



Altona Laverton  
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# NEWSLETTER

ALTONA

SPOTSWOOD

FOOTSCRAY

## LOCAL AREA NEWS OF SPECIAL EVENTS DURING 2020



It is sometimes necessary for Historical research to extend beyond the common local areas normally covered by a Historical Society and this Newsletter reports on some Anniversary commemorations and current new activities which have occurred or are developing in the broader Hobsons Bay and Maribyrnong Council areas in 2020.

1. In **Altona** in December 2020 it will be the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the construction of the building occupied primarily by the Altona Senior Citizens Club at 2 Sargood Street Altona, now known as the Beryl Hevey Centre, which will reach 60 years since being opened in December 1960.
2. **Spotswood** is destined for attention by the Hobsons Bay Council as they seek public opinion as to how they may best raise interest in the area and they intend to add information on street signs indicating the Heritage origins of their naming.
3. In **Footscray** on September 23, 2020 the Tweddle child and health service reached it's 100 year anniversary following its formation by the Victorian Society for the Health of Women and Children in Victoria in 1920.

In the following pages we give some further information regarding these matters.

## Altona-2 Sargood Street 60 Years since Construction



The building at 2 Sargood Street Altona, officially named *The Beryl Centre* on January 28, 1999 by the Hobsons Bay City Council, and primarily occupied as the Altona Senior Citizens Centre, with shared use by the Altona U3A group and other community groups from time to time, will reach **60 years** of occupancy on December 4, 2020. It was officially opened by the then Shire of Altona President Cr. W. G. Cresser on December 4, 1960.



**TENDERS**  
ROBERT WARREN, Architect, invites tenders for the erection of a brick veneer elderly citizens' centre in Sargood Street, Altona, for the Altona Shire Council.  
Tenders close Saturday, 30th January, 1960 at noon.  
Contractors desirous of tendering should contact the office of R. Warren, Architect, 45 Geringhap Street, Geelong. Telephone X3923, private W6696.

In January 1960 an article appeared in *The Altona Star* calling for a tenders for a new building to be a brick veneer, Elderly citizens centre in Sargood Street Altona. In February 1960 it was announced that the successful proposed builders were Messrs Weaver and Smith of Altona.

This project arose following the establishment of the Shire of Altona Council which had the aim to help the elderly residents of the Shire.

A "Declaration of Trust" was signed on April 2, 1959, allowing for money to be collected and held in trust, to enable the formation of a club to be known as the Altona Elderly Citizens Club.

The Trustees appointed and who signed the Trust Deed were Councillors Harry Kim, Mrs. Catherine McIntyre and R. Frazer, all three being amongst the first council members of the then newly formed Altona Shire Council.



# Beryl Hevey



The naming of the Building at 2 Sargood Street, "The Beryl Hevey Centre" in 1999 was a recognition of her service to the Altona Seniors Club and the Community over a period of 25 years having served as Secretary and President on various occasions.

She was Altona Citizen of the Year in 1988.



An interview with Beryl specially prepared for the book *"Seniors by the Sea"* by Carolyn Jackson in 2010 is partially reproduced below.

Beryl was born Beryl Janet Broadway to parents Leonard Edgar and Jessie Christina Broadway on April 17, 1912 at Yarraville.

(Her father was one of six brothers who became Bakers and subsequently operated bakery and bread carting businesses at Narre Warren, Essendon, Spotswood and finally Yarraville after the family purchased a pre-existing business "Wembley Bakery".)

In Narre Warren at the astonishingly young age of fourteen, Beryl herself began to teach on a voluntary basis. In these pre-war years, qualifications were not necessary, and Beryl was considered well-educated enough to begin passing on her knowledge and skills to the next generation. And she must have been a dedicated teacher – Beryl had to walk a good seven miles from Narre Warren to her classroom in Dandenong, and another seven miles to get home again.

In 1928, the family decided to sell the business at Narre Warren and return to the metropolitan area, however there are newspaper reports that she continued as a staff member and teacher at the Narre Warren School until at least 1929.

Her father began to work with his brother Alf at a bakery in Essendon on their return and Beryl would recount walking along Buckley Street to catch the train to Dandenong daily during that period.

Subsequently her father established his next bakery in Stephenson Street Spotswood and she returned to teach for a time at Spotswood State School until her marriage to husband John Bennet (Jack) Hevey in 1938.

Beryl joined the Altona Senior Citizens Club in 1974 and enjoyed her time there quickly becoming involved in Committee work with subsequent service several times as Secretary and President.

She particularly enjoyed the social side of activities especially dancing, she had begun to learn dancing in Yarraville at age three with a special love for Scottish dancing.

This enjoyment of dancing continued at the Altona Seniors club.

For many years she ran the Friday night dances. She taught everybody to dance, and never tired of taking a spin around the floor, even taking the man's part when a woman was short of a partner.

Beryl passed away at Footscray on April 11, 2010 aged 97 years six days short of her 98<sup>th</sup> Birthday.



# Heritage Streets of Spotswood

The Hobsons Bay Council has commenced a project of Heritage Street signs showing the origin of the street names in the council areas, and in 2021 intends to expand the project to include Spotswood.

During the year we assisted Hobsons Bay City Council with research on a number of streets within the Spotswood area. These included Reed Street, McNeillage Street, Hudsons Road and McLister Street.

With the assistance of Jim Hevey who hails from Spotswood and the knowledge of Roy Picone the following tell the stories behind each of these thoroughfares and sheds light the early days in the settlement and progress of the Spotswood area.

## Reed Street



Named after Joseph William Reed, a local businessman and identity within Spotswood. Joseph William Reed born 17 August 1870 in North Melbourne to parents Joseph Reed and Mary Deborah Reed nee Avery. Joseph was the third of eleven children.

On 22 October 1902 Joseph William Reed married Annie Louisa Elmer at the Methodist Church in Spotswood. The couple lived at 30 Hudson's Road Spottiswoode, as it was then known. Joseph's occupation was listed as a newsagent (1903) operating in Hudson's Road, by 1914 as postmaster, and 1924 as postmaster.

Joe Reed was also elected as President of the Spotswood Citizens League. Williamstown Chronicle, 16 February 1924, pg 3: 'A meeting of the residents of Spotswood was held in the local Mechanics' Institute on Monday night to consider the question of improving the Spotswood Recreation Ground; Mr. J. W. Reed was appointed chairman, and Mr. F. Bannister secretary, pro-tem. It was decided to form a citizens' committee to look after the improvements to the Spotswood Reserve and the interests of Spotswood. Messrs T. Stephens and J. W. Reed were deputed to wait on the gardens committee of the local Council and place certain proposals before them.'

Joe's name first appeared as early as 1891 as Secretary and Captain of the Spottiswoode Cricket Club. He later became President of three organisations at the same time. President of the Churches Cricket Association, President of the Spotswood Cricket Club but most importantly President of the Citizens League.

Joe and his committee were made up of people from the Business District, Football and Cricket Clubs and the local Shopkeepers. The Citizens League Committee was responsible for looking at most of the problems facing the people in the small community, including the welfare of these families and the people who were out of work during the hard times of the Great Depression.

Heavily Involved in Church activities, Joe had realised the need for a recreation Reserve for use by the young people in the Spotswood District. Joe and his dedicated Committee had approached the Council on several occasions for land suitable for their badly needed Reserve, the land they finally sought was given to them in three lots, but the area was far from suitable for a sports oval and the committee soon realised what was involved with plenty of hard work ahead of them.

By 1931 the couple had moved to 'St Elmo' Vernon Street Croydon and Joseph's occupation was still listed as postmaster. 1937 postmaster, 1940 poultry farmer. Joseph William Reed died on 16 December 1940 at the family home in Croydon and was buried in the Williamstown cemetery



(Methodist H, Row 8, Grave 6), his wife Annie Louise, who survived him by 6 years, is also buried at this site.

It was due to recognition of his contribution through the Citizens League Committee, local sports clubs and an early settler to the area, the road next to the Spotswood Primary School was named Reed Street.

### **McNeilage Street**



Named after William McNeilage a former Councillor and twice Mayor of Williamstown.

William McNeilage (pictured in 1916) was born in Glasgow, Scotland in 1856 and immigrated to Australia (NSW) with his family in 1862 at the age of 6. In 1875, William married Elizabeth Glen and the family settled in Sandridge. The couple eventually had four children of which William James McNeilage was their third born.

Roy Picone comments — “William McNeilage senior was appointed Managing Director at Australian Glass Manufacturers Spotswood in 1904 and continued this position until 1921, it is interesting to note the terms of his employment during this period, William Senior a 30-year-old glass blower by trade was appointed Works Manager in 1890.”

William served two terms as Mayor of Williamstown and was a great worker for the Spotswood District where served on most of the Committees, the School Committee in 1910 when the School was in Robert St, and again when the new school was built in 1912-14. He was involved in the Spotswood Citizens League Committee as President when the Committee secured from the Government a block of land of seven acres at the northern end of the Town for recreation purposes.

In 1909, Spotswood residents signed a partition, with the help of their Local Member of Parliament, John Lemmon, for the Victorian Government to build a state school in the area. As a result, permission was given for a school to begin in the local Free Gardener's Hall, a leased building in Robert Street. The School opened on 18 July 1910 as an adjunct to the Williamstown State School (No. 1183).

From the outset there was insufficient space for the school as the Free Gardener's Hall was only able to accommodate Grades 1 to 3. Subsequently, the Local Member and local residents, assisted by the City of Williamstown Councillor William McNeilage, continued to press for a purpose-built school for all primary-aged children. William also served as the President of the Chamber of Manufacturers.

William appears to have retired around 1928 due to ill health. He and Elizabeth decided to take a voyage to Europe via South Africa however illness in Natal forced the couple to shorten their journey and return home to Australia. William passed away on 5 August 1929 and is buried in Williamstown cemetery (Presbyterian G, Row 22.5, Grave 10).

Their son, William James McNeilage, also served as a councillor of the City of Williamstown and also served as president of the Williamstown branch of the RSL. William James McNeilage had enlisted in 1917 into the AIF and served in France with the 3rd Divisional Ammunition Column. William managed his own business in the area and lived initially in Spotswood before moving to Electra Street Williamstown.

William James McNeillage passed away on 27 November 1950 after having been ill for a period of time. Like his father he was involved in the local area as a councillor of the City of Williamstown, member of the bowling and football clubs as well as other sporting bodies within the district. He is buried in the Williamstown cemetery (Presbyterian I, Row 7.5, Grave 7).

### Hudsons Road

It would appear that Hudsons Road is named after Henry, William and Robert Hudson from Sydney who purchased 100 acres of land in the area during the 1880s. The Williamstown Chronicle (21 April 1888, p 3) reports that the brothers under their company, Spottiswoode Estate Company, were looking to sell the 100 acres for £640,000 or £640 per acre after having purchased the land from Sir Thomas Bent for £115 per acre.

Following the crash of land prices in the 1890s the Hudson's company went into administration but managed to sell 9 ¼ acres to the Board of Works for the pumping station for £680 per acre.

The Hudson family resided in Sydney and were known for the Hudson Brothers Building Company at the Clyde works. In 1854, William Henry Hudson was running a small carpentry business from Regent Street, Sydney. The business expanded following a number of important contracts including the building of St. Paul's Church in Redfern. The company also supplied woodwork for the University of Sydney and St Andrew's Cathedral. In 1866 William Hudson handed over the business to his sons Henry (1836 – 1907) and William (1843 – 1891), who were later joined by their brother Robert (1841 – 1915).

Within 25 years, the brothers had turned the small carpentry business into one of Australia's leading manufacturers of iron and timber, employing around 400 men. A turning point for the business was in 1868 when they purchased an old boiler and engine to saw timber. The brothers purchased more machinery to automate their works allowing them to expand into iron and steel.

In January 1876 they were contracted to supply the New South Wales Government with 200 rail wagons and in 1879 they were contracted to build the International Exhibition building in the Botanical Gardens, Sydney. During this period, they became one of the largest buyers of timber in the colonies — processing over 1.8 million metres of timber in 1878 alone. Between 1876-77 Hudson Brothers completed a government contract for two hundred railway wagons at £70 each. Their bush-based timber mill incorporated over six miles of railway and several sailing vessels were used to take the wood to Sydney.



Figure 1 Hudsons Road circa 1903 looking towards the railway line and the Spottiswoode Hotel

The success of the company put pressure on their Redfern site and as their irregular jumble of buildings became increasingly cluttered the brothers started looking further afield for a site to house their growing business. In Victoria, other than their land purchase in the Spotswood area they were also producing goods wagons for the Victorian Railways. The Australian Glass Manufacturing company building was erected on the land purchase by the Hudson's.

# Tweddle child & health service - Footscray



## HOW IT ALL BEGAN IN 1920



**T**he child and family healthcare service, currently known as Tweddle child & family health service has evolved with the assistance of many influential patrons and donors, following the formation of The Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria (Plunket System) ,on September 13,1920.

The Co-Founders of the Society are pictured they were Doctor John Springthorpe, Sister Maud Primrose and James Hume Cook.

The Age (Melbourne) Tuesday, August 31,1920 reported:

*That the Society had been proposed at "A Lively Meeting" convened by the Lord Mayor at the (Melbourne)Town Hall, with strong opposition from the then existing Baby Health Services.*

**The motion to form the Society was carried by one vote.**

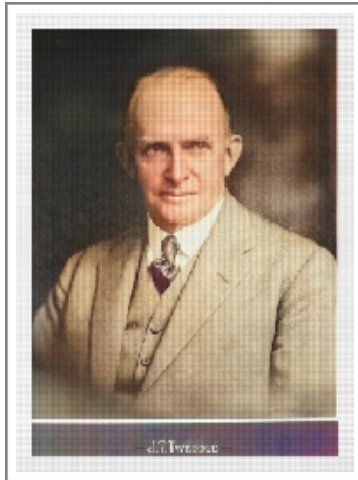
The formation of the Society, eventually led to the establishment of the Tweddle Hospital, and the site for training of nurses at the "Tweddle Hospital for Babies and School of Mothercraft" from 1924. The nurses on site were formally known as 'Primrose Nurses'.

The Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria was subsequently incorporated into the Tweddle child and family health service of today.



*In September 2020 the Tweddle child and health service reached it's 100 year anniversary following the formation of the Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria and subsequent construction of the original hospital.*

## Joseph Tweddle-The major Patron



**F**ootscray Council provided land in 1922, which enabled construction of the original hospital buildings on the corner of Barkly and Gordon Streets in Footscray and this later was expanded to provision of additional land in nearby Disney and Adelaide Streets from which the hospital currently operates.

Joseph Tweddle a well known Melbourne business man at the time donated the funds required to construct the original buildings, and the Hospital later became a Mothercraft Nurses training school.

The hospital bears his family name as the prime benefactor of funds.



**The original timber hospital buildings circa 1925**



**53 Adelaide Street-current location**