Altona Laverton Historical Society Inc.
PO Box 236 Altona 3018

NEWSLETTER

President's Report   By Kim Reilly

Happy New Year to all our members, volunteers and friends.

It is certainly looking like 2024 will be another exciting, busy and rewarding year for our Society. We have been remarkably busy working on ideas and coordinating events for the upcoming Heritage Festival (held in the second half of April), working closely with Hobsons Bay Heritage team and Altona U3A. This will see us jointly aligning a couple of activities across Hobsons Bay.

We have also been working with members of the Williamstown Historical Society, passing on some of our experience and knowledge as well as learning lots from their team of volunteers. Several of our members attended their presentation in January on the Hansons (WW1 Signature) Quilt that was given by one of their members in the Williamstown Town Hall which was extremely informative and provided another opportunity for both Societies to network.

Our team of volunteers are now back with renewed vigour and fresh ideas for the coming year. In 2024 our key focus will be on commemorating the 150th anniversary of the death of Alfred Langhorne (August 1874). Alfred was one of the first European settlors within the Altona/Laverton area and with members of the Society having been in contact with the Langhorne family in England, we are hoping that they will be able to share new stories and information about Alfred and the Langhorne family and its connection with the Altona Homestead.

2024 also commemorates the 30th anniversary of the City of Hobsons Bay which was gazetted in June 1994. It is an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on the first 30 years of our great city and look at the vision that will take us to 2030.

Our research team has been busy scouring through new materials that have been donated to the Society and discovering new stories about the families and organisations that have shaped the area of Altona, Laverton and Altona Meadows. A day does not go past that we are not learning something new – which does create an evolving list of things to be done in terms of research, writing, cataloguing and storing information and objects.

Of course, our Devonshire Tea events are about to start, and our volunteers are looking forward to welcoming old friends and new to the Homestead where we can chat over delicious scones and tea, whilst enjoying the atmosphere that is the Altona Homestead.

President's Report-continued:

As a committee we are again looking forward to another exciting year with new opportunities to work with many wonderful groups across Hobsons Bay and our community. Many thanks must go to Graeme and Jim (our secretary and treasurer) and Ann for keeping the Homestead and the Society ticking over with the help of the other Graeme and Russell. We are a small but enthusiastic committee and if you are looking to be a part of this dynamic group, please contact us.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

This is an open invitation to anyone who might be keen to learn new skills or use their research and IT skills and who have an interest in local history. If you are looking for a volunteer opportunity and a chance to socialise with other local volunteers, then we have several opportunities available.

No prior experience is necessary, we are very happy to provide all the necessary training and there is no fixed commitment required, our volunteers work flexible days and times that suit them.

Whether you interest lies in data entry, tourism, collection management, education, museum displays, digitizing collections, or research we have a position available.

If you would like to volunteer or just chat about the opportunities available contact us at g.reilly@alhs.com.au or drop into the Altona Homestead on a Tuesday between 11.00am and 2.00pm, Logan Reserve, Queen Street Altona.

Edward (Ted) Allsopp (1926 – 2024)

By Graeme Reilly (ALHS 2024)

Longstanding Altona North resident and unsung hero Edward (Ted) James Allsopp passed away quietly on 18 January at Marina Aged Care at the grand age of 97. Not many residents might know the enormous success that Ted had achieved over his lifetime, but to his family and friends he was an "absolute legend" but also a person who never sought out public recognition for his many achievements.

Ted Allsopp was an Olympian, an Australian Athletics champion, an artist and a proud Western Bulldogs fan, but more importantly he was a devoted family man. One can define success as clearly setting goals and priorities in your life. When you know what success means to you, you can focus your time and energy on the things that matter most and avoid getting sidetracked by distractions or other people's expectations. This was Ted through and through.

Ted was born in Edenhope on 15 August 1926, to parents Frederick William Allsopp and Hannah Lewington Allsopp nee Claughton. The family soon moved to the Melbourne suburb of Newport before later moving across to Williamstown. Ted's early education was undertaken at the local Sacred Heart School in Newport. He not only grew up in the Newport/ Williamstown area but worked in several jobs within the Maribyrnong and Hobsons Bay areas.

Ted Allsopp possessed a powerful inner drive, actively looking for and pursuing new opportunities to grow. This drive saw him, in 1940, join the Williamstown Athletic Club as a runner, but later here he discovered he had a massive talent for race walking, and as they saw the rest is history. Ted competed for over 26 years as a race walker and had the longest serving career for an Australian male walker, which still stands to this day. But let's give his career as a walker some real perspective.

He took up race walking in 1945 at the age of 18 years and was immediately successful with third places in the 1946 and 1947 Australian 10 km championships and a breakthrough win in the 1948 Australian 10 km title in 49:09. He just missed selection for the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, whilst qualifying second only the winner was selected to represent Australia.

Ted's meticulous planning for the next Olympics came together with a flurry of top-class performances in 1956. He started the year with a win in the Australian 2 Mile track championship in a time of 14:04.4, ahead of minor place-getters Harry Summer and Ray Smith. Then on 14 July, he won the 20 km Olympic trial in a time of 1:34:26. Don Keane had led for most of the race but Ted stormed home over the last 4 km to win by just over a minute. This secured his first Olympic selection.

Over that 26 years Ted represented Australia at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, where he competed in the 20 km and 50 km walk and the 1964 Tokyo Olympics where he competed in 50 km walk. Whilst he competed at two Olympics, it could just as easily have been 5 Olympics. In 1952, 1960 and 1968 the only reason he missed out on selection was that only one representative went to compete, even though Ted's performances were easily above the qualifying standard.

Within Australia Ted won 23 Australian (11 gold) and 66 Victorian (32 gold) road walking medals. These were apart from his numerous track medals. On 22 September 1956, just two months before he competed in the Melbourne Olympics, Ted set an official World Record for the 2 Hour Track Walk covering 16 miles and 403 yards (26.118 km), that is walking at a pace of over 13 km per hour. This race still stands today as the most astonishing races ever in Australian history. It resulted in

- A new world record for the 2 Hour Walk: Ted Allsopp

- 6 new Empire Records: Don Keane and Ted Allsopp

- 10 new Australian Open Records: Don Keane and Ted Allsopp

- 9 new Victorian Open Records: Don Keane and Ted Allsopp

- 7 new Australian Junior Records: Noel Freeman

- 7 new Victoria Junior Records: Noel Freeman

During this period, in Australian Athletics, Ted consistently competed against Noel Freeman and Don Keane, two younger men who shared the top ranks of race-walking with Ted, who even though he was some years older was wilier and wiser.

A week after this historic event Ted walked his first 50 km event, the Victorian 50 km title, and astonished everyone with a new Australian residential record of 4:24:24. It is said that he only started in the event as a training session and was 6 minutes behind Norm Read at the 17-mile mark. But Ted's intensive training program had given him such a wonderful combination of speed and stamina that he was able to go on and win the event by over 20 minutes.

Ted (left) competing in the 1956 Olympic 20 km event.

While Ted was excelling in his passion as an athlete, his personal life was to also take off, with the meeting of the love of his life, Ann Lilian Edwards, in 1951. They just both happened to be holidaying in Queenscliff and crossed paths. It was long before love flourished for this young couple. They were married in 1955 and they moved into live in the rear bungalow at Ted's parents' home at 165 Ferguson Street in Williamstown.

The following year, during the Melbourne Olympics the first of their three children, Paul, was born. On the evening before the 50 km walk event, Ted went to bed early, having no idea that Ann was about to go into labour. About 11pm, an Australian team official took a telephone call saying that Ann had given birth, but the official decided to let Ted get a good night's sleep and did not tell him straight away of the birth of his son.

The next morning, Ted picked up the Argus newspaper and was surprised to learn that he was now a father. The team bus duly took the competitors to the MCG and the crowd of 100,000 cheered him as the walkers did their first two laps of the ground before setting off to walk to Springvale and back. At the 12-mile mark, Ted was disqualified, being reported by the two Russian judges and the chief judge, Libotte of Switzerland. It was to be the only time that he was to be disqualified in a race.

After the birth of Paul, the Allsopp's two daughters Karen (1960) and Janine (1964) soon followed and in 1969 the Allsopp family moved into a new family home at 10 Marsh Street Altona North, their forever home.

Ted raced his entire athletic career with Williamstown Harriers and won his last Victorian medal in 1972 – another gold in the 50 km title – 26 years after his first medals in 1946. He was now 46 years of age and decided that whilst he was still more than competitive, he would retire from a sport he loved so much.

Like so many young men of that era Ted then went off to work at the ACI Glass factory in Spotswood where he made bottles. It was here that he just so happened to work alongside Charlie Sutton who would go on and coach the Footscray Football Club to a premiership in 1954. Of course, Ted was a lifelong supporter of the "Doggies" so this must have been quite a nice coincidence for him!

Ted leads Noel Freeman and Harry Summers in the 1959 Australian 2-mile walk.

Ted later went on to complete an upholstery course at the Melbourne Tech and then commenced working as an upholsterer at the Hillman Minx factory in Fisherman's Bend, Port Melbourne making car seats. Some years later he started working as a shipwright at the Williamstown Naval Dockyard, where an opportunity presented itself when a vacancy came up for a 'Saw Doctor' in the saw sharpening shop. Ted had found his new calling, he loved the job and the camaraderie with workmates, and he remained in this role sharpening various knives, saws and other ship building implements until his retirement in 1986.

Whilst most of us would be content with one amazing achievement in life, this was not the case for Ted Allsopp – he went on to become an acclaimed artist. He was a realist painter and was known for his works that covered Williamstown boats, landscapes, old shacks and cottages.

He joined the Altona Artists Association in 1979 (now known as the Hobsons Bay Art Society) and forged lifelong friendships with his art companions. But more than just joining the group, Ted was a founding member along with Derek Craggs, Moira Blackett, Ray Hewitt, Shirley Fisher, Gwen Temby and Victoria Smith. Ted served Vice President (1989), a longstanding Committee member and was one of the most senior members of the Society. He was ultimately awarded Life Membership for his endless contributions to the Society. Ted was never a passenger in any group he joined, he was an influencer.

So passionate was Ted about his art and the Society, he entered he work in just about every exhibition run and was also a workshop and activity leader and demonstrator covering all aspects of painting.

Royal Yacht Club Victoria, Edward Allsopp

Ted and Ray Hewitt shared the same passion for art and many conversations on new techniques and new products was had between the two. Ted would often venture to Ray's shack in Beech Forrest, in the Otway Ranges, and painted the glorious surroundings. They, and the Society members, went on many art trips around Victoria and interstate with his favourite location being the Flinders Ranges in South Australia painting landscapes and gum trees and Ann often accompanied him on these trips.

Throughout his life, friendships made were always important to Ted. With many enduring and great friends – people like Ernie McDonald a workmate and motor mechanic from the Naval Dockyard. Ernie was always working on the family cars and shared the same passion that Ted had for cricket and football. In Ted's later years in life, one of the great highlights was witnessing the Western Bulldogs win the flag in 2016.

Another great friend was Trevor Young – a former workmate and fellow resident at Ted's nursing home, at Marina Aged Care in Altona North. They would often ring each other's rooms to discuss what was on the food menu and reminisce about old times.

Image courtesy of Hobsons Bay Art Society

The Allsopp family were a happy typical Australian family, with Ann being a devoted wife and mother to them all, Ted had the highest respect and appreciation of everything that Ann did for their family and that she did in life. For Ted, his beloved Ann and their children always came first – it is plain to see that he adored them, and this love was returned in spades. He achieved an intimate and cherished relationship with his children throughout his life and was always there for them. It was this same love and affection that he had for his grandchildren that created such a lasting and special relationship. To them all he was an "absolute legend", but he was also a modest man who achieved so much in life but was never one to boast about any of his achievements nor seek out recognition.
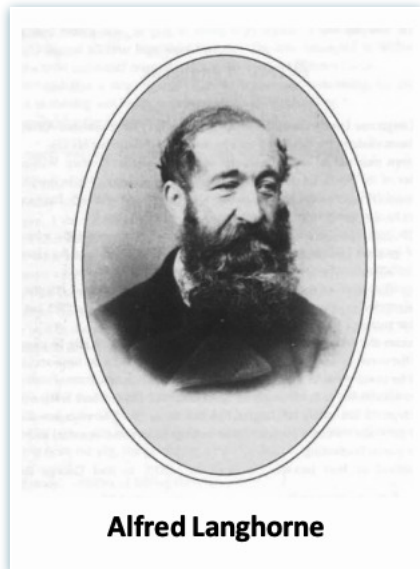
Edward (Ted) James Allsopp was many things, a true sportsman, an Olympian, an artist and a proud Western Bulldogs fan, but his loved ones will always remember him as a beloved family man. Albert Schweitzer, the Nobel prizing winning philosopher, once said "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful." Ted, you've left behind so many warm memories and a beautiful legacy of love, determination, resilience and fun for your family and friends. You remind us that 'truly doing what makes you happy is truly what makes you successful.'

Alfred Langhorne (1817 – 1874)

Part One: Bound for New South Wales
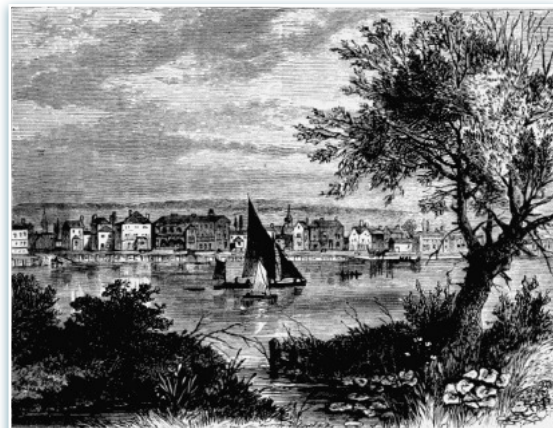
by Graeme Reilly

Alfred Langhorne

When I first moved into Altona, some 30 odd years ago, I was given a book to read on the history of Altona and found it very interesting but at the same time a little bemusing that there were names of early European settlers that I was very familiar with, but I knew little of the history of the western suburbs. I had grown up around the Noble Park/Dandenong area from 1960 to about 1983 and the names of Alfred Langhorne, John Helder Wedge, Captain William Lonsdale, and Joseph Hawdon were names very recognisable, where I grew up, in the form of street names and local history. It wasn't until I joined the Altona Laverton Historical Society, which operates from the Altona Homestead, Alfred and Sarah Langhorne's home that the connect between the two suburbs made perfect sense. But more about this Langhorne connection to two cities later.

This year the historical society is commemorating the 150th anniversary of the passing of Alfred Langhorne that occurred on 11 August 1874. We thought that it was a time to reflect on Alfred's time in Australia, how he is acknowledged across two Melbourne suburbs, that couldn't be much further apart, and he is acknowledged at Langhorne Creek, South Australia, just 55 kilometres southeast of Adelaide. In this four-part series we will cover various aspects of Alfred's life, that of Sarah and their immediate family, his four brothers that were in Australia with Alfred, and his legacy within Altona.

Alfred Langhorne was born on 4 November 1817, in Wandsworth, London to parents Henry Langhorne and Mary Anne Langhorne (nee Box). Alfred was the eleventh child born to the couple, who would eventually give birth to fifteen children. At the time Alfred was born, his father had commenced the business of a Broker firm under the name of Browne, Langhorne and Brailsford, having previously operated as a cotton merchant where he undertook his business in London. Henry Langhorne appears to have imported and exported Irish linen, and prior to this, cotton and silk. Alfred's grandfather, Joseph Langhorne, had previously engaged in the same business in Manchester, Lancashire being the native county of the Langhorne family.

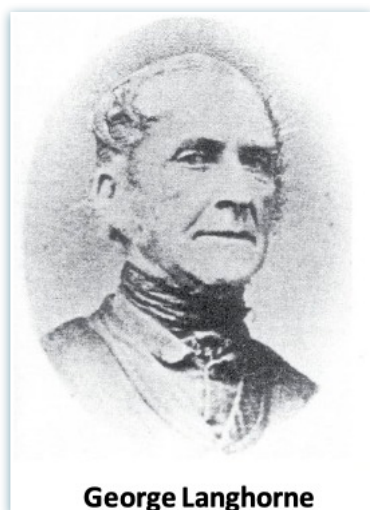Wandsworth circa 1790 (British History Online: https://www.british-history.ac.uk)

His mother, Mary, was the only daughter of William Box Esquire, of Blackfriars and Camberwell, who for many years was surgeon to the great prison of Newgate, in London, and from this appointment had an extensive private practice.

[1] Susan Priestly, Altona A Long View, 1988

Very little is written of Alfred's formative years, but what has been said is that the Langhorne family tutor, Josiah Richardson, seems to have assessed Alfred as being an astute, quick-to-learn student, for this appears to be the trait that he displayed throughout his life.

By the early 1830s, as a sixteen-year-old he came under the guidance of his elder brother, William, who as a registered member of the Stock Exchange, who employed him as a clerk. While the 1834 Robson's London Commercial Directory confirms Alfred as a stockbroker, the Stock Exchange Registers hold no reference to him being 'admitted' either as a dealer or an intermediary. But young Alfred had his eyes set on adventure, rather than remain working with his brother. He had word from his elder brothers, George and Charles, of the numerous opportunities that awaited any adventurous person in the colony of New South Wales, and Alfred was now convinced that this is where his opportunity for fortune was to be found.

Alfred quickly prevailed upon his father for his blessing and a passage to join his brothers in New South Wales. With a smallish sum of money and two letters of introduction Alfred left the then Camberwell family home and made his way to the Downs Docks in Kent where the 345-ton sailing ship *Statesman* stood at anchor. While he entered his name to the passenger list correctly, he raised his age by two years, but could do little about his stature - even in adult life he stood no taller than five feet nine and a half inches. To all onboard, a young Alfred put on a brave face and an air of confidence to hide the apprehension of a young man setting out on his own to new lands.

George Langhorne

The *Statesman* sailed from Kent to Portsmouth on 26 November 1834, where it lay over to take on more passengers and cargo - it ultimately left England on 10 December. The voyage was everything a young adventurer could hope for. Pirates pursued them as they neared the equator, and the different ports of call were just as fascinating for a youngest who had possibly not ventured far outside of London to this stage. Alfred arrived at Port Jackson on 29 April 1835, to find his brother George there offering reassurance.

During the decade of the 1830s, the colony of New South Wales was turning from a distant penal outpost, of the British empire, into a growing and prosperous commercial hub. Wool exports into the British market drove its wealth, and some families were becoming wealthier beyond even their wildest expectations. British policy continued to encourage free migration to Australia including schemes to encourage young women to migrate, with men still significantly outnumbering women in the colony.

Gregory Blaxland, William Lawson, and William Wentworth had crossed the Blue Mountains and found good pastureland to support stock. Hamilton Hume and William Hovell had trekked to the south from Sydney finding new grazing and agricultural land, the Murray River and had ventured as far south as Port Phillip. A colony had been established in Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania) and both Adeliade and the Port Phillip settlement were at the beginning of their establishment. The colony was starting to flourish and those with money, know-how and or a sense of adventure could make their fortune.

2 Edward W Northwood, The Langhorne Brothers as Overlanders & Merchants, 2000.
3 Josiah Richardson appears to have tutored/schooled several of the Langhorne children.
4 Stock market intermediaries facilitate buying and selling by acting as bridges between investors and the market. Brokers execute orders, dealers provide liquidity, exchanges offer standardised platforms, and clearinghouses ensure trade settlement.

Prior to Alfred's arrival in Sydney, his brother, George Langhorne, had arrived in the colony in 1832 and Charles Langhorne had arrived towards the end of 1833. By the time Alfred had arrived, George had been accepted for training as a lay missionary by the Sydney auxiliary of the Church Missionary Society and Charles had been appointed as the Assistant Overseer on a property owned by the Reverend Richard Hill, a Church of England clergyman who owned 1200 acres (486 ha) in the counties of Hunter and Northumberland, known as '*Millbrodale*' within the Hunter Valley, just south of Singleton.

Map of the Milbro Dale Area

Upon his arrival, Alfred immediately joined his brother, Charles, working on the rural New South Wales property, learning the skills of a stockman, which required physical strength, stamina, an ability to handle animals and being able to work outdoors in all types of weather for long hours. A year later, when the Reverend Hill passed away, the property was sold and Charles found employment at '*Dunheved'* a 3,000-acre (1,214 ha) property, about 27 miles (43.5 km) from Sydney. He remained there until June 1837 where he took up an overseer position at *'Cecil Hills'*, a property owned by Sire John Wylde.

Alfred Langhorne, however, left Sydney sailed for Port Phillip on the *James Watt* to meet with his brother, George, who was now employed within this new settlement. There George introduced Alfred to Captain William Lonsdale, who surprised both brothers by declaring to be their uncle. It appears that his brother, James Faunce Lonsdale, married a lady who was closely related to the Langhorne family. Whilst the family connection was a distant one, within a new settlement, and with the position that William Lonsdale held, it would prove to be a valuable one for the Langhorne brothers as well as for William Lonsdale.

5 The Langhorne's time at Milbrodale is recognised in the naming of an area as Langhorne Creek.
6 Research undertaken on behalf of E.W. Northwood indicates that the family connection arose from Lonsdale's marriage to Martha Smythe. The Smythe and Langhorne families were connected by marriage at least twice.

Shortly after his arrival at Port Phillip, Alfred was engaged as an overseer for John Hawdon. John Hawdon was a free settlor who had established a cattle station near Batemans Bay and was overlanding cattle down to Port Phillip via Dandenong. At this time, Alfred appears to have persuaded his brother Charles to join him at the station at Dandenong, where not only did the Hawdon's have their cattle station but William Lonsdale had his horse station, *'Bigning',* where Alfred was appointed as William's station overseer.
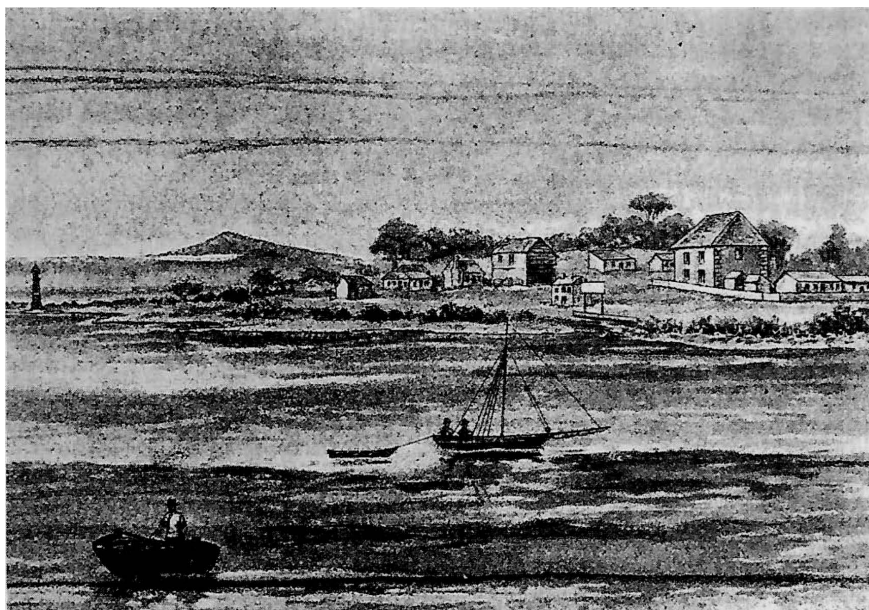
By April 1838, Alfred was again on his way north, presumably on his own enterprise, when he met up with the survivors of the William Faithfull overlanding party who had been attacked by Aborigines near Broken River, which commences in the Victorian Alps near Mansfield and flows into the Goulburn River at Shepparton. He was back in Melbourne by November where he advertised the services of his horse, Noble, at Dandenong, where paddocks and every care were provided for the mares. He also had one hundred fat bullocks and fifty rams for sale. The sheep would be sold in full fleece until 20 December, when they were due to be shorn. This advertisement indicates that Alfred was probably clearing the run of stock in readiness for another overlanding venture. Alfred Langhorne appears to have, in a very short time, learnt the skills of a stockman/overseer and possessed of a daring adventurous spirit.

Between February and April 1839, Charles Bonney pioneered a stock route westward to the Glenelg River and beyond, then along the coast to Adelaide. Alfred Langhorne followed Bonney's coastal route soon after, possibly during the period from March to September when his sale advertisement for 'small herds of milch cows' was a permanent feature within the Port Phillip Gazette. Alfred had previously met with Charles Bonney, having been introduced by their mutual acquaintance, Joseph Hawdon. By then, his brother George had resigned as missionary and was busy setting up his Yarra stock run, within the area of Kew.

By September 1839, William Langhorne, and possibly Arthur Langhorne and Edward Langhorne, had arrived at Port Phillip. They joined up with their brothers and their business 'Langhorne and Company' began dealing in stores and settlers' equipment. They established their premises in Flinders Lane and at Williamstown where they planned to specialise in supplying foodstuff to ships, seaman's clothing, and other nautical supplies. Whilst the drawback at the Williamstown settlement was the lack of fresh water, Alfred Langhorne is credited with locating the first reliable supply when he sunk a sixteen foot (4.9 m) well at the western Williamstown beach, about a half mile from the centre of the Williamstown shipping harbour. This ensured the growth of the population into the town and a steady growth in their customer base.

With the establishment of the Langhorne business, in Williamstown, and the finding of a water supply it would be safe to say that Alfred was already exploring the surrounding district for good pasture to lease. Undoubtedly, he would have heard about that flat pastureland, that lay to the west of Williamstown, and set about examining the country around Altona Bay. In fact, he could have located a suitable site well before January 1841 when the Langhorne firm advertised that they had teams of working bullocks, to hire out, on moderate terms. Bullocks would have needed good pastureland and be close to the Williamstown business.

 7 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, and Point Lonsdale were named after William Lonsdale, as was Lonsdale Street Dandenong and Mount Martha after his wife. It is believed William named the suburb of Dandenong as a translation of Dan-y-nong a name from the clans of Westernport aborigines known as Ngaruk-Willam.
 8'Milch breeds' also known as 'milk breeds' are the cows of the breeds, which produce high milk yields.

Sketch of Williamstown (1840) showing the Gellibrand Light, the You Yangs, in the background, and the Langhorne's warehouse as the most prominent building. (Attributed to Robert Hoddle, La Trobe Collection, State Library of Victoria)

The economy within Port Phillip, around the end of the 1830s, was showing signs of faltering and it was the strategy of the Langhorne brothers to return to the reliable business of stock dealing and over-landing. Alfred Langhorne was again in the saddle or sailing to New South Wales seeking out stock to purchase and drive across their various stations/properties that were situated between Melbourne and Adelaide. On 20 October 1840 Alfred purchase land adjoining the Yarra River in the Parish of Prahran covering just over 20 acres (8.1 ha) which was later to form part of Como House property.

For Alfred Langhorne there was also a very emotional draw to the settlement of Adelaide in that during his recent visits there, he had taken up the acquaintance of a very young Sarah Marianne August. Sarah was the only daughter of the late John Samuel August and Sarah August (nee Maskall). Sarah had arrived, in Adelaide, with her mother and three brothers aboard the *City of London* on 19 March 1840.

To be continued…. Alfred and Sarah marry, the Rufus River incident, the move to Melbourne and Laverton Estate.

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