

THE WOMEN OF Sunbury

by Peter Free



They made their mark

There are many women in our community of Sunbury that have made major contribution in the way we live. Some of these women were acknowledged and rewarded with British and Australian honours and others worked in their communities with little or no recognition, but they all played a part in their community and made their communities strong.

During the First World War many women supported the soldiers by knitting garments and sending care packages to the troops on the front line. They also worked on the farms helping the men bringing in the harvest.

The women of Sunbury had to overcome hardships in their daily lives. There was no articulate water supply, or electricity, they worked on the family farms, worked at the Sunbury Asylum or stayed at home and raised their families.

During the Second World War many of the women either joined the Armed Forces or joined the Land Army. People accepted that women could do work hitherto reserved for men. In Melbourne for example, the Tramways Board found a 99 per cent acceptance of female staff that in February 1942 numbered 210 women, with 20 new recruits accepted each week. The public also accepted women taxi-drivers, railway porters, telephonists at police headquarters, bread carters, and so on. In these jobs women were judged efficient and 'as good as any man'. The women of Sunbury played their roll during the Second World War. They joined committees that helped raise funds for the war effort and a number of them joined the armed forces.

In 2020 the women of Sunbury are still making enormous contributions to the Sunbury community.

I would like to thank The Baird Family, Kath Tremlett, Sandie Braun, Veronica Burgess, Pat Hill, Joy Munns, Ken Lupson, Cheryl Schembri, Annette Swaffield, and Mary Wicks for their help with the 'Women of Sunbury'.

The following are some of the women that have played a leading role in the Sunbury Community over the past 100 years.



Front Cover image: St. Mary's Church of England Lady's Cricket Team Sunbury, Circa 1903

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, which includes the Gunung Willam Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living cultures as a vital part of Australia's identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to the existing family members of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and to Elders past, present and future.

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Kathleen Mary Aitken M.B.E



Kathleen Mary Aitken was born Kathleen Mary Douglass on the 20th December 1900 at “Glen View” homestead near Bonnie Doon, her parents were sheep farmers and graziers and of Scottish descent. Kathleen came to Sunbury in 1921 and resided in Barkly Street. Here she met William Chambers Aitken whose father owned the butcher shop in Station Street Sunbury where the Olive Tree carpark is now located. On the 23rd April 1924 the couple were married at Scots Church Melbourne. Kathleen gave birth to a son William who died at a young age and a daughter Kathleen who currently resides in Barkly Street Sunbury.

Kathleen’s early community involvement was to provide assistance for William with the social activities of the Sunbury Football Club and the Sunbury Cricket Club. She was an active member of St Andrews Presbyterian Church and later became a member of the Church Board of Management and the first lady Elder. She was also a member of the Presbyterian Women’s Missionary Union and was the president of the Sunbury Branch. She was also secretary of the St. Andrews Presbyterian Church flower show committee for more than twenty years.

Kathleen was the Foundation Secretary of the Sunbury Branch of the Country Women’s Association. Later she was elected president of the Central Highlands Group of the Country Women’s Association for a two-year term and in recognition of her service to the CWA she was honoured by having bestowed on her a Life Membership of the Association.

During the Second World War, Kathleen worked with enormous energies in the interest of the soldiers. She was elected secretary of the Sunbury Return Soldiers League War Service Fund and the Salvage committee that held regular weekly meetings throughout the whole six years of hostilities and a member of the Patriotic Fund Committee. In recognition of her service to these very important committees, the Sunbury Sub-branch of the RSL presented her with a framed Certificate of Service.

Kathleen was a very active member of the Sunbury Auxiliary of the Royal Institute for the Blind and in recognition of her excellent work and dedication she was elected a Life Governor.

Kathleen was a committee member and a very active worker for the Sunbury Progress Association. She was also a member of the Official Visitors Panel to the Sunbury Mental Hospital. She was a member of the Sunbury Infant Welfare Centre Committee and a member of the Sunbury Girl Guides fund raising Committee and Patron of the Girl Guides building committee.



Kathleen was awarded the Red Cross Long Service Medal from Her Excellency, Lady Delecombe at Government House in recognition of over twenty years of dedicated service.

Kathleen was the first female member of the Sunbury Primary School committee and was secretary for many years. She was also President of the Sunbury Primary School Mothers club. She was also committee member of the Sunbury Agricultural Society Show Committee and a Life Governor of the Royal Children's Hospital. Kathleen also provided care to the Eadie family which enabled them to remain at home during their latter years.

In 1981 the Rotary Club of Sunbury awarded Kathleen the Rotary Club of Sunbury Citizen of the Year Award and in 1983 the award was renamed the Kathleen Aitken Citizen of the Year in recognition of her service to the community.

Kath Tremlett her daughter said, "She was the sort of person who took on interesting things to do and felt that she just wanted to be involved. She was the sort of person who didn't sit back and just be on the outside. In the early days Sunbury had many women's auxiliaries and all these organisations the same ladies were involved. It was a dress up occasion, when they went to a meeting; it was gloves and hats and all the rest of it. It was an important thing to do. But they all worked tremendously hard for whatever projects they were involved with".

Kathleen said 'just being able to serve the community. That was so important to her. Her greatest achievement would not have been the M.B.E or anything like that, but just being part of so many causes.

In the Sunbury Newspaper dated Saturday, 11th January 1964, the headlines read "Queen Honours Local Lady". Kathleen Mary Aitken was awarded the M.B.E (Member of the British Empire) in that year's honours list for outstanding public service and charity work. On the 20th October 1983 Kathleen Mary Aitken M.B.E passed away peacefully at her Barkly Street home.

In 2016, the Sunbury Historical & Heritage Society Inc renamed the Kathleen Aitken Outstanding Citizen Award. The criteria for this award is that nominees must be 18 years or older must live in Sunbury and must have made a significant personal contribution as a volunteer to the community of Sunbury.

Hilda Baird



Hilda receiving her Kiwanis Club of Sunbury 1988 Australia Citizen of the Year Award.



Hilda Baird unveiling the plaque to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of laying the foundation stone of the Memorial Hall in 1885

Hilda Baird (nee Balfour) was born in Sunbury and went to Sunbury State School No 1002. Her father Fred Balfour was the engineer at the Sunbury Mental Hospital and her mother who was a Davis grew up on a vineyard in Diggers Rest. Hilda worked as a Nursery House Maid at Rupertswood for the Hon Russell Clarke and was the Headmistress of Sewing Room at the Sunbury Mental Hospital. She later lived on the hospital grounds when her husband Ken Baird was appointed Secretary of the Sunbury Mental Hospital. As a child of ten years, Hilda rode with her father on his bike to Diggers Rest to watch Harry Houdini stay aloft for more than three minutes in a French Voisin biplane on 18th March 1910. Hilda's quote: 'I liked any sport. I used to play with the boys too. I'm a real tomboy I think'.

For many years Hilda was president of the Caloola Pines Golf Club and also Life Member. Hilda organised and ran many fundraising activities, and loved to have dances with the attendees dressing up in various costumes.

Hilda was Superintendent and teacher at St. Andrews Presbyterian Sunday School for 17 years, was the relief organist at St. Andrews Church and sang in the church choir. Hilda was a steward for the St. Andrews Church Flower Show and entered many exhibits. She was a valuable member of Sunbury Sub branch of the Red Cross and a member of the Sunbury Country Women's Association (CWA)

Hilda was involved with swimming carnivals at the Swimming pool at The Nook in Sunbury. The Sunbury Swimming Club was quite active and they had many swimming events. Hilda won the Ladies Stakes at a Sunbury Swimming Carnival, receiving a gold brooch that she gave to her granddaughter to look after. Hilda enjoyed playing tennis at Caloola tennis courts and she swam every day until she was in her eighties. Hilda loved to help decorate the stage for various functions in the Sunbury Memorial Hall.



Sandie receiving the Kathleen Aitken Outstanding Citizen Award. L to R Rev Gavin Ward, Sandie, Athol Guy

Sandy Braun was born in Arbroath Scotland. She came to Sunbury in 1986 and commenced working in the community of Sunbury. Sandie has been an active member of her community; she has been a leader of Girl Guides here in Sunbury as well as Tullamarine and Rochester for many years. She is currently the communications secretary of the Girl Guides Trefoil group in the Black Forest area and has held that position for 12 years. She communicates all news and guiding matters to all members, gently reminds them with follow-ups and gives little pokes when needed. Sandie is still very supportive of Girl Guides themselves by assisting at Guide meetings when asked to help leaders with their programs.

Sandie is the secretary of the Sunbury Agricultural Society and has been for the past 19 years. She organises the show schedules each year, this takes her many hours of her time. She also sends out correspondence to all the side show rides, exhibitors, and trade space exhibitors, and is the Membership and Volunteers coordinator.

Sandie has become a very active member of the AVEO Retirement Village organising activities, events and outings. She is supportive of all people who move into the village, inviting and encouraging them to come along and be a participating resident within the village community.

Sandy is a valued committee member of the Sunbury Historical & Heritage Society and was awarded the 2016 Kathleen Aitken Outstanding Citizen Award for her contribution to the Sunbury Community.

Sandie is an active member of a Macedon Ranges and surrounds community group that is a sub branch of CIKA – Cancer in Kids Association. This group actively fundraises for the research into cancer in kids having raised over \$117,000.00 towards that area within the Royal Children’s Hospital.

Sandie is regular member of St. Mary’s Anglican Church Sunbury who assists with church activities in many and varied ways and is much loved for her service to the church community. Sandie is a quiet achiever who does not seek publicity. She is a humble person who seeks to make a difference in many people’s lives, serving God and her community with distinction.

Veronica Burgess



Veronica Burgess was born 1941, and she commenced her schooling at Columbus Catholic Primary School Elwood. During her early years she attended, Madam Xenia Borovansky School of the Melbourne Academy of Russian Ballet. She also became interested in ice skating and regularly attending the St. Moritz Ice-Skating Rink located on the Esplanade at St. Kilda.

Veronica was a very good tennis player and at the age of 11 years entered her first tennis age tournament at Warracknabeal, playing in all under 12 events where she won her first singles event. Later she played "A" Pennant for Grace Park Tennis Club, Glenferrie (this was the highest standard of tennis in Australia).

During her association with Grace Park, Veronica and Margaret Smith won the Open Women's Doubles Club Championship. She continued playing "A" Grade tennis both mid-week ladies on Tuesdays and Thursdays and on Saturday afternoons, with her team winning many of these events. In 1973 Veronica and John decided to buy a new house in Sunbury and this started her involvement in the local community.

Veronica was the secretary and committee member of the Sunbury Amateur Swimming Club from 1975 to 1995. She organised and coordinated a Swim-a-thon to raise funds for the victims of the Ash Wednesday Bush Fires and she visited victims to offer any assistance needed for their everyday requirements. She was the secretary, assistant secretary and committee member of the Sunbury Lawn Tennis Club from 1975 to 1998. She was Referee, Coordinator and Principal of the Sunbury Lawn Tennis Club Junior Tennis Tournament for all ages, single and doubles events from 1989 to 1995.

Veronica served as president of the Sunbury and District Heritage Association Inc from 1989 to 2020 and has been a member since 1978. She was foundation president of the Evans Street Wildflower Grasslands and held that position from 1994 to 2011. She was foundation and committee member of Mt Holden Preservation Society now the Sunbury Conservation Society from 1992 to 2010. She was also a foundation and committee member of the Bulla Region Tourist Association from 1988 to 1995.

Veronica was a foundation and committee member of the Sunbury Cemetery Advisory Council from 1999 to 2020, now the Friends of the Sunbury Cemetery, and foundation member of the Friends of Blind Creek from 1992 to 1996. She was awarded an honorary member of the Old Sunbury Courthouse in recognition of her dedication to the Courthouse Project. For over 40 years Veronica was a volunteer collector for Red Cross.

In 1991 Veronica was elected a councillor of the Bulla Shire Council representing Sunbury West Ward. During her time as an elected councillor, she represented council on many organisations including:

- Sunbury Heights Primary School
- Sunbury Police Community Consultative Committee
- Shire of Bulla Youth Advisory Committee (Western Region)
- Shire of Bulla Heritage Study
- Shire of Bulla Local Conservation Strategy Committee
- Shire of Bulla Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
- Shire of Bulla Housing Forum
- Shire of Bulla Safe Living Working Group
- Shire of Bulla and Urban Land Authority Working Conservation Management Committee
- Shire of Bulla Interim Committee of Management of Evans Street Grassland
- Chairman of the Shire of Bulla Aboriginal Archaeology Study.

Veronica organised and arranged the financial sponsorship of the inaugural Young Achiever Australia program in the Sunbury area, an important experience for year 11 and 12 students. She has been involved with promoting Sunbury through tourism and as president of Sunbury & District Heritage Association with exhibitions in the George Evans Museum and the Sip-n-Sup celebrations from 1986-2002. The association has provided the community with a greater knowledge of local history through the following exhibitions in the George Evans Museum;

- Mayday in Pioneering Sunbury
- History of Schools in the Shire of Bulla
- Tribute to the Local Service Men and Women
- Vineyards through the Ages
- History of Sport
- Sunbury Pop Festival
- Pioneering Families of the District

Veronica's other achievements include;

- Member of the Sunbury Genealogical Society now the Sunbury Family History Society
- Queen's Baton Relay Runner 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games
- MC and steering committee member for International Women's day 2012 and also received the Senior Woman Chocolate Lily Award.
- Hume City Council, Australia Day Citizen of the Year 2003
- Pride of Australia winner for Environment Category in 2009 for the retention of the Evans Street Wildflower Grasslands.
- In 1958 awarded an Honorary Life Governor of the Royal Children's Hospital
- In 1986 was awarded a Life Member of the Sunbury Amateur Swimming Club
- Recipient of 2011 Faces of Sunbury celebrating Sunbury's 175th Anniversary.
- Hume City Council 2011 Resident of the Month for her contribution in verifying records of former residents of the Sunbury Asylum that were buried within the Sunbury.



Janet Marion Clarke (1851-1909), philanthropist, was born on 4 June 1851 at Doogallook station on the Goulburn River, Victoria, the eldest daughter of Peter Snodgrass and his wife Charlotte Agnes, née Cotton. She became governess to William Clarke's children late in the 1860s and married him on 21 January 1873; of their four boys and four girls, the eldest son and a daughter died young.

As mistress of Rupertswood, the Clarke mansion at Sunbury completed in 1876, Janet at once showed her flair for organization, combining the care of her large family with an active public life. She was the inspiration behind the lavish hospitality for which the Clarks became famous in the 1880s and 1890s, at Rupertswood.

This mansion at Sunbury was the setting for balls, luncheons, dinners, garden parties and race meetings.

At Rupertswood in 1882 Janet presented Ivo Bligh captain of the English Cricket team with a little urn containing the ashes of a bail, the urn is now contested by Australia and English Cricket teams. Janet led society in Victoria for thirty years and was a familiar figure at the races and admired at the main social events each year. On her many visits to England she was entertained as one of the best-known Australian women.

Janet and William Clarke made a significant contribution towards the building of St. Mary's Church of England. She performed the official opening of St Andrews Presbyterian Church Sunbury.

Janet felt that wealth brought her obligations to people and organizations in need. Her enthusiasm and drive made her a vigorous supporter of philanthropic, cultural, educational and political movements.

Janet's contributions to education included helping to establish the College of Domestic Economy, acting on the committee to extend Church of England schools for girls, and serving on the council of the Melbourne Church of England Grammar School for Girls. Her most notable donation was £5000 to the building in 1889 of the Hostel for Women University Students, Trinity College (Janet Clarke Hall); later she gave another £1000. In 1904 she was president of the University Funds Appeal which raised £12,000.

Janet was involved in many organisations and was at the forefront of many women's organisations. After the death of her husband in 1897 Janet used the title Lady Clarke, rather than 'Dowager' As a trustee of her husband's estate she showed herself a capable manager. Janet died on 28th April 1909.



Sunbury Red Ladies at Rupertswood, Circa 1915



Pat Hill is one of Sunbury's most active and iconic citizens who has helped and guided so many people within our community and beyond.

Pat Hill has and still is an outstanding volunteer in the Sunbury and district community, having been a resident for the past 48 years. Pat has involved herself in the true spirit of volunteerism and serving our community. Where there was a need Pat would help and if there was not an organisation to turn to for help and support, Pat would start one.

When Pat discovered that her son was addicted to drugs, she tried in vain to receive help. She attended many forums in her search for help, and soon discovered other parents like herself, were left without any help or support.

In fact, at the time there was no organisation they could turn too. So, Pat in her usual style set up the support group Parent Drug Information and Support (PDIS) becoming its driving force.

Pat in effect, is a Social worker without any formal qualifications, who spends most of her time helping those young people and their parents through the most difficult times of their lives. She educates people about the continued risks of drug use, holds parent support programmes and finds accommodation, work and support for those she helps. She works closely with young people and is confronted by many issues dealing with drug use, homelessness and mental illness through the work she believes is so important.

Pat, with the help of other volunteers had instigated fundraising activities in the local shopping complex to assist in making the general community aware of the threat that illicit drugs can have in our everyday lives.

In 2008, Pat as President of Parent Drug Information and Support, composed a Letter of Plea which was sent too many groups, private practitioners, local politicians and other organisations seeking to change the practice of "Doctor Shopping". The Government introduced a national computer site to record all medications of anti-depressants, etc. in order to stamp out this practice. Over many years as a volunteer Pat has also been involved with the following organisations:

- The Sunbury Community Health Centre Fundraising Auxiliary
- President of Parent Drug Information and Support (PDIS) operating through the Sunbury Community Health Centre

- Lifeline and Family Drug Health
- The Sunbury Police Community Consultative Committee
- Rupertswood Junior Football Club for the past 14 years
- The Sunbury Ladies Netball Association, an executive committee member for over 25 years. She was instrumental in starting the first mixed netball team in Sunbury.
- Coach and umpire of the Junior Netball Team at both the Sunbury Primary School and the Kismet Park Primary School for over 14 years, nurturing young sports stars.

Over the years Pat has continued to assist in many other organisations within Sunbury and district. However, it was her 10 year involvement as a volunteer at “Caloola” (formerly the Sunbury Mental Hospital) which was a stand-alone moment in Pat’s Life. For over a 10 year period, she was instrumental in turning some of the aged and elderly clients’ lives around, by hosting clients in her own home to encourage them to develop life skills and to gain confidence to lead a normal life outside the Institution.



Today, Pat is more famously known around Sunbury, the Hume District and internationally for initiating the program “Parents of Drugs & Alcohol Affected Youth” and the creation of the Sunbury Street Surfer or better known as simply Pat’s Bus. The idea of creating the Sunbury Street Surfer bus was brought about by Pat’s voluntary work over several years with Sunshine Police Senior Constable Jon Reader who initiated the pilot project in the City of Brimbank.

Since 2001 when the bus was donated by transport company WestTrans, Pat sought the help of students from the Sunbury Downs Secondary College to change the appearance of the bus and to create an environment appealing to the youth. Hence, students donated their time and their creative abilities to bring Pat’s Bus to life. Pat along with volunteer bus drivers (normally from the Sunbury Police Station), were constantly invited to attend Skate Parks, School Fetes, Blue Light Discos and Community Festivals in the north and western suburbs, doing invaluable work as a mobile outreach program.

Since the introduction of the Sunbury Street Surfer Bus in 2002 and over its first 8 months of operation there had been many positive outcomes and activities that the Street Surfer Bus had been involved in. During December 2002 Pat’s situation was a feature on the ABC 7.30 Report by Lisa Whitehead entitled ‘When it comes to drugs, one person can make a difference.’ In 2009 Pat’s Bus was invited to help the kids and their families affected by the Black Saturday Bush Fires. Pat and her driver went to the burnt-out towns and brought with them, a hairdresser and a bus load of supplies and donations.

Pat Hill (cont).

Together they volunteered many hours of their time in assisting numerous families in the Kinglake community to get back on their feet. Today, there are five Street Surfer buses doing similar work within Victoria and Pat has provided the How to Guide for the Irish Police Force, who came to Sunbury to meet the powerhouse we all know affectionately as Pat. During this time, Pat went on to become a self-taught social worker, working tirelessly nights and weekends to help our youth who were vulnerable and who were caught up in drug addiction, working with the police, doctors, local traders, teachers and anyone else who would listen and help.

The Sunbury Street Surfer Bus known as Pat's Bus was travelling to other towns and suburbs to show other communities how successful the Surfer Bus had become and how it could be utilised in saving people who were caught up in similar drug related circumstances.

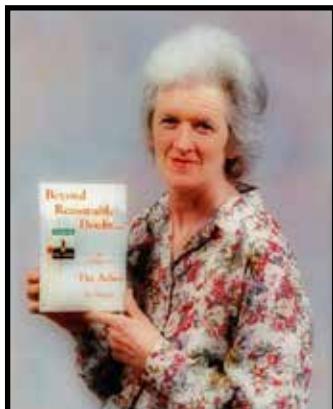
During 2011, the Sunbury Street Surfer bus visited the Eaglehawk Dahlia and Arts festival with over 500 children visiting. In fact, the Rotary Club of Bendigo-Strathdale was leading a project to raise funds with the idea of providing a similar Street Surfer Bus for the City of Greater Bendigo.

Due to her work over many years, Pat Hill has been recognised with the following Awards:

- Victorian Senior of the Year- Premier's Award 2012.
- Victorian Government 2001 International Year of the Volunteers 'Certificate of Appreciation'
- Hume City Council 2002 Australia Day Citizen
- 2003 Victoria Centenary Medal
- Rotary Club of Sunbury 2004 Kathleen Aitken Citizen of Distinction Award
- Digger's Rest Primary School 'Certificate of Appreciation'
- 2011 Sunbury International Women's Day Chocolate Lily Recipient
- 2011 Hume City Councils 175 Faces of Sunbury

After 12 years serving Sunbury's youth, and after thinking long and hard, Pat had decided to pass on her bus to Les Twentyman and his 20th Man Fund. Part of the agreement was for the Sunbury Street Surfer bus to remain linked back to Sunbury and not just the western suburbs of Moonee Ponds, Hobson's Bay and Maribyrnong, but also to have youth workers, and even doctors connected to the bus, through government funding.

Pat stated that, "one of my hardest decisions was to give up the bus as it has become a very important part of my life". She went on to say, "Time had now come for me to have a bit of a life of my own". Today Pat appears regularly as a Guest Speaker where there is a need for people to hear "her story". Pat is an unassuming selfless woman who deserves greater recognition for the hours of voluntary work she commits to her community and beyond.



Joy Munns was born in Australia, but lived and married in London where she spent 13 years. Joy, whilst living in London worked for the BBC and during those years cultivated a passion for history and historical buildings. Upon returning to Australia with her husband John and their children they settled in Sunbury in 1983 where her passion for history was rekindled.

While living in Sunbury Joy wrote two books relating to the history of Sunbury. The first book was Rupertswood – A Living History. She tells the story of a mansion that was home to some of the more notables of our society. The book follows the fortunes of this home through its various owners and their influences upon it and the community.

The second book Beyond Reasonable Doubt was about the birthplace of the ashes. It tells the reader that Sunbury was the place where Janet Lady Clarke presented the little urn to English Captain Ivo Bligh at Rupertswood. Today this urn is what Australia and England play for. Joy spent many hours researching and writing this fascinating history and has put Sunbury into cricket history.

Joy was the co-owner of Fletchers Photographics, Evans Street Sunbury. She was a member of the Sunbury Historical & Heritage Society and a member of the Sunbury Courthouse Restoration Committee.

Joy was the president of the George Evans Advisory Committee that organised displays and exhibitions in the museum. She was a member of the Sip n Sup organising committee that became one of Sunbury's favourite events. With her passion for historical building Joy was a guide showing visitors Rupertswood Mansion. She was a Rupertswood Battery Mum, helping with many projects relating to the battery.

Joy was a member of the Ashes Commemorative Event Committee that organised the cricket match between Australia's Alan Border X1 and England's David Gower X1 at Rupertswood on the 18th January 1995. The match attracted over 15,000 people and put Sunbury on the map as the Birthplace of the Ashes beyond reasonable doubt.



Joy Munns & Michael Clarke

Maggie Lupson Story



I was born at my parent's farm on the Diggers Rest/Bulla Road, 9 miles from Bulla, 3 miles to Diggers Rest and 7 mile to Sunbury. A midwife attended my mother at my birth in 1919. My family consisted of 4 sisters and a brother. I was the second youngest, and only one sister and I are still living. One sister passed away in 1928 after years of rheumatic fever. Also in 1928 the eldest sister married and went with her husband to live on a dairy farm where the Tullamarine Airport now stands.

My dad had a mixed farm and had a team of Clydesdale horses that used to plough, harrow, sow grain and pull the binder etc. Our crops were mostly oats, binders cut the crop into sheaves, and then they were picked up by hand and made into stooks, about eight to ten sheaves to a stook. Hard on our hands there were no leather gloves.

My sister and I always helped after school and at weekends to see the farmers had the horses and wagons and it was great to them all lined up at the Diggers Rest hay and chaff mill near the Diggers Rest Railway Station. The mill was owed by Schult, Barrie and Robinson and they employed a number of local men for many years.

My father and other farmers would take a wagon loaded with hay and pulled by a team of horses to the Haymarket on the corner of Flemington and Sydney Roads. After delivering the hay the farmers stayed overnight at the Haymarket Hotel. I think it was at the corner of Peel Street and Flemington Road. Pigs were also taken by dray with a pig net over it. The place they were taken to was where the Royal Melbourne Hospital now stands.

The Royal Melbourne Hospital was being built in the late 30's or early 40's during the war years. The Americans completed the hospital and had use of it during the Second World War. We drove buggies and or jinkers to the city. Used one stable "Dillon's" in Napier Street, Essendon and another in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne near "Tait's Stores" and you could buy everything there. Jinkers had steel wheels and then solid rubber tyres.

My father owned a steam traction engine, threshing machine, chaffcutter, hay press and a Furphy water tank, and when required by farmers he travelled the district. He employed 12 to 15 men and when my brother was old enough he went by train to the Working Men's College in Melbourne to qualify for his steam ticket. He was away many weeks at a time.

Other threshing machine teams operated at Romsey, Gisborne and Melton etc. Hard times in the late 20's and early 30's with a terrible drought, the crops did not grow, but we were lucky we had underground wells for our water. We had a big stable constructed from bluestone that my father built in 1911 for our horses and hay. In the back section we had a chaff cutter and a huge bin for the chaff. We girls had to assist dad to cut the hay, one to pass the sheaves up to dad to put through the chaff cutter and one to clean the chaff away, a dirty job, but all horses and cows were fed by chaff, horses in the stalls and cows in a nose bag in a yard.

Mother and sisters milked about 15 cows and we had to help milk before and after school. After milking we would separate the milk from the cream with a big hand turned separator. The skim milk went to hand rear calves and pigs. Cream was churned into butter for our own use, but some was sold to our grocer, down near the Essendon Post Office. The remainder was put into cream cans and taken by horse and cart to the Diggers Rest Railway Station which then went to Holderson & Neilson in Melbourne.

We rode our ponies to school, two or more to a pony. There was one store, a little shop and Eadie's, Sunbury supplied our bread and our telephone was on a party line (more than one phone on one line) you could hold a meeting with your neighbours.

Every couple of years a steam train visited for a few days, it was called 'The Better Farming Train'. The train had many carriages and displayed farm equipment, kitchen utensils, dress making equipment, school supplies and much more. The whole district visited the train to search for anything that was new or some item that was required at the time. In 1929 we acquired our first car, we drove by horse and buggy to church at Bulla nine miles and up and down two big hills, sometimes twice a day and all gravel roads of course. Electricity was put through the district in the mid 20's. We rode our horses to Sunbury for the Sunbury Show and later years for football. The ground was where Coles now stands, also the flower show, great meeting place for oldies all came back at night and Mr Aitken auctioned what was left. We had bay trips would catch the early morning steam train to Port Melbourne, boarded the "Weeroona" and sailed down the bay to Queenscliff or Sorrento returning at night. Big crowds and the entire district went.

Our social life was mostly political meetings dad was very involved in the Country Party in power in Victoria for many years. Mr Dunstan was premier. There was a Women's Section and a younger set, of which I was Secretary. We ran dances in a hall near where the old school now stands. Dances on Saturday night, one shilling for girls and a plate of supper, one and sixpence for boys. There were great dances at Diggers Rest, Toolern Vale, Bulla and Sunbury. A ball was held quite often, when we had a four piece band and it went until 2am to 2.30am. My mother made the coffee, made of ground coffee and milk and water, put in a cream can and taken up to the hall and put into the copper, hot water round it.

Maggie Lupson Story (cont).

I married in 1940, come to Sunbury 1948 with family three boys. Homes hard to rent and only work was up at the Mental Hospital, until a company transferred an Army hut to Barkly Street to where the car park now stands. I think they made slippers etc.

Later Yakka Overalls purchased it about 1950 and was great for the town. All ages worked there, from older women to girls. Mr Dave Laidlaw was the owner and the boss and was a very good man. He started the business with his mother doing the sewing and designing and helping to make the overalls, mostly boys then.

I was employed there from 1951-1958, over eighty women employed. Piece work was introduced in 1958 and I left and went up to the Mental Hospital where I was employed as a seamstress in the sewing room and eventually taking charge until I transferred to the position of Deputy Housekeeper and Hostel Supervisor. I retire in 1979.

Sons went to local Primary School and then by bus to Essendon Technical School. Late 1950's Progress Bus Line was employed by the Government to take staff from the Hospital and local as well to Melbourne. Departing about 7am, terminating at St. Francis Church in the morning. 5pm and 11.30pm was from Ball and Welch in Flinders Street. Also Saturday services for the families of patients.

Taken over by Tullamarine Bus Lines about 1962, bus now terminates at Moonee Ponds. Sunbury's population was only about until Payne's Properties bought land west of the railway line in the sixties and Tullamarine Airport was built. Payne's sold house packages, land, house, fences, paths etc. at reasonable cost and everything went ahead very quickly.

A Police and Citizen's Youth Club was formed in the early fifties and I helped there for years. Many attended and we had some very good local instructors and helpers. Maggie worked tirelessly and effectively to keep the club going, sometime in very difficult circumstances. She deserves the greatest praise for her devotion to the club.



Hazel Ruth McKay came to Sunbury as a young bride – a city girl who found Sunbury quite a challenge. However she settled in and opened a hairdressing salon in Evans Street where clients were delighted to have their care provided by a George’s stylist. Hazel quickly became involved in Sunbury life. When she and her husband Alan had their children Scott and Jane she became a vital part of the committee working for the establishment of St Andrews Kindergarten, Sunbury’s original kinder and was overjoyed when they reached their goal and the kinder became a reality.

For many years she was the face of Sunbury Pharmacy, efficient, cheerful and compassionate. Hazel’s faith was unwavering and she supported St Andrews Uniting Church in so many ways, from Parish Council to Flower Show and to helping parishioners in need and always with a smile and a plate of food.

Of recent times she had been an integral part of Kids Unplugged with weekly mornings for mums, dads, grandparents to take pre-kinder little people to play and socialise. That activity captured her heart for the last fifteen years, she never her enthusiasm and love for those Tuesday mornings. Recently the Sunbury History & Heritage Society presented Hazel with a Quiet Achiever Award celebrating her selfless contribution to the life in Sunbury for so many years and how grateful we are for her example. The Award will now be known as the “Hazel McKay Quiet Achiever Award”

Sadly Hazel has since passed away



Kinder Staff and committee members Beth McKinnon, Marg Treweek and Hazel McKay

“ Her kindness was legendary ,”

Cheryl Schembri



In May 1993 **Cheryl Schembri** received an invitation from the Shire of Bulla Conservation Officer to assist with the Railway Station refurbishment by establishing a garden. Work began in September 1993 with a design from the Public Transport Corporation and assistance from Andrew Wardlaw, local nurseryman. She organised working bees to make the garden ready for the opening on 29th November 1993 and Alan Brown, Minister for Transport presented Cheryl, as the representative of Sunbury Garden Club, with a plaque which was later placed in the garden.

In 1995 Cheryl formed a committee to discuss, organise and plan future development at the Sunbury Station Garden including a compost bin, watering system, plantings, working bees and special displays.

On May 8th May 1994, Cheryl and two other members attended a special council function to be presented with a plaque for winning the Urban City Pride Section Tidy Towns Award that year.

Cheryl organised the purchase a lawn mower and rostered volunteers to regularly mow the lawn. On the 13th June 1996 Cheryl, as president of the Sunbury Garden Club was presented with a Keep Australia Beautiful Certificate of Appreciation from Alan Brown, Minister for Transport.



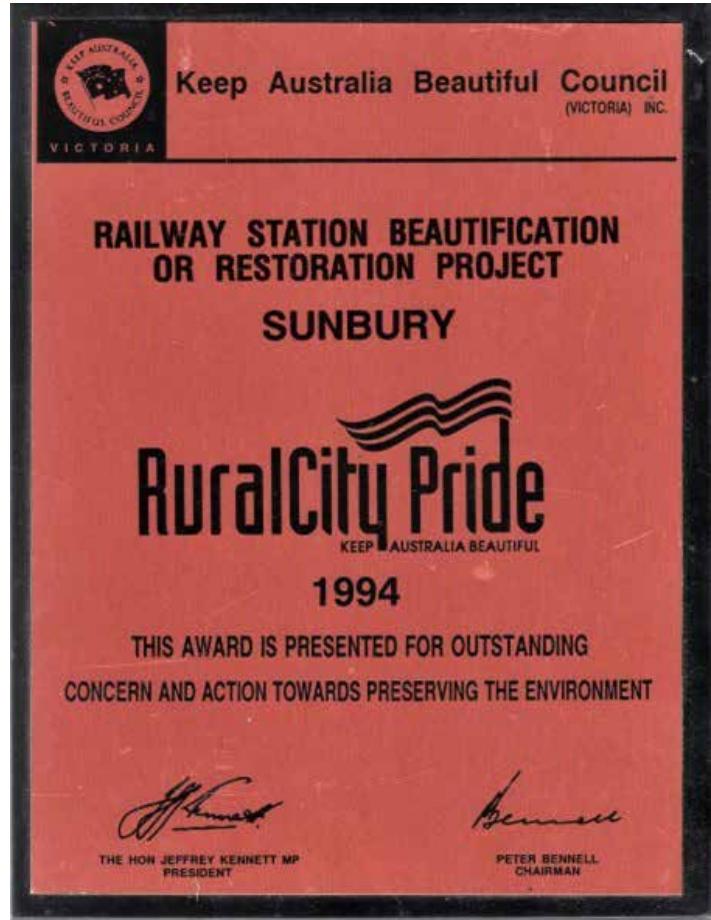
Cheryl and members of the Sunbury Garden Club took pride in the station garden and made sure it was well looked after. On the 26th November 1996 Cheryl and members of the Sunbury Garden Club were presented with a plaque for winning the Community Group Award from City Pride, Keep Australia Beautiful. Presentation was held at the Melbourne Town Hall and Cheryl attended with the treasurer. In May 1997 The Sunbury Garden Club was represented by their president Cheryl for accepting a Certificate of Appreciation for Keep Australia Beautiful for outstanding concern and action towards preserving the Environment.

In 2000 the year of the Olympics Cheryl and members of the Sunbury Garden Club organised to plant a special display with pansies and alyssum of the Olympic rings in one of the front beds and a gold and green display in the other front flower bed.

On the 29th October 2003 the Sunbury Garden Club celebrated 10 years of looking after and developing the Sunbury Railway Garden. Cheryl organised a special celebration at the Railway Station attended by Brian Klemm from Keep Australia Beautiful, two representatives from Hume Council Parks Department, Sunbury Station Staff and member of the Sunbury Garden Club. They had afternoon tea and champagne provided by a member of the Sunbury Garden Club. Andrew Berry, Sunbury Station Master unveiled a plaque in the Garden.

Sunbury Garden Club volunteers have been maintaining the garden, starting with 5 members and finally with 3, Joy O'Connor, Sandie Braun and Cheryl Schembri. The club received a grant from Keep Victoria Beautiful Stations, Right on Track section for a renovation project which the club have been unable to complete because of Covid-19. The Garden Club receives a grant each year which pays for professional lawn mowing, purchase of plants and fertiliser.

Cheryl Schembri has been the president of the Sunbury Garden for over 20 years and it has been her leadership and enthusiasm that made the Railway Garden Project a success.





Annette Swaffield grew up in Gippsland and arrived in Sunbury as a young 20-year-old newly graduated teacher in January 1967 and still residence in Sunbury – marrying Kevin Swaffield and raising two daughters – Tressa and Narelle.

Annette was a teacher at Sunbury Primary School No 1002 at the Macedon Street site for 3 years. She was the Infant Mistress for Grades Prep – 2 in those years. Other teaching positions have been at Mt. Carmel Primary School, Gisborne Primary School, Bolinda Primary School and St. Anne's Primary School. She became librarian at St. Anne's and continued this love, volunteering with library at Learmonth St Kindergarten when grandchildren attended there.

On arrival in Sunbury, she joined St. Mary's Anglican Church and has been a continuous working member since then. She has had many roles within the church including lay worship leader, Bible study leader, church choir, catering team, church cleaning. She was a member of the Ladies Fellowship being President and Secretary and member of the Parish Vestry/Parish council. She was present for the 100th Anniversary and was a member of the celebration committee for the church's 140th and 150th Anniversaries.

Annette has also been a part of the St Mary's mission team that travel to Zambia, to an isolated rural area to support orphans, widows, and vulnerable children in the area of Chibobo and made five visits there – being a team leader for the last 2 of those visits. She worked with the women of the community teaching them to sew, enabling them to make school uniforms for the children and items to sell to generate income. Annette played with the children, helped them with schoolwork and improved their English. She actively worshipped with them, taking major roles within their church services and helped in the building of a Health Centre, a maternity ward and a secondary school as well as restoring their church.

Annette was invited to the Sunbury Guides and transferred to Sunbury as a qualified leader of Guides 11-16 year olds. Opened Sunbury Ranger Guides 14 – 18 years and spent 45 years of Sunbury Brownie/ Guides 7-11, Member of Girl Guides Victoria's Brownie committee. Opened Sunbury Lead beater Guides in 2014 5-7 year olds and still currently leading that unit. Annette is a hard working member of the Sunbury Guide Hall Building committee. Hume District contact leader as well as Region Leader of Black Forest Region and Assistant State Commissioner for Girl Guides Victoria.

Annette is a Member of Girl Guides Victoria's State Council and 9 years as member of the State Executive. She served Guides Victoria as a trainer of new and established leaders for 35 years, qualifying as a National Trainer for Girl Guides Australia.

She is a Member of Girl Guides Australia training committee and Girl Guides Victoria Training Committee. She held World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts training qualification. She was State Advisor for Junior Leader Guides for 4 years, Asia Pacific Chairperson for Friends of Sangam (one of Girl Guides 5 world centres), She was the Convenor of British Commonwealth Leaders Event for the Melbourne Commonwealth Games. Annette was a member of the committee for Asia Pacific Young Leaders Conference, Melbourne. She was awarded Emu Award, bar to the Emu and Red Kangaroo award for sustained and intensive services to Girl Guides Australia.

With arrival of children – became involved with many local communities – being active at St Andrew's Kindergarten, Sunbury Primary school - supporting classroom teachers and being a member of the Mother's Club and Braemar College for 3 years as the Convenor of their Debutante balls each year.

Foundation member of the Sunbury Red Cross – memories of home nursing the Eadie family at their Brook St home in their final months. This also led to the establishment of the Blood bank visiting Sunbury on a regular basis and members providing donors with their refreshments.

Sunbury Library – delivered monthly supply of books to aged care facilities.

For the last 18 years have been a part of Sunbury's Australia Day celebrations coordinating Sunbury Girl Guides to conduct the flag raising ceremony. Last 2 years, member of committee organising the event.

Committee member for the Inaugural ANZAC Youth Vigil conducted here in Sunbury in 2019, this was the first such event to be organised at this level in Victoria. She partook in the Sunbury Winter Night shelter making meals for nights at St Mary's and doing night shift duties.

Annette supported her husband Kevin, as member of Sunbury Kiwanis Club since it's charter through his many roles there as a member and more recently as an active member of the Hume Men's Shed here in Sunbury.

Annette is very privileged to be recognised as a part of this community –

- Kiwanis Citizen of the Year award
- In 2007 was awarded the Kathleen Aitken Outstanding Citizen Award
- Awarded the International World Day of Women's, Hume Council, Chocolate Lily
- Awarded the Order of Australia Medal for services to Guiding and Local Community.



Nurses at the Sunbury Mental Hospital, Circa Unknown



Sunbury Ladies Football Team, Circa Unknown

Kath Tremlett



Kath and her horse Budget, Circa 1938

Kath Tremlett was born in Sunbury in 1932 where she spent most of her life. Kath attended Sunbury State School then went and studied at Methodist Ladies College, Melbourne. Kath is the daughter of William Aitken and Kathleen Aitken (nee Douglas), her father was the local butcher and like his wife Kathleen, was involved in many organisations in the Sunbury community. Kath followed in her parents footsteps becoming extremely active in community work and fundraising.

Kath at the age of five years old was the youngest competitor at the 1938 Sunbury Horse Show at which she received a trophy.



Kath is the student teacher on the left, Circa 1950



Kath Tremlett receiving the Kiwanis Club of Sunbury Australia Day Citizen of the year award, Circa 1988

On leaving school Kath became a student teacher at Sunbury State School and after twelve months decided that teaching was not her vocation.

Kath's community service included the following:

- Kath was the secretary of St. Andrews Uniting Church Flower Show committee for 35 years. She was a member of the St. Andrews Kindergarten Committee and secretary of the Presbyterian Women's Mission Union and held that position for 10 years, Kath was the coordinator of the garden competition for the St. Andrews Flower show.

- Kath was a member of the Sunbury Primary School Mother's Club and a member of the school fundraising committee. She taught Religious instruction at Sunbury Primary School during the 1960's. She was also a member of the Sunbury High School Auxiliary (Worked on many projects in the early years of the school) and for many years a volunteer worker at the Sunbury High School Canteen.
- Kath was an examiner for proficiency badges for the Sunbury Girl Guides.
- Kath is a member of the Sunbury Agricultural Show Committee and was the coordinator for the Sunbury Primary School Mothers Club who ran the catering at the Sunbury Agricultural Show in the 1960's. She organised the Miss Showgirl competition for 30 years and for many years Kath organised and ran the poster completion. Posters were designed by the Sunbury and District Primary Schools students and were judged and displayed at the Show.
- From 1964 to 1996 Kath was the compere at the Shire of Bulla Presidential Debutante Ball. She made sure the debts were presentable and announced the debts and their partners on entering the dance floor.
- Kath assisted her children in running many fundraising stalls and activities for the Royal Children's Hospital from 1966 to 1972. Kath was secretary of Sunbury's 150th Anniversary Ball Committee. The, with 190 guests, was held in the Memorial Hall where the Mayor of Sunbury in England attended.
- Kath was a member of the Liberal Party for 40 years and was secretary of the Sunbury Branch for 27 years. She was the Sunbury Branch delegate for State and Federal Electorate Committees.
- Kath was secretary of the Sunbury Historical & Heritage Society from 1994 to 2016 and she is now the Vice-President and has worked with enthusiasm to promote the Society and the history of Sunbury. In her younger years Kath helped her mother Kathleen Aitken (MBE) with many causes, including Red Cross, CWA, the Blind Auxiliary stalls, local dances and fundraising. She also helped her father and mother with fundraising for the Sunbury football and cricket teams.
- Kath worked as the volunteer coordinator at Caloola Centre Sunbury in the early nineteen eighties. She also helped with the care of the Eadie Family so that the three remaining members of the family could live in their own home "Dunblane".
- In 1989 Kath was awarded the Rotary Club of Sunbury's Kathleen Aitken Outstanding Citizen Award. She is a life member of the Sunbury Agricultural Show Committee. Kath is also a Life Member of the Sunbury Historical & Heritage Society. In 1988 she was awarded the Kiwanis Club of Sunbury Australia Day Citizen Award for her contribution to the community of Sunbury.

Memories of Sunbury - By Kath Tremlett

(extract of the Kath Tremlett's talk at Sunbury's 175th Anniversary Dinner in 2011)

This is a nostalgic look back at My Sunbury so please come along with me.

My mother, Kathleen Douglass came to Sunbury in 1921 when her brother and brother-in-Law were given Soldiers Settlement Land at Redstone Hill after World War 1.

My dad- Bill (Billy) Aitken came in 1922 to open a butcher shop. These lovely people met, fell in love and married in 1924. After a long time and some heart break — I arrived.

My early memories include: My cubby house in the mirror bush, riding my little Shetland pony at home and at the Sunbury Show, being at Emu Bottom for the unveiling of the Centenary fountain, being upended into the pig trough in my brand new coat & the sophistication of sitting at a table in Jack Isaac's shop, eating ice cream from a little silver dish.

My Sunbury was a little county town, surrounded by a solid farming district and with a large Lunatic Asylum up on the hill.

It was three main churches that each provided a meeting place and social focus, as well as religious care and comfort. The C.W.A, Blind Auxiliary, Girl Guides, Sporting Clubs and Lodges all played their part in the social scene in a tight knit community.

It was State School No 1002, eight grades, 80 kids, two rooms and three teachers. We played Cricket, marbles, rounders, hopscotch, boys saluting the flag each Monday morning, everyone reciting the oath and singing "God save the King". St Mary's Catholic School was close by and there was a certain rivalry between the two.

It was my dad's butchers shop meat hanging on the rails, sawdust on the floor, a customer outside in her jinker and pony waiting to be served. It was my dad's horse plus cart bolting with dad in hot pursuit on his push bike, they both arrived back at the shop breathless and almost at the same time. It was me going to the convert with six penny worth of cat's meat and suddenly being surrounded by nuns. The holy pictures and the orange eased the fright. It was dad's phone call every Monday morning JA1138 to order his sausages, Pork German and other small goods.

It was Bill Kearney's Barber's Shop, with a sign in the window saying "Melbourne haircuts repaired here". It was a customer asking for a "singe" and Bill had absolutely no idea, but he obliged by lighting a page of "The Herald" and wafting it round the poor man's head until the charred pieces fluttered down. Fortunately a bucket of water was handy.

It was the Post Office, a very busy place, with a manual exchange, the girls knew everything, everyone's number, where the fire was, who won the football and lots more as well.

It was Mr Lloyd the chemist, affectionately known as "Lloydy" who gave medical advice and veterinary advice, rendered first aid often to the butcher over the road, weighed babies made up all the pills, medicines and ointments, left scripts out in the letter box for after-hours customers to collect and never sold methylated spirits on Sundays.

The railway station, early train for workers going to work for H.V McKay, annual excursion train to Mordialloc, trains taking on water before tackling the down line to Bendigo, theatre train, a rail motor at midnight on Saturdays. The papers, mail and films coming in the guards van of the passenger trains. The Station Master delaying, everything for the late comers who would be racing up the street to catch the 7.45am train.

The newsagent with a well-worn front step and selling papers, magazines, school supplies, cakes, lollies and ice cream, and a separate room, a surgery for the visiting dentist. The Davies family bought that shop the year I was born and the 3rd and 4th generations are now involved.

It was horse racing, Squizzy Taylor was supposed to have attended on occasions, greyhound open coursing in local paddocks.

It was wartime with rationing of meat, sugar, tea, butter, clothing and petrol, folks learned to cope in most ingenious ways. Depression times had taught them to be resourceful.

It was the Red Cross and volunteers who made camouflage nets, sub-mariners oily jumpers, knitted socks and balaclavas and packaged parcels for prisoners of war, which only Red Cross could deliver.

It was the R.S.L caring for the families of servicemen. It was Uncle Arthur with a shed full of Molotov Cocktails — in case.

It was John Moran in his sailor's uniform, so handsome.

It was over worked Dr Cameron.

Movies in the Memorial Hall on Wednesday nights and two shows on Saturdays and if it was a "cowboy" matinee the young cowboys had to check the guns and holsters at the ticket box and collect them for a street gunfight at interval, and check them in again to collect later.

It was Brigadier General Clark from "Craiglee".

Kath Tremlett (cont).

It was Mr McCormack, the Shire Secretary, his office in the Memorial Hall, his wife helping at rate collection time. There was a Medical Officer, Health Inspector, Engineer. He ruled the council and the councillors most efficiently.

It was Fred Watts Mr Everything in the 1920's and 30's.

It was a special train bringing horses, competitors and visitors to the Sunbury Horse Show and on the day a grand luncheon with speeches, held in a large marquee. It was Harry Muir's Garage.

It was everyone turning out when the fire bell rang.

It was having delicious bread home delivered and the milkman coming to the door and serving milk from the can into your billy or jug.

Michael and John McMahon, father and son, both Shire of Bulla Councillors and serving terms as Shire President.

It was Clarke's Rupertswood being sold to H. V. McKay and sold it again when he died suddenly, next buyer Mr Naughton sold to the Salesian Fathers and they established a boy's school.

It was Eric Boardman, like his father before him, who printed "The Sunbury News", showed the movies and was involved in every aspect of Sunbury's life. Eric was truly "Mr Sunbury".

It was Dadda and Mumma Baker who ran a Hire Car Service and operated the State Savings Bank.

It was McMahon's Dairy donating milk for all the large social functions.

It was the ladies decorating the stage in the Memorial Hall for balls, cutting sandwiches, having a dance or two, serving supper and cleaning up next morning.

It was Les Aldridge and Kismet Park Stud with its magnificent horses.

The Eucharistic Festival at the Salesian College, special trains, hundreds of people and Archbishop Mannix.

It was Ernie Free and his horse Dolly.

People dealing month about with the local shops, it was Ivy Clyne's and her property by the creek. It was Fred Norris and his poems, Jimmy Walsh and his Tow Truck.

It was Agnes Eadie insisting on making her own tomato sauce until she was 92 and being ever so peeved at the Queen when she didn't receive a birthday card on her 101st birthday, having got one the year before.

It was Bert Eadie travelling in his covered wagon delivering bread twice a week to the Diggers Rest farmers. Dances, Euchre Parties, Belle of the Balls, cricket and football played where Sunbury Square now stands. It was General stores, Drapery shops, Bootmaker, Blacksmith and still three pubs.

It was a grand new hall, after the old dilapidated one mysteriously burnt down and the fire brigade took a very long time to arrive.

It was huge celebrations and later an official banquet when Sunbury Footballers at last defeated the old rival Romsey to win the premiership and the best and the bravest of all that team was Roger Free.

It was "Back to Sunbury" crammed-with festivities night and day.

It was ANZAC Day marches and church services, eighty years of flower shows and S.E.S workers out in thunder storms restoring power.

It was Win Williamson becoming an "Aussie" at the age of 98 years.

It was a President of the Sunbury Football Club, who shall remain nameless, but bore a strong resemblance to my dad (William Aitken) deciding that the footballers needed a little "nip" at three quarter time to warm them up, so he had a bottle of sweet sherry in his overcoat pocket and we found out later he had a bottle of dry sherry in the other pocket.

It was everybody attending and supporting each other's functions.

It was a military funeral for Larry Shepherd a local lad killed in Vietnam.

It was working at the Mental Hospital when the migrants came with their unpronounceable names and their unbelievable stories of survival and changed the perspective of our town.

It was meeting and marrying a young chap from St. Kilda and producing three little Sunburnians and then it was Billy carting, pop bands and drumming.

It was my mother's (Kathleen Aitken) M.B.E (Member of the British Empire Medal) Citizenship Award and her Community Service.

It was Mother's Clubs, school canteens, fashion parades and thirty years of Shire of Bulla Debutante Balls.

It was seeing Sunbury grow and grow and change and develop, but always still my town. Tonight, we salute and remember and marvel at the ghosts of Sunbury's past and wish Sunbury a wonderful and prosperous future. Let us take the time to enjoy and thoroughly appreciate Sunbury's present.

Mary Wicks O.A.M



Mary Wicks was born Mary Duggan in Sunbury and has lived in the town all her life. She attended Our Lady of Mount Carmel Primary School and continued her education at boarding school. After leaving school Mary involved herself as a volunteer in the Sunbury community which continues through to today.

Her voluntary service has been varied and includes work within Our Lady of Mt Carmel Parish, sporting organisations, the interest of her family and the wider community with the aim of improving opportunities available to all residents through social interaction.

Mary was very involved with Our Lady of Mt Carmel Parish. She organised dances and social outings through Young Christian Workers (YCW) in the 1950's. She was president of Our Lady of Mt Carmel Mothers Club, fundraising for projects within the school, tuck shop duties. She accompanied students on excursions, a member of the Parish Education Board, a Catechist educating and supporting children not attending the Parish school. Mary was rostered on to read at church services, to clean the church and provided and to arrange flowers. A member of the Evergreen group, serving at the piety stall, membership of the Josephite group, involved in the church historical group, she contributed towards a book written on the history of the church and gathering and displaying of historical items.

Mary's sporting achievement included a member of Our Lady of Mt Carmel Tennis Club, she was a member, treasurer, secretary and ladies captain of the Sunbury Pines Golf Club from the 1970's to 1990's. She was also secretary of the Goonawarra Golf Club and actively involved with the club in staging the Goonawarra golf classic in the early 2000's.

Mary was actively involved in all groups her children were involved in. She was secretary of St. Andrew Kindergarten, secretary of the Sunbury Pony Club. She was involved with the 1st Sunbury Brownies and her roles included being an assessor for the First Aid Badges, being the First Aider on brownie camps and actively involved in fundraising for the building of the Guide Hall. She was also a member of the Parent committee of the 1st Sunbury cubs.

Mary supported her husband Jack whilst he played cricket during the 1960's by serving afternoon teas on match day. She also supported Jack when he was president of the Sunbury Sub-branch of the Returned Service League (RSL) to organise balls and social events.

Mary is a very active member of the Red Cross. She is a blood donor and acting in the role of community first aid trainer. She has been a member of Australian Red Cross since the late 1960's with membership of the Sunbury Branch and continues today with membership of the Darraweit Guim Branch. Mary is a collector for the annual Red Cross appeal. In 2010 she received the Australian Red Cross Long Service Award followed by the Red Cross Service Award in 2015 and an Outstanding Service Award in 2016. She was chairperson of Zone 2 from 2014-2016 and is currently deputy chairperson of Zone 2.

Mary's other community activities include, president of the local Legacy group, president of the committee of management of the Sunbury U3A and arranges guest speakers, a steward at the Sunbury Agricultural Show, a member of the committee formed to raise money for the building of a public hospital in Sunbury with involvement in the running of weekly bingo sessions. She was a former member of the Sunbury CWA where she regularly assisted with the transportation of older members. She was a volunteer at the Sunbury information Centre which involved the promotion of the local community to visitors and a volunteer to St Vincent de Paul opportunity shop.

In 2019 the Sunbury Historical & Heritage Society awarded Mary Wicks the Kathleen Aitken Outstanding Citizen Award for her commitment and dedication to the Sunbury Community.

Mary has contributed significantly and extensively within the local community over many years and continues to play an active role in community life. Many leads by example, is respected for her voluntary work and mentors others in the promotion of voluntary work in the local community. In being actively involved Mary is creating a healthy, active community of which she is a proud member and participant. Mary was awarded the O.A.M (Order of Australia Medal) for work in the community.



Mary receiving the Kathleen Aitken Award with Kath Tremlett Kathleen Aitken's Daughter, Circa 2019



Win Williamson was born in the little village Cavendish in England. Win lived in Hong Kong for seven years before emigrating to Australia in 1951. Her husband was in the Hong Kong Police Force and had been a Japanese prisoner of war. He died eight years before Win moved to Sunbury in 1972.

Not long after arriving in Sunbury Win got involved in the local community. She said "I was sitting on the Village Green feeling very, very sorry for myself because I had left all my friends in Tasmania, and I didn't know many people in Sunbury, and a dear lady came and sat down beside me. A woman named Helen Dunn, she was a great CWA lady, and she said why don't you join CWA, and she became a great friend".

Win became a member of the Sunbury Branch CWA for over 25 years was the president of the branch, and a member of the concert party and participated in concerts for Senior Citizens of Victoria. Win helped raise much needed funds for CWA scholarships for young people and was also very involved in craft classes that the CWA held.

Win was a valuable member of the Sunbury Unit of the Red Cross. For many years she was secretary of the Sunbury Unit. She helped with the Blood Bank in Sunbury and those giving blood would remember Win offering them a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit after they had donated a pint of blood. Win had spent many hours working on street stalls and fundraising for the many projects of the Sunbury Red Cross Unit. She had been on many emergency calls catering for emergency workers at all types of incidents.

For her dedication and work for the Sunbury Red Cross Unit she was awarded the Red Cross Long Service Medal.

Win was a foundation member of the Sunbury Community Health Centre Committee of Management and was an extremely active member for 23 years. She worked tirelessly to make the Sunbury Community Health Centre one of Victoria's top centres. For her devoted service she was made a Life Governor. Win was a member of the Sunbury Agricultural Society and worked at the Sunbury show on show day. For over a 15 year period she spent many hours working in the exhibitor pavilion taking entries and helping with setting up displays.

In 1998, Win was nominated for the Victoria Senior Citizen of the year award. In the same year she was awarded the Kiwanis Club of Sunbury Australia Day Award for her service to the community. Win was a member and a past president of the Sunbury Pines Golf Club. She worked very hard to raise funds to make sure the club was successful. Win played golf well into her 90's.

In 1998 Win was awarded the Rotary Club of Sunbury's Kathleen Aitken Outstanding Citizen Award for her service and dedication to the community of Sunbury.



Win Williamson receiving the Kathleen Aitken Citizen Award with Kath Tremlett Kathleen's daughter, Circa 1998

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This transcript has been produced in partnership between Hume City Council and Sunbury Historical & Heritage Society. The names, events, images, photos and recollections have been provided in good faith and are to preserve a significant piece of Sunbury's history for many years to come.

