrastructure was

⁹¹ Howe 1991.

⁹² Renate Howe 1999, *New Houses for Old*, p. xx.

⁹³ Trove, 1947.

⁹⁴ *Argus*, 20 August 1946, p. 3; *Argus*, 11 October 1946, p. 2;

⁹⁵ See Kate Darian-Smith (ed.), *Memory and History in 20th-Century Australia*, p. xx.

slow to keep up with new residential development, with most new home-buyers faced with a block with no services connected for some years.

The new 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. Montmorency in the 1930s and 1940s, Greensborough 'Greenhills' area in the 1920s-1960s.

In the postwar period, many outer suburban areas were popular for project homes. Some areas of Banyule, notable Lower Plenty, which had formerly been taken up by farms and orchards, were developed for larger, more luxurious homes set on large blocks. Commercial builder/developers included Jennings as well; as Siebel, and Morris and Lucas.

Houses built on the urban fringe, attracting those with affordability in mind as well as those seeking a retreat from the congestion and absence of nature in the built up urban metropolis. The urge to get away from the city saw many buying up blocks in the 1940s and 1950s.

Commercial development

Basic needs were provided at local stores from the period of early settlement. Villages usually included a hotel, a general store, and a blacksmith. Suburban development from the early 1900s attracted a larger range of shops, and this development was boosted by the arrival of the railway. The Burgundy Street shopping centre in Heidelberg and the Ivanhoe shopping centre on Heidelberg Road grew extensively through the early twentieth centuries.

In the 1930s, shops were provided in some housing estates, notably in those developed by A.V. Jennings in 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 Greensborough. In the 1970s and 1980s large drive-in shopping centres replaced some areas of shopping strips.

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 1878.⁹⁶

Extensive suburban expansion in the 1920s, triggered by the rail connection and the general demand for housing, prompted the development of a number of new state schools: for example at Montmorency in 1923; Briar Hill in 1927, Rosanna in 1940. The postwar population growth triggered the need for a number of new schools, for example at West Rosanna, West Heidelberg, and Greenhills. State high schools were erected in the postwar era – including at West Heidelberg and Banyule.

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

⁹⁶ Argus, 30 April 1878, p. 6.

offered a service that was unavailable elsewhere and was the first community-based adult education service in Victoria.⁹⁷



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

Water supply, sewerage and drainage

The Yarra River and Plenty River were originally used as a water supply by the early settlers, who would transport barrels of water to their properties. Water from the rivers was also used for irrigation and watering stock.

Heidelberg and Ivanhoe were connected to the Yan Yean water supply in the early 1900s, but the more outlying areas like Montmorency, Greensborough and Watsonia took longer to be connected. In the 1890s, the construction of the Watts River (Maroondah) weir tapped into a large supply of water upstream in the Yarra catchment. This was conveyed by open aqueduct from Healesville to South Morang and traversed the country near Greensborough. As a result, settlers in Greensborough could elect to create their own connection to the Maroondah water supply.⁹⁸ The possibility of a connection to the Maroondah Aqueduct, which was considered superior to the Yan Yean water supply, was an incentive used to entice settlers to the area from the 1890s and for decades following.⁹⁹

Sewerage was not connected until the early 1900s, following the establishment of the MMBW which 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.¹⁰⁰ Greensborough was eventually sewered in the c.1960s-70s.

As Heidelberg was further developed in the late-nineteenth century, drainage problems were ongoing. The steep inclines in Heidelberg caused waste from the higher ground to fall and pool on the lower ground. Waste from the Hospital for Incurables, which was situated on a hill, ended up in a drainage channel that had an outlet in the Yarra River. This posed a problem for dairy cattle downstream that were drinking contaminated water, which was then thought to be the cause of illness in those drinking the milk from those cattle.¹⁰¹ In the 1890s a scheme

⁹⁷ 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>.

⁹⁸ Dingle and Rasmussen 1991, *Vital Connections*, p. xx.

⁹⁹ See for example, refs from trove from the 1920s for Greensborough and Rosanna.

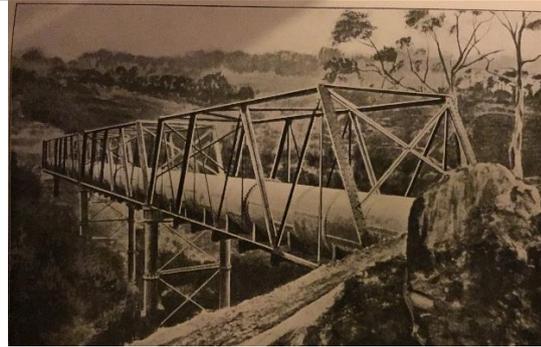
¹⁰⁰ Museum Victoria.

¹⁰¹ *Age*, 13 August 1897, p. 3.

was devised to drain the village of Heidelberg, and this involved the construction of a bluestone drainage channel in the Heidelberg Park.¹⁰²



*Bridge over the Salt Creek, Heidelberg Park
(Context 2018)*



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

Further references:

- Davison, Graeme 1978. *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*. Melbourne University Press, Carlton.
- O’Callaghan, Judith and Charles Pickett 2013. *Designer Suburbs: Architects and affordable homes in Australia*. NewSouth Publishing, Sydney.

¹⁰² *Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 15 April 1898, p. 3.

6. Community and cultural life

Church life

Local churches, like local schools, were the mainstay of early community life. Their construction usually came about at the behest and agitation of a community group seeking to put down roots for the future. Various denominations were established in the Heidelberg area in the 1850s. The Anglican Church of St John's was established in Heidelberg in the 1840s – the town plan of 1840 took this existing site into account. The Presbyterians built their first church at Heidelberg around 1850 and a new church in 1900/1908¹⁰³ (this was replaced again in 1927). Beyond Heidelberg, new churches appeared as settlements grew large enough to sustain their own building. An Anglican church was erected in Greensborough in 1870. A Presbyterian church at Ivanhoe was built in 1908, with a replacement church erected in 1927.

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 church–school of St Faith's in Montmorency was established in the early 1920s.



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

The first Catholic Church (and school) was a rudimentary timber structure known as St Monica's, which was erected in 1852 on a site set aside in 1850.¹⁰⁴ This was replaced in 1859 with a new bluestone Gothic Revival church building designed by the eminent Melbourne architect William Wardell. In 1905 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).¹⁰⁵ 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 significantly in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The Catholic Church in Melbourne (and across Victoria) underwent a great expansion in terms of school buildings from the period after World War I under the strong and energetic leadership of the Catholic Archbishop, Dr Daniel Mannix. Catholics gained numerical strength

¹⁰³ *Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 14 December 1900, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1850; *Tribune*, 23 May 1914, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ *Advocate*, 2 March 1950, p. 12.

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. The Catholic hospital, The Mercy, moved from East Melbourne to Heidelberg in the 1990s.

There was considerable expansion by the Catholic Church in Melbourne in the period from the 1920s to the 1960s under the Archbishop, Dr Daniel Mannix. 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.



Catholic seminarians at Loyola College in the 1950s, working in the vegetable garden (courtesy Greensborough Historical Society)

The expansion of the Catholic Church was particularly dramatic in the suburbs of Banyule, where in addition to the regular parish churches and schools these additional Catholic institutions were established: the Jesuits' seminary Loyola College, which was built in the 1930s, Odyssey House seminary which was completed in 1952; the Christian Brothers' Training College was established at 'Amberley', in Lower Plenty; the Sisters of Mercy Convent, and the novitiate at Rosanna was opened in 1930¹⁰⁶. 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 for such a large number of Catholic institutions to be established in one Melbourne municipality, and this development partly reflects the relative affordability of large areas of land but also suggests a concentration of Catholic endeavours in the northern suburbs of Melbourne.



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)

¹⁰⁶ *Advocate*, 30 October 1930, p. 7.

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 Heidelberg in xx (later 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.¹⁰⁷ A library at Ivanhoe was erected in the 1970s to a notable Modernist design. (Heritage Alliance, postwar study)

Theatres and cinemas also provided community with meeting places. In 1944: St Johns 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, supporting 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 and progress associations. There has been strong interest in the arts, with a number of long-term arts groups operating in Banyule, including a literary group that has operated from the 1920s, the Heidelberg Choral Society (est. 1920), Heidelberg Symphony Orchestra (over 40 years old) and the Heidelberg Theatre Company (est. 1952). Historical societies are also strong in Banyule, with the Heidelberg Historical Society established in the 1960s, as well as the Greensborough Historical Society and the Eltham Historical Society. There are also a large number of community action groups, largely concerned with conservation and many of these are long established.

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 labouring and shopkeepers were also predominantly Protestant with Irish Catholics making up the bulk of the labouring class. The first substantial Catholic landowner in the district was Thomas Farrell.¹⁰⁸ 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.¹⁰⁹

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, such as the provision of a carport under the house. Typically, these

¹⁰⁷ Baragwanath, Pam. If these walls could speak)

¹⁰⁸ trove 1950, 1948.

¹⁰⁹ Heidelberg Historical Society, pers. com., April 2018.

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.

Nino Borsari, Olympic cyclist and immigrant to Melbourne, built a grand home in 1967-68 on the Boulevard in Ivanhoe. Whilst a Modernist design, it 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 house served as an informal meeting place for the local Italian community.¹¹⁰



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



House, Rosanna (Context 2018)



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 affordable.

¹¹⁰ Steve Barlow, Heidelberg Historical Society, pers. com., April 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 area was used for hunting or coursing into the early 1900s – this a popular pastime of Melbourne’s aspiring landed class who would gather before the hunt at the Old England Hotel on the Heidelberg Road.¹¹¹

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’.¹¹² Easily accessible by train from 1901, many came to the district from Melbourne for picnics and rambles in the bush. Factory workers from Melbourne, including staff 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.¹¹³

Along the Yarra bank in Heidelberg from the late nineteenth century there were many recreational opportunities, including tea rooms and boats for hire.¹¹⁴ Catherine Durham kept a tea gardens on the Yarra River at Eaglemont in 1880.¹¹⁵ 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.¹¹⁶ 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, which was formed in 1926, is possibly the longest running angling club in Victoria.¹¹⁷



Greensborough and District Angling Club (source: Yallambie blog at Wordpress)

¹¹¹ See for example, *Leader*, 26 July 1902, p. 16.

¹¹² *Weekly Times*, 21 December 1901.

¹¹³ *Williamstown Chronicle*, 23 December 1911, p. 2; *Emerald Hill Record*, 8 September 1945, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ Context 2012, ‘Warringal Parkland’, p. xx.

¹¹⁵ *Argus*, 2 April 1880, p. 7.

¹¹⁶ *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 26 March 1926, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ Greensborough and District Angling Club: <https://yallambie.wordpress.com/tag/plenty-river-fishing/>; *Hurstbridge Advertiser*, 3 December 1926, p. 2.

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 fibro model of a horse mounted on top of the shop.

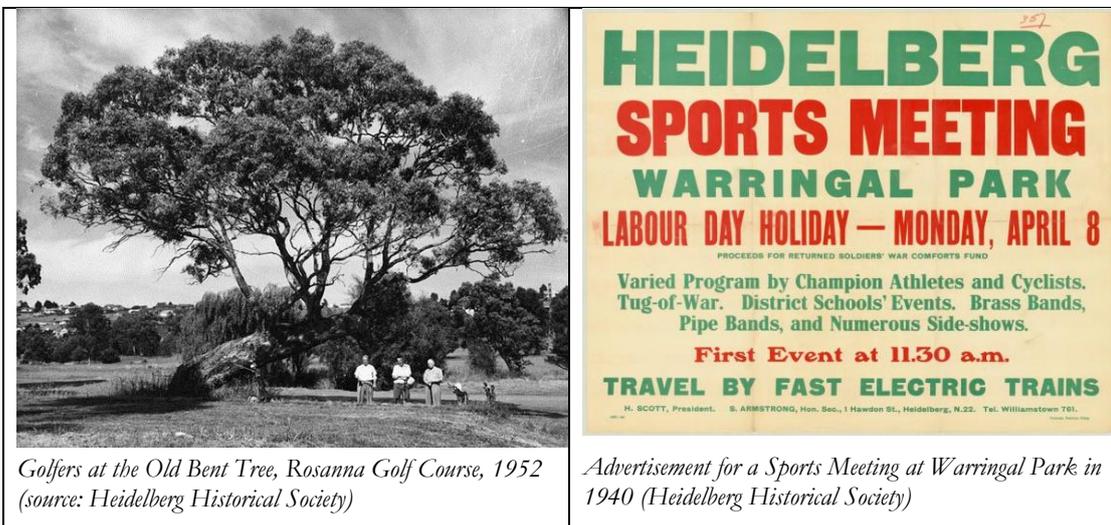
Sport

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 at least the 1850s. In 1861 the local sportsman Tom Wills organised an Aboriginal cricket team from his home in Heidelberg. The team played at the Heidelberg cricket ground in 1867.¹¹⁸

Football clubs were established from the late nineteenth century.

Local sports clubs were usually allocated space at the local public park for facilities. The recreation reserves were endowed with tennis courts, bowling clubs and croquet lawns.

Golf became a popular activity in the early 1900s, with golf courses laid out on the large areas of river-fronting public land. The Rosanna golf course was described in the 1920s as a 'neglected Eden'. Club houses were often former homesteads, as at Ivanhoe.



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

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

Holidays and tourism

Heidelberg was long established 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. 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.¹¹⁹ Once Heidelberg had the railway connection established 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 take home armfuls of flowers.¹²⁰

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 that was not too distant from Melbourne. Greensborough advertised in the

¹¹⁸ *Australasian*, 2 February 1867, p. 12.

¹¹⁹ Withers & Sons, *Beautiful Melbourne, Motor Char-a-banc Trips, 1911–1914*.

¹²⁰ *Leader*, 10 January 1914, p. 58.

early 1900s as offering land for ‘weekend retreats’, with tea rooms and guesthouses such as ‘The Grandview’ on offer.¹²¹ By the 1930s the novelty of ‘camping out’ was also popular.¹²²

<p style="text-align: center;">Greensborough Hotel</p> <p style="text-align: center;">KINGLAKE ROAD . . . GREENSBOROUGH</p> <p>'PHONE : G'BORO 32</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">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 style="text-align: center;">TARIFF: MODERATE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">J. HOLOHAN - - - - - PROPRIETOR</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GRANDVIEW : GREENSBOROUGH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IN THE COUNTRY - CLOSE TO THE CITY</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Comfortable accommodation . . . Excellent Table Morning and Afternoon Teas . . . Supper Breakfast Trays . . . Poultry . . . Cream</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BILLIARDS, TENNIS, RIDING SCHOOL ADJACENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MODERATE TARIFF</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mrs. E. DRAKEFORD Phone: GREENSBOROUGH 195</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>

¹²¹ trove 1900s; for example, Lobbs Tea Rooms; Grandview guesthouse, Greensborough.

¹²² *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 they were 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 1872.¹²³ Part of the Heidelberg Park was originally intended, or at least referred to, as a botanic gardens

Outside of Heidelberg 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. Land for Ivanhoe Park was acquired in 1911 and a site for Greensborough Park was purchased in 1917.¹²⁴ Sparks Reserve in Ivanhoe was not reserved until the c1920s. Other local public parks and gardens were established at Rosanna, Watsonia, Montmorency and Eaglemont.

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.¹²⁵

Hospital 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) 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 offered to provide a layout for the site at Heidelberg in 1881,¹²⁶ which followed closely after his plans for the hospital gardens at Stawell and Horsham.

There was significant landscaping carried out at the Heidelberg Repat from the 1940s onwards.

Street trees

Banyule has a rich collection of significant street tree plantings. Some of the earliest street trees were planted by Peter Fanning for the Shire of Heidelberg in 1881.¹²⁷

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 layout in 1912.

There are a range of tree species 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; Grandview Grove (palms?); Invermay Grove (Lemon-scented Gums); and Darvall Road – Eucalypts.¹²⁸

¹²³ Boyle 1991, p. 92; *Victorian Government Gazette*, 1872; 1853 gazettal.

¹²⁴ [add ref for 1911]; *Heidelberg News & Greensborough, Eltham and Diamond Creek Chronicle*, 2 xx 1917.

¹²⁵ Rosie Bray, 'The Willinda Park Story'.

¹²⁶ *Argus*, 6 October 1881, p. 10.

¹²⁷ Trove 1881.

¹²⁸ see Warringal Conservation Society booklet.

1937 additional street tree planting relied on community role, watering was a community effort.¹²⁹

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 land was reserved. 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 (c.1916) set a high bar for the municipality in terms of developing a close connection between houses and their settings 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 exponential growth, there remained a strong adherence to principals of tree retention and provision of public open space where possible. 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 built in a manner that was in close affinity with the environment, there are often no footpaths or front fences. Bush gardens flow between 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 an element of continuation with the celebrated 'rustic' character of Heidelberg municipality in the nineteenth century that probably owed more to economic forces than to conscious planning.

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¹²⁹ [trove 1937]

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 at 'Banyule' had established his own rifle range 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 there was some early military training in the area in the early 1900s.¹³⁰

The enthusiasm for military training was boosted with the establishment of the Citizens' Military Forces 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. The open bushland of the Heidelberg district offered an ideal setting for military drills. A large military training camp for the CMF was held over Easter 1913 at a site north of Heidelberg, near Mont Park (trove 1912). 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 carrying out a military manoeuvre in 1913 near the Maroondah Aqueduct.¹³¹

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 one used in 1912. Here, a large canteen and huts were erected as well as a miniature rifle range at Heidelberg in 1916.¹³²

The commencement of World War I saw the rallying of women as well as men. Through the work of the Red Cross, women of all ages were occupied with knitting socks, sourcing provisions for soldiers on active service, and fund-raising. Local branches of the Red Cross were formed in many communities, including at Ivanhoe and Heidelberg.



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

¹³⁰ trove 1900; 1908.

¹³¹ *Herald*, 26 March 1913, p. 5.

¹³² AWM, trove, Cummins 1986, *Heidelberg Since 1836*, p. xx.

Despite the pattern of replacing German placenames with more British names across many towns and suburbs of Australia during World War I, there was little support for a name change for Heidelberg – a name that local residents felt had important historical associations with the beginnings of settlement in the area.¹³³ In the new residential subdivisions of the 1920s, street names were selected to honour 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.¹³⁴ Known as the Watsonia Military Camp, this complex was heavily utilised during the Second World War and included the provision of an enlistment depot.

The Watsonia Army Camp was further developed in the 1950s and 1960s, during the Cold War period, and into the 1980s. Buildings erected included barracks, a signals centre, and a communications centre. 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.

On returning home to civilian life, returned soldiers formed local RSL clubs, which offered support and camaraderie. Clubs were formed at Heidelberg, Ivanhoe and Greensborough, and later at Montmorency. Among other things, RSL groups raised funds to establish club rooms and rest homes. A returned soldiers' hall was opened in Banksia Street, Heidelberg in 1934.¹³⁵ 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.¹³⁶ The RSL clubs also lobbied for War Service Homes to be built in local areas. In 1936 a public trust fund was established to manage the building of war service homes in the Heidelberg district.¹³⁷ 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.

By 1941 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 1941, at a site known as Spira's Paddock. 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.¹³⁸ The home for convalescent soldiers at Heidelberg was later known as the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, and known locally as 'the Repat'. It was taken over by the Army in c.1942.

¹³³ *Heidelberg News and Greensborough and Diamond Creek Chronicle*, 19 September 1914.

¹³⁴ Yallambie blog.

¹³⁵ *Argus*, 29 October 1934, p. 16.

¹³⁶ Allom Lovel 1999, vol 1, p. 72.

¹³⁷ [trove 1936]

¹³⁸ *Age*, 1941.

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.¹³⁹ 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.

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.

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¹³⁹ trove, 1905.

10. An artistic landscape

Local artists

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. It 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’.¹⁴⁰ In the 1860s and 1870s, some of the colony’s leading artists 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 echoed the way that 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

In the late 1880s, a new approach to painting the Australian landscape emerged 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 true colour and lights 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, part of the Charterisville estate, which was close to the river, and offered views of the river and the distant hills. The site was a tangled mass of unkempt garden, with fruit trees and a ruined fountain, and provided an ideal 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 to thrive.

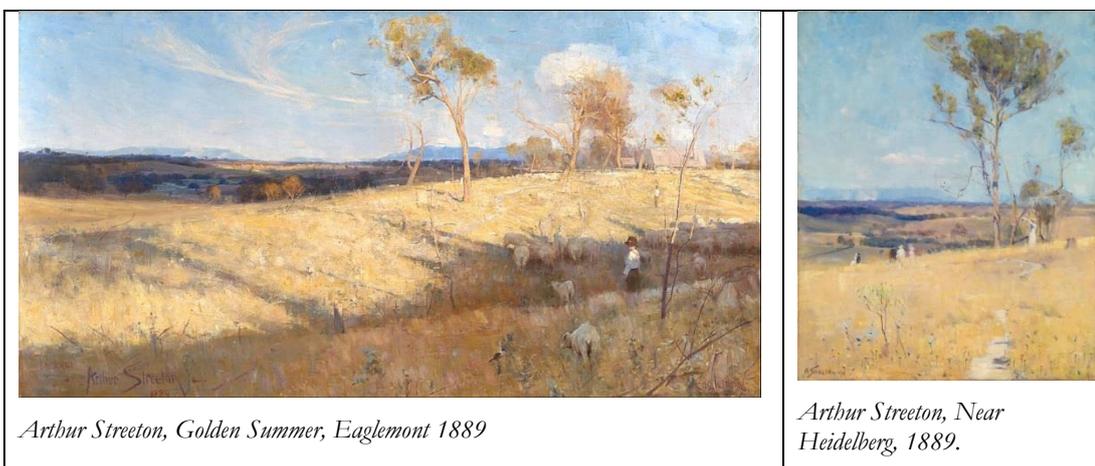
Led by Arthur Streeton, this group of impressionists etched the name of Heidelberg on the national stage and the national psyche through what became known as the ‘Heidelberg School’ of art. This group had come into prominence with the famous ‘9 x 5’ exhibition in Adelaide in 1887, where they exhibited small landscapes on cigar box lids to mixed reviews, but went on to critical acclaim. Whilst the subject matter was not exclusively of the Heidelberg district, the

¹⁴⁰ *Australasian*, 16 April 1870, p. 9.

artists congregated at Eaglemont and produced some of their best work here. Streeton's works painted at Eaglemont include 'Golden Summer, Eaglemont' and 'Near Heidelberg', and 'Still Slides the Stream', all in 1889.

Walter Withers established a second artists' camp at Heidelberg when he took up the lease for house owned by Charles Davies, who was brother-in-law of the artist David Davies. Those artists who frequented the 'camp' at Eaglemont included Frederick McCubbin, John Longstaff, E. Phillips Fox and Davies. There were other too who joined the group, drawn by the 'art atmosphere and the camaraderie of the "Camp".¹⁴¹ 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. Significant works produced during this second period included Walter Withers 'Moon Rise' and E Phillips Fox 'Tranquil Waters'.

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 Conder and Tom Roberts (at Eaglemont), and Walter Withers (at Heidelberg and Eltham). This new representation of the Australian bush, achieved at the Eaglemont artists' camp, was critical to the rise in nationalism in the 1890s and represented, along with the literature of the *Bulletin* School of writers, the emergence of a new romantic nationalism, which 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 their work.



Arthur Streeton, *Golden Summer, Eaglemont 1889*

Arthur Streeton, *Near Heidelberg, 1889.*

Artists, architects and radicals

In the early 1900s, other artists continued to be drawn to the area, including Napier and Christian Waller, and William Blamire Young. Now on the fringe of suburbia, but easily accessible by rail, commuters from Melbourne encountered at Heidelberg and Eaglemont and country around Greensborough, what was considered the essence of the Australian bush. Whilst much of the new suburban area was broadly conservative, a community of radical thinkers emerged in Heidelberg and 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, who included Tom Walsh, who lived for a time with the British feminist Adela Pankhurst on Heidelberg Road. Walter Burley and Margaret Mahony Griffins made a home for a time in Ivanhoe and had a wide circle of artistic friends, including the MacGeorges of Fairy Hills, for whom they would often design houses. An influential circle of artists was based at Heide, across the river at Bulleen; this group included John and Sunday

¹⁴¹ Rob W. Harvie, Letter to the Editor, *Herald*, 12 August 1919, p. 10.

Reed, lived at 'Heide', across the Yarra at Bulleen in the 1930s and 1940s. Sidney Nolan who was a member of the Heide circle advertised his works for sale in a newsagency in Burgundy Street, Heidelberg in the 1940s.

In the postwar period, other notable architects lived in the area, including Frederick Romberg. The Modernist furniture designer Fred Ward lived in Glenard Avenue, Eaglemont.¹⁴²



Socialists' picnic held at Heidelberg Park in 1905 (source: State Library of Victoria)

Twentieth-century architectural expression

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 Arts and Crafts, English Revival, Californian Bungalow and Moderne styles. The availability of large blocks in prime riverfront positions or elevated hilly country made this highly attractive for new home builders.

The City of Heidelberg also carried out a number of civic projects in this period including new Heidelberg Civic Centre and shire offices, Heidelberg baby health centre, and street tree planting that was in sympathy with the ideal suburb. Heidelberg won the Ideal Suburb several times in the 1920s.¹⁴³

Walter Burley Griffin had established a high benchmark with his residential work on his Glenard and Mont Eagle Estates, completed in 1916, which were notable for the retention of trees, central community parks and roads that followed the contours of the landscape.¹⁴⁴ These included the Griffins' own house, Waller House, as well as the MacGeorge house in the Fairy Hills area of Ivanhoe. Griffin's achievement in residential design and town planning attracted other architects. Napier Waller, the artist and designer, moved to the area in the 1920s. Later, it was also 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.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Fred Ward – website.

¹⁴³ Butler 1985.

¹⁴⁴ Godrey 1977.

¹⁴⁵ Butler 1985; Garden date, *Builders to the Nation*.



In the mid-twentieth century, architects and landscape designers turned to the natural environment, and to functionality and lifestyle as key influences. Pivotal 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 and Peter Jorgenson. Modernist homes in Eaglemont, Ivanhoe, East Ivanhoe, Rosanna and Lower Plenty were closely engaged with their location and reflected a new sensibility for the Australian environment. The houses of Boyd and others were typically built into the landscape, engaged with the natural environment, rather than surmounted upon it to maximise views. They were introspective and subtle rather than decorative and monumental. Many homes were cleverly positioned on steep slopes, amidst existing vegetation, and architects responded to the setting with attention to windows, decking and sight lines.

A closer engagement with the natural environment also saw the burgeoning of mud brick construction centred 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's first mud brick house was built in 1947. His influence soon extended beyond Eltham and Montmorency into the suburbs of Lower Plenty, Rosanna, and the more suburban Heidelberg and Ivanhoe. A number of examples of Knox houses survive, such as the Abbey House in Rosanna. Knox worked to a strict and all-encompassing ideology of living with nature. This fitted stylistically and ideologically with the earlier work of Edna Walling, as well as Ellis Stones, and Robin Boyd – all of whom have left their mark on Banyule.

The natural environment of the 'bush suburbs' of Banyule invited and encouraged this approach to building and living with the environment. The 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 key 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, with their close affinity with the natural environment, there were other popular postwar styles. These included the fashion for Hollywood-style glamour and flamboyance, with balconies and outdoor terraces (eg. Mountain View Road, Rosanna 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 deep and radical shift in the design ethos of suburban homes. There was a significant departure by the leading architects away from the traditional pitched and tiled roof of Melbourne's middle suburbs. The Heidelberg Council voted in 1951, for example, on a resolution to ban flat roofs and insist on pitched roofs.¹⁴⁶

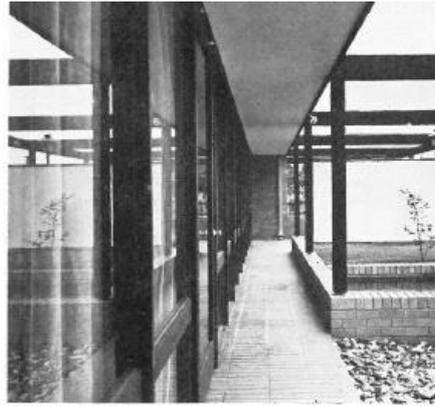
It was not only private residences that were revised in this period, but also public buildings and churches. A number of churches in Banyule were built to inspired Modernist designs in the postwar period, including Robyn Boyd in Ivanhoe, Alistair Knox in Montmorency; and Frederick Romberg in Ivanhoe.



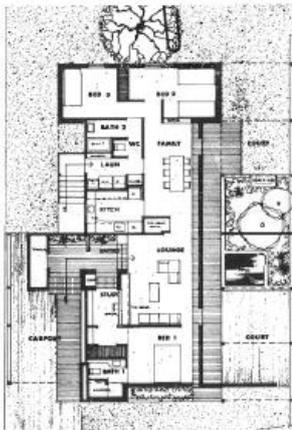
The opening of the Methodist Church, Greensborough, in 1966 (courtesy Greensborough Historical Society)

¹⁴⁶ *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 on a prize-winning Modernist home in Yallambie in 1968 (Project Homes, 1968)

Landscape design

The rich soil in the Heidelberg district and the plentiful water supply enabled the development of substantial and often ambitious homestead gardens. 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 drew sketches of the property in the early 1850s.¹⁴⁷ The garden of D.C. McArthur at Charterisville was also a site of notable horticultural endeavour, with McArthur produced prize-winning fruit and his wife was an early apiarist.¹⁴⁸ Another colonial gardener, John

¹⁴⁷ SLV, NGV.

¹⁴⁸ *Victorian Agricultural and Horticultural Gazette*, vol III, no. 25, 21 March 1859, p. 9.

Arthur, who became the first curator of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, was employed at Heidelberg in the early 1840s as gardener to Captain Smythe.¹⁴⁹ The earliest nursery in Heidelberg was established by John McEwin near the Yarra River. McEwin was a Scottish gardener and botanist, who settled in Melbourne in 1838 and reputedly selected the first trees for the Melbourne Botanical Gardens.¹⁵⁰

A remarkable early example of a grand local garden was the stately hilltop garden on 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.¹⁵¹ 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.¹⁵² 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 private suburban gardens of Eaglemont.

The eminent landscape designer and director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, William Guilfoyle, was commissioned in 1880 by the Heidelberg Shire to draw up a plan for laying out the Heidelberg Park, which had been permanently reserved in the 1870s. His colleague Robert P. Whitworth prepared a plan for the park under Guilfoyle's supervision.¹⁵³ 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.¹⁵⁴ For a fee of £36 Fanning established the paths and a rustic bridge, presumably in accordance with Guilfoyle's plan.¹⁵⁵ 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.¹⁵⁶ Local council officer, Peter Fanning, worked at the implementation of the Guilfoyle plan and won praise from the Council for his work.¹⁵⁷ The gardens and the broader site of the Heidelberg Park was highly regarded. 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.¹⁵⁸

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 in Ivanhoe was sold and developed as an A.V. Jennings housing estate in the 1930s. The typical domestic garden was traditional in the interwar period, and in the postwar era, with flower beds, specimen trees (usually an exotic) and pathways with front fence in a style 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 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

¹⁴⁹ Ref, HHS. Daniel Bunce 1850, *The Australian Manual of Horticulture*, p. 52.

¹⁵⁰ *Australasian*, 11 June 1932, p. 4.

¹⁵¹ Paul Fox 2001, *Clearings*.

¹⁵² Fox 2001.

¹⁵³ *Argus*, 27 April 1880, p. 7.

¹⁵⁴ Robert Percy Whitworth 1880. *Guide to Melbourne*. Helen Doyle et al. 1999. 'Koroit Botanic Gardens CMP', prepared for Moyne Shire.

¹⁵⁵ *12 Rambles in Heidelberg*.

¹⁵⁶ See [historical images of the Gardens held HHS, Butler 1985]

¹⁵⁷ [trove, 1882/83]

¹⁵⁸ *Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 17 February 1883, p. 2.

and instead believed in an open landscape, his philosophy being that ‘the whole landscape is his...’¹⁵⁹

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 is typical of the subdivisions developed after the 1960s that electricity cabling is 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 fencing and in private gardens. Rock-faced retaining walls are also common across the municipality – these are used both in private land and on the roadways and divided roadways, presumably constructed by the former City of Heidelberg in the c.1930s-1960s. There are also rock retaining walls built by the former City of Heidelberg to create divided roadways in Eaglemont, Ivanhoe and Rosanna (for example, Grandview Grove).

In the southern parts of the municipality, in Eaglemont and Ivanhoe, many of the residential areas have a strong interwar character and the 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 competing garden styles in the earlier established areas. Many 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. The postwar homes of Italian immigrants favoured 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, Grandview 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 adjacent to the former Rosanna golf course. 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, including scar trees, and native bushland.

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¹⁵⁹ 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 Mrs Thomas Austin of Barwon Park for the purpose of building a Hospital for Incurables (people with incurable diseases). This was in response to the high mortality rate from infectious diseases in the nineteenth century, and the prevailing fear of contagious disease.

The site for the new hospital was selected at Heidelberg, an elevated position overlooking the township and with distant view of the surrounding hills and Valley of the Yarra. 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 with incurable diseases – patients who entered the hospital would not be discharged.¹⁶⁰

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.

In 1881, Melbourne's leading landscape designer William Guilfoyle offered to prepare a plan for laying out the hospital grounds and to superintend the work of laying them out.¹⁶¹ 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 1880-1881.¹⁶² The hospital gardens have virtually been obliterated with developments to the site over the years; some of the remnant trees, possibly dating to Guilfoyle's original layout, were removed in the 1990s.

The Austin Hospital, as it became known, was originally intended for the poor and those afflicted with incurable diseases. Over time, however, with the advance of medical science, the hospital took on other roles especially as cures were developed for the previously incurable diseases. With the growth of the Austin Hospital through the twentieth century, Heidelberg was probably more important as a centre for public health developments. This was problematic as caused disease downstream as cows ate pasture watered by the river which carried waste from the hospital (see trove 1890s?). The original complex, built in 1882, was demolished in the 1970s, and has been replaced by updated hospital buildings.

There were other hospitals in the district in the mid-twentieth century, including the 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.

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.

¹⁶⁰ Thomas Embling, Letter to the Editor, *Australasian*, 20 August 1881.

¹⁶¹ *Argus*, 6 October 1881, p. 10.

¹⁶² Doyle et al. 1999, 'Koroit Botanic Gardens Conservation Management Plan'.



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 (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. The mansion house 'Ravenswood' in Ivanhoe was used in the 1950s as a 'Home for Lonely Women'.¹⁶³ The Churinga residential care centre for mentally handicapped children operated in Greensborough, initially occupying a former homestead, 'Saxham', from 1967 until 1990.¹⁶⁴

Infant welfare centres

The baby health centres at Heidelberg and Ivanhoe were examples of their type and 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.¹⁶⁵ The garden setting for the Heidelberg Baby Health Centre reflected values about well-being benefitting from pleasant surroundings. By 1940 there were also baby health centres at West Heidelberg and Greensborough.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Heidelberg Historical Society, ref. P2350.

¹⁶⁴ Wikinorthia: <https://wikinorthia.net.au/churinga/>; Allom Lovell 1999, 'Banyule Heritage Study', Citations A-K, vol. 2.

¹⁶⁵ ADB entry.

¹⁶⁶ *Age*, 6 August 1940, p. 3.

Cemeteries

Many of the earliest settlers in the district were buried on the properties they occupied. Aboriginal people would also have been buried 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 in what was then the Warringal Village. 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 1849.¹⁶⁷ The Greensborough Cemetery was established in 1863.

Cemeteries were also established at the Heidelberg Repat Hospital and also possibly at Loyola College and the convents. A memorial garden is maintained at the Mercy Hospital for Women.

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¹⁶⁷ Butler 1985, 'Heidelberg Conservation Study', pp. 179-80.

12. Conserving the waterways and bushland

Early attitudes to the Yarra and its wetlands

At the time of white settlement along the lower Yarra from Port Melbourne and through Richmond, Kew, Bulleen and Heidelberg, there were rich wetlands and a network of swamps or billabongs along the river flats, which were teeming with life. These were important food bowls for the Aboriginal people, attracting animals, fish and bird life. Tim Flannery likened the lower Yarra to ‘a temperate Kakadu’. European settlers, however, did not look favourably on the wetlands, except perhaps as a good place for sportsmen to go shooting. The prevailing nineteenth century view was the swamps were dangerous to public health, and furthermore settlers sought to drain swampy ground to increase the available farming land.¹⁶⁸

The early reservation from public sale of riverbank land in Melbourne in the 1850s protected the immediate river bank to some degree, chiefly from private ownership and control, but much of this land was initially leased for cropping and grazing and other purposes, and generally was largely denuded of its native vegetation. Some areas, more by chance than intention, nevertheless remained bushland through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth.

Appreciating the Australian landscape

A competing but less powerful view of the new country was its value for aesthetic reasons, and from as early as the 1840s artists sketched scenes of the river and landscape around Heidelberg. The recognised natural beauty of the district was a key factor in its popularity as a place to settle through the nineteenth century. The Heidelberg School of artists did much to popularise the beauty of the Australian bush generally, and in particular the Heidelberg district – although their influence some years to have wide appeal.

In inner Melbourne, much of the riverfront land of the Yarra had been reserved as parkland in the 1850s, and by the 1890s efforts were made to re-design some of these parks and the Yarra itself. In the early twentieth century, local efforts began in Heidelberg and Ivanhoe to preserve the riverfront and the river flats as parkland.

The early conservation movement

In the early twentieth century, the Banyule area remained relatively free of the excessive polluting of the Yarra downstream. 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 groups sought to have these 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 particular trees and stands of trees. In 1910, for example, a group formed for the Protection of the Old Red Gum Tree at Heidelberg.¹⁶⁹

Growing demands for protection of the Yarra

In the 1970s, there were successful local campaigns, for example, to save the natural environment of the Warringal Flats at Heidelberg. Local conservation groups included the Evelyn Observer and Bourke East Record (Vic. : 1902 - 1917), Friday 19 August 1910, page 3 Warringal Conservation Society, and Friends of Rosanna Parklands. The Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works, which controlled the health of the Yarra River, had also developed a stronger concern for the lower Yarra in the 1960s and 1970s, and supported the reservation of riverbank parklands. The construction of the Eastern Freeway, which impinged

¹⁶⁸ Maya Ward 2011, *The Comfort of Water*, p. 113. Tim Flannery 2002, *The Birth of Melbourne*, p. 14.

¹⁶⁹ *Evelyn Observer and Bourke East Record*, 19 August 1910, p. 3.

on the Yarra River near Heidelberg, was another motivating factor for firmer action amongst conservationists.

The Yarra precinct has attracted keen conservation efforts from outside the local area. Wider campaigns include 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.



A billabong near the Yarra River at Ivanhoe (source: SLV)

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