

Elements

OF WESTGARTHTOWN



Bluestone

Volume 20. No. 2 • October 2016

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Graff's Farmhouse (Photo: David Johns)

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WESTGARTHTOWN GOES DIGITAL

Welcome to our redesigned newsletter

Our new name reminds us of the harsh environment faced by the original settlers at Westgarthtown and the raw ingredients and produce fundamental to forging their new life.

Elements of Westgarthtown is the new name for our twice-yearly newsletter, formerly the Friends of Westgarthtown News.

Our stories present aspects of life at Westgarthtown, both past and present. With this edition we tell the story of one of Westgarthtown's most iconic elements: Bluestone. From their arrival in 1850, Westgarthtown's settlers constructed buildings and walls from the basalt rock found in the fields. To this day, Bluestone has left an indelible mark.

Elements of Westgarthtown signifies a change in the way we deliver our newsletter. We received a great response to our digital subscription offer — over 80% of recipients will receive this edition via email. Electronic distribution promises to save around \$1,000 in printing and postage each year. That saving makes our current low subscription rates sustainable, and frees up funds to preserve and promote Westgarthtown.

However you have received it, we hope you enjoy our newsletter.



Romancing the stone

WESTGARTHTOWN'S BLUESTONE HERITAGE

In 1995 Geoffrey Borrack presented *Romancing the stone* to the Plenty Valley Arts Conference *The Cultural Landscape of the Plenty Valley*. Here we summarise his paper.

WORDS BY GEOFFREY BORRACK
PHOTOS BY DAVID JOHNS

My earliest childhood recollections of the stone buildings of the Plenty Valley were of the stone buildings of the German families at Thomastown who settled there in the 1850s. My extended stays at Westgarthtown in the 1940s and 50s gave me an intense awareness of the way stone could be manipulated and put to a variety of uses, if one was prepared to put in the effort.

The stone buildings at Westgarthtown represent but a part

of the growth which occurred in the Plenty Valley from the 1840s, growth which is represented today by the many fine examples of the way the readily available deposits of basalt could be transformed into halls, schools, churches, houses, barns and not least, the dry stone walls which abound through parts of the landscape.

The German settlement was erected on a square mile of land which was part of the barren Keilor plain extending through to Broadmeadows and beyond. Its

Bluestone wall at
Ziebell's Farmhouse

formation was from lava eruptions, major volcanoes being at Hayes Hill, Mount Tulloch and Fraser Hill with the flow augmented by 52 vents extending down to the Preston area. By the time the German settlers arrived, the lava crust had weathered into fertile soil, dotted throughout with an abundance of surface rock. It was this rock which prompted many of the settlers to vie for those areas with concentrations of surface rock, in preference to more cultivable areas. This was no doubt due to the fact that the surface rock, already well fragmented into more manageable sizes, was easily extricated for building purposes, with the added advantage of having flat surfaces which could readily be used for facing stones.

When the German settlers did arrive from 1850 onwards, William Westgarth must have been greatly pleased, as many arrived with large families of up to eight children and made an immediate attack on the landscape to create houses and productive farms. Most of the German settlement was built in the 1850s gradually evolving to finality in the early 1870s.

Westgarthtown's houses were constructed with stone walls of about 600mm thickness, using a mud-like composition mortar. This mortar was mixed with straw and small amounts of cow manure to give binding and layered on smoothly to the inner wall faces. At Ziebell's Farmhouse, it was used

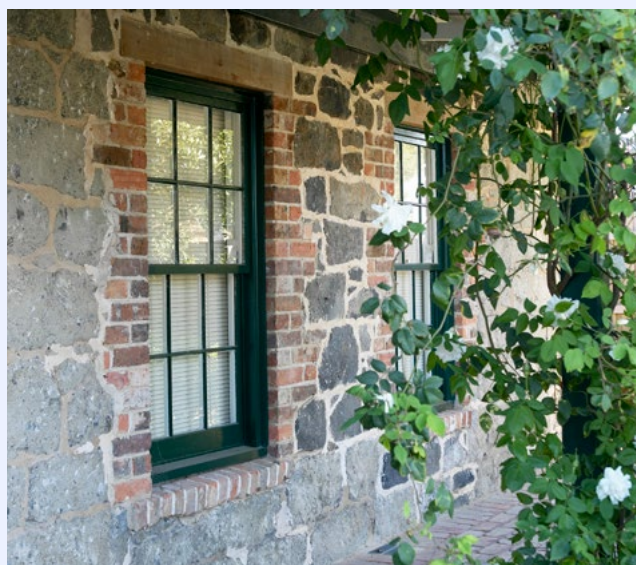


Thomastown Lutheran Church and Maltzahn's Farmhouse

partially as a smooth stucco finish to the walls of the main verandah and stone course lines grooved in.

What is of great interest is the fact that each building at Westgarthtown has its own individual visual character, a result of the way in which stone was employed to construct the walls. The individual character emerges

as a result of variations in the size of stone employed to form the walls, the use of square or random shaped stones, the joint widths and the colour and texture of the faces. When combined *en masse* in different ways, these elements yield a wonderful variety of surface effects, highlighted by the intensity



and angle of the sun throughout the day.

Before concluding, I would like to mention a property in the Wollert area where Ernst Schultz erected a complex of stone house and barns. These buildings show a marked contrast to those of Westgarthtown in that they employ the use of near perfectly honed and coursed

stonework. The front elevation of the large barn shows a detailed concern with the creation of a stone pattern by the use of smaller stone groupings symmetrically situated on either side of the attic entry door. This concern with design and detailed working of the stone is further evidenced in the remnants of the pig shed with perfectly formed and positioned windows and sluice openings.

In the house thin bluestone sets with hammered edge textures form a lining for door reveals; elsewhere corners are articulated and chiselled. Sills are used even in small attic windows, stone steps are employed in changing room levels and external window openings have stucco cement relief surrounds.

Much of the work we acclaim in the professional architectural sphere is

achieved by a self-conscious striving for style, sometimes successful, sometimes not. Westgarthtown's German settlers would be the last to think their simple, beautiful buildings might become the subject of architectural interest, or that their labours might one day become an important investment in the cultural history of Victoria.

Westgarthtown's school teachers

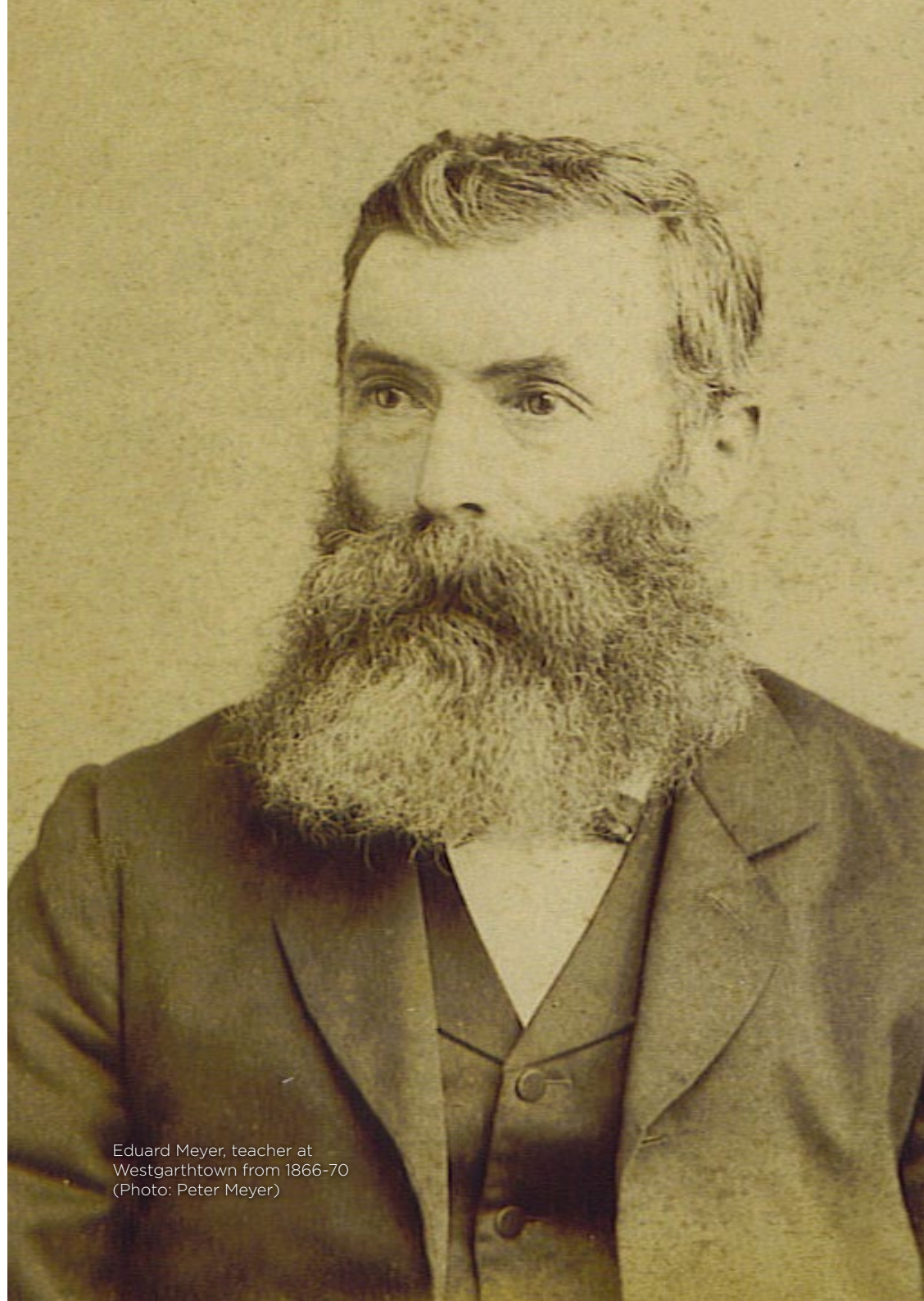
BY ROB WUCHATSCH

In *Friends of Westgarthtown News* Vol. 11, No. 2, November 2007 we included an article about the Neu Mecklenburg Lutheran School at Westgarthtown, which operated from 1855-76. In this issue we focus on Westgarthtown's teachers.

Four schoolmasters are known to have taught at Westgarthtown – Ernst Bernhard Heyne (1855); Gottlieb Renner (1856-62); Johann Stanger (1863-66 & 1870-76); and Eduard Meyer (1866-70). As well as teaching, the schoolmasters often officiated at worship and funeral

services, when the pastor from the Trinity German Lutheran Church at East Melbourne was unavailable. They also acted as caretakers for the church and school and prepared the Westgarthtown congregation's financial accounts.

The Synod-approved curriculum for Lutheran schools in Victoria



Eduard Meyer, teacher at Westgarthtown from 1866-70
(Photo: Peter Meyer)

was 31 hours of schooling a week, consisting of 12 hours devoted to study of the German language (reading and writing), six hours to religious instruction, five hours to mathematics and lesser times to the study of art, nature study and German history. Ten hours per week were also to be devoted to the proper learning of English. 'Proficiency in reading, writing and understanding English was to be aimed at, plus a knowledge of English coinage, weights and measures.'

Although Westgarthtown's population was insufficient to attract the best and most qualified Lutheran teachers such as Robert Renzow (Germantown), Max von Schramm (Doncaster) or John Walther (East Melbourne), its teachers appear to have been diligent men who served a very useful role in the small farming community. Westgarthtown's teachers were effectively assistant pastors, serving a Lutheran congregation which could not afford to maintain a pastor itself. Their main deficiency was their limited English language skills.

How Westgarthtown's children were educated from 1850-55 remains a mystery. It can only be assumed the German and Wendish settlers taught their children themselves – either individually, in small groups, or both. Education was not compulsory in Victoria

until 1872, so even after the Neu Mecklenburg Lutheran School was established in 1855, pupils were often absent during busy periods such as harvest time or the birth of a child. The inability of some parents to pay weekly school fees would also have contributed to absences.

Ernst Bernhard Heyne (1825-1881)

ERNST Heyne was the first teacher at the Neu Mecklenburg Lutheran School, which officially opened on 1 October 1855, in the partly completed church building. It is possible Heyne, or others, had taught at Westgarthtown prior to the Denominational Schools Board's registration of the Neu Mecklenburg School, but there is no evidence of this.

The Denominational Schools Board provided £82.10.0 towards construction of a building for the Lutheran school at Westgarthtown and £100 per year salary for the teacher.

Heyne, who had 18 pupils (12 girls and 6 boys), served as schoolmaster for three months until 31 December 1855, for which he received £25 plus weekly fees. For further details about Heyne's life, see *Friends of Westgarthtown News*, Vol. 10, No. 2, November 2006.

Gottlieb Renner (c.1813-1890)

GOTTLIEB and Louisa Maria (née Herchert) Renner arrived in Melbourne from Hamburg aboard the *Oscar Vidal* on 14 March 1854 with three children – Martha (6), Maria (4) and Gustav (2).

The Renner family came from Hirschberg, Silesia where Gottlieb was a tailor.

The Renners were living with the German community at Hawthorn when their son Gustav died in June 1855 aged 3. By January 1856, however, they had moved to Westgarthtown, where Gottlieb had been appointed as schoolmaster of

the Neu Mecklenburg Lutheran School. His salary was £100 per year plus pupil fees of one shilling a week. Where the Renners lived at Westgarthtown and whether they lived rent-free is not known. Local legend has it one of Westgarthtown's teachers had been a Prussian soldier in the Kaiser's Guards — if so, this could only have been Gottlieb Renner.

Renner taught at Westgarthtown for seven years (1856-62). He also conducted many worship services and funerals when Pastor Goethe

was unavailable. During 1856, 18 children were on the school roll, although the average attendance was only 12. Some pupils came from Mill Park where several German families lived. In November 1857, the Denominational Schools Board's Inspector Geary visited Westgarthtown and reported:

"The school is situated within about a mile of the Wesleyan one. The children in it do

not learn English but confine themselves exclusively to German. They read the German language, write the German character, learn the Geography of Germany and

German History etc. This in my opinion is an unfortunate error and I therefore pointed it out to the teacher. The children will have to mingle and associate with their English fellow colonists and will feel it a considerable loss if they are unable to speak our language when it could have been so easily acquired in their youth. The teacher himself does not understand even the most simple of English sentences and I

"IN 1860 THERE WERE 39 CHILDREN ON THE ROLL BUT THE AVERAGE ATTENDANCE WAS ONLY 23."

beg therefore to suggest either that a teacher of English be provided or the aid afforded by the Board withdrawn until such time as it is shown that English is satisfactorily taught. If the system of making grants to such schools be followed we may expect to have Chinese establishments, French and Hindustani."

In 1858 there were 20 pupils. In 1860 there were 39 children on the roll but the average attendance was only 23. There were 30 on the roll in 1862. As well as his £100 annual salary, Renner received £54 in pupil fees in 1862, down slightly on previous years.

Gottlieb Renner was naturalised as a Victorian citizen in 1861, suggesting he intended to settle here permanently, but he left Westgarthtown at the end of 1862 and returned with his family to Germany in 1863. Three more daughters had been born at Westgarthtown but all died when less than six weeks old. Two – Elizabeth (1857) and Johanna (1859) – are buried there.

In February 1863, just prior to leaving Australia, Gottlieb lent £150 to Johann Maltzahn and £250 to Georg Nebel Jr., secured by mortgages on their farms at Westgarthtown. He also lent £75

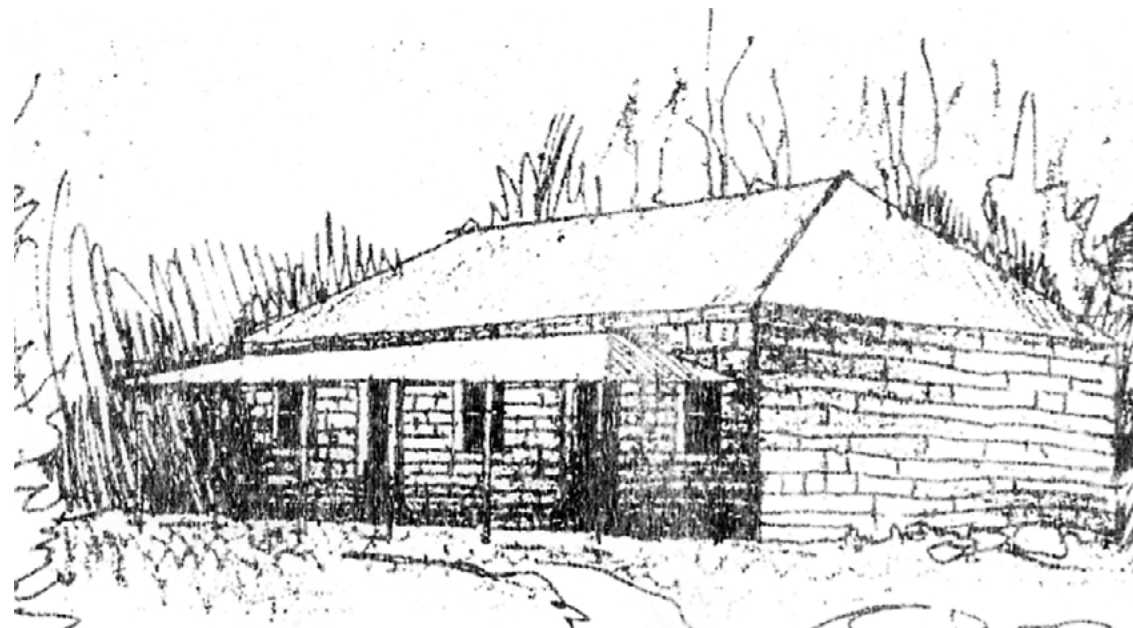
to John Walther, the Lutheran teacher at East Melbourne and had previously lent £20 to the Lutheran colporteur Johann Schmidt.

Gottlieb Renner died at Warmbrunn, Silesia in Germany on 11 March 1890 aged about 76.

Johann Stanger (c.1811-1884)

JOHANN Stanger, a vinedresser from Kornthal, Württemberg arrived in Australia from Hamburg aboard the *Wilhelmsburg* in August 1853. He was 41 and unmarried. In June 1854, he was appointed as first schoolmaster of the newly established Germantown Lutheran School, near Geelong. He served there until 1857 when he resigned. Sometime later, he left for a visit to Germany, returning to Australia in February 1860 aboard the *Voorwaarts*.

By January 1861, Stanger was living at Bendigo, possibly assisting the Lutheran school teacher Nicholas von Thun, who also acted as pastor there from 1860-62. Later that year he was reported to have been at Castlemaine. In January 1863, however, he commenced as schoolmaster at the Neu Mecklenburg Lutheran School at Westgarthtown, where he taught for the next four years (1863-66). Like Gottlieb Renner, he also conducted



The school house (sketch: G. Borrack)

religious services between Pastor Goethe's visits. During these years, some parents transferred their children to the Thomastown Common School, where they would receive greater instruction in the English language.

There were two significant developments during this time. At the end of 1864, the Board of Education withdrew funding for the teacher's salary, because of declining numbers and proximity to the Thomastown Common School. The Lutheran school then continued as a private one funded by the Westgarthtown congregation and students. Late in 1865, construction

began on a new schoolhouse adjacent to the church, in which the school had been conducted since 1855. The new building included a teacher's residence.

In January 1867, Stanger moved to St Luke's Lutheran School at Hamilton, where he taught for two years. He returned to Westgarthtown in late 1870, following the departure of his successor, Eduard Meyer. Stanger, who never married, remained at Westgarthtown for over ten years, as schoolmaster until the school's closure around 1876, then as Church Reader and Sunday School teacher. He died on 17 February 1884 aged

74 at the Melbourne Hospital and was buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery.

Eduard Meyer (1835-1885)

EDUARD Meyer arrived in Australia from Hamburg aboard the *Ida* on 18 September 1853 aged 18 with his father Johann Jacob Meyer, stepmother, uncle and eight brothers and sisters. He was born on 3 August 1835 at Alpbach near Itingen in Switzerland.

The Meyer family are believed to have lived and worked in the Hawthorn, Nunawading and Harkaway areas for the first few years after their arrival. From 1858-64, Eduard lived with his family at 'Swiss Farm', a 22-acre property his father purchased in Vermont South for £91. He worked at contract fencing and farming, as they established a vineyard and sold firewood in Melbourne cleared from the farm. In 1862, he unsuccessfully applied for the position of schoolmaster at the Harkaway Lutheran School, failing Arithmetic and receiving poor marks for Reading and Geography. His uncle Wilhelm Meyer had settled at Harkaway.

On 14 February 1866, Eduard married London-born Sarah Hephzibah Aylwin, at Prahran. He gave his address as Dandenong

and occupation as farmer. By the end of 1866, however, he had been appointed schoolmaster at Westgarthtown and served there for almost four years. An advertisement for this position had appeared in the Melbourne German Lutheran monthly journal *Australischer Christenbote* in September 1866 which read:

Teacher Wanted

The community of Westgarthtown at Thomastown seeks a Christian man, who can give German and English language classes, as teacher for their Elementary school. Further details are with Pastor Göthe in Melbourne, or with the school principal, Mr Nebel, Thomastown.

The School Board

Georg Nebel's role as Principal was presumably to superintend the school for the school board, rather than teach, although it is possible he taught when the schoolmaster was ill or unavailable.

Few details about the school exist after 1864 when Board of Education funding ceased. The school then continued as a private one paid for by the congregation and its pupils. In May 1869, however, Schools Inspector John Sircom visited Westgarthtown and wrote:

"...the building [church] at Mecklenburg is at present used as a place of worship and is in excellent repair. The inhabitants have erected a stone building close by in which School is held – here I found five good desks, six forms, a fair blackboard and easel, and five maps. The teacher is Edward Meyer, and the average attendance somewhere about twenty; last year it reached twenty five."

Meyer, like his predecessors, also officiated at worship and funeral services in the absence of the pastor.

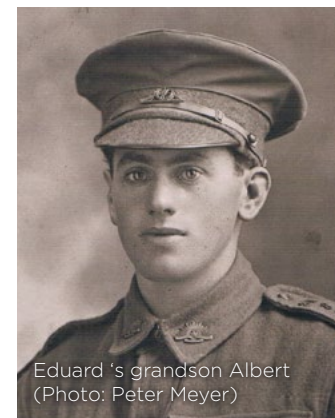
Two of Eduard and Sarah's children were born in the schoolhouse at Westgarthtown — George Jacob (1868) and Henry Daniel (1869).

Eduard and his family left Westgarthtown in August 1870. He was living at Windsor and working as a carrier/storeman in 1871, but had moved to Collingwood by 1872, when he was admitted to the Melbourne Hospital following an accident unloading a dray. He was

hospitalised again in 1873 when he was injured unloading a wagon. In 1874, he resumed teaching and was Head Teacher at the Dairy Dartmoor (Mumbannar) State School No. 1354, but he appears to have transferred to the Kirchheim Lutheran School near Minyip in 1875 and is believed to have taught there for a year. Sarah and the children remained in Melbourne.

In 1877, Eduard was back with his family, living at North Melbourne. By 1880 he was a bookkeeper living at Carlton, but was living at Fitzroy when he died on 23 December 1885, aged 50. He was buried in the Melbourne General Cemetery, survived by Sarah and five of their ten children. Sarah, who later remarried, died in 1929.

Eduard's grandson Albert Edward Meyer, son of George Jacob Meyer who was born at Westgarthtown in 1868, enlisted in the AIF during the First World War and was killed in Belgium in 1917.



Eduard's grandson Albert
(Photo: Peter Meyer)

My thanks to Peter Meyer who kindly provided details about Eduard Meyer and his family.



BY JULIE MAURDEV
PHOTOS JULIE MAURDEV

Jacaranda Preschool's Bush Kinder Program, the first in the City of Whittlesea, was developed in 2012, with a six week trial. Every year since then, the program has evolved. We currently have 66 Four Year old children engaging in the program, which is offered weekly during Terms 2 and 3 of the kindergarten year.

Bush kinder is an inspiring concept for kindergartens based on the European forest kinder programs, which have been running for decades. At Jacaranda Preschool we believe childhood is precious and that an important part of childhood is being outside in nature.

We know in our hearts that children need more time outside in nature, and this knowledge is supported by research.

We are fortunate to be granted the opportunity to play in a natural bush land play space in the Westgarthtown Lutheran Reserve, Thomastown.

This lovely setting is the perfect place for children to explore nature in a safe way under the supervision of their regular kindergarten teacher and assistant, and it is located just a few minutes from Jacaranda Preschool.

Bush kinder at Westgarthtown

While the children of the first settlers grew up with nature all around, local children today are now also given the opportunity to play in the bush.

Children are natural learners. Our Bush Kinder Program provides the children with the time and an ideal environment for them to learn in three hours of uninterrupted play in the bush, using what nature has provided as learning materials. It is an all weather outdoor education program, and the children attend even if it is raining.

The children have the opportunity to play in the rain, roll down grassy mounds, balance along fallen logs, get involved in dramatic play, find insects, draw with sticks in the ground, make mud pies, and cook on a camp fire.

The teachers support children as they take the risks and face challenges as they climb trees, and move about the uneven and rocky terrain.

Through play the children will connect with and respect the Bush Kinder space. They connect with their land in a way that cannot be done under a roof or within walls.

The preschool was successful in receiving grants when we established the program to purchase things such as wet weather gear for the children, a camping toilet, emergency equipment and emergency phone.

Over the years we have had many pre service teachers, kindergarten

and early childhood teachers and curious members of the public, come and observe a session to see what the children do, and gain a better understanding of the program.

We have also created a wonderful network with the Westgarthtown Pioneer Precinct Committee, the Friends of Westgarthtown and members of the Thomastown Lutheran Church.

We have also made connections with the City of Whittlesea Parks and Wildlife department who have

come to speak to the children about the flora and fauna of the land, and Friends of Merri Creek who conducted a sustainability and clean waterways talk and demonstration for

the children.

We are now looking forward to working with The Men's Shed Lalor, to have some seating built for the children and community to use.

On behalf of the children and staff at Jacaranda Preschool, I would like to thank the Westgarthtown Pioneer Precinct Committee, the Friends of Westgarthtown and members of the Thomastown Lutheran Church, for their continued support of our Bush Kinder Program.

We look forward to our program continuing to grow and evolve.

**“THIS LOVELY
SETTING IS THE
PERFECT PLACE
FOR CHILDREN
TO EXPLORE
NATURE”**



Sale of Wuchatsch's Farmhouse

An era spanning 166 years ended on 5 April 2016 when Wuchatsch's Farmhouse passed out of ownership from the estate of the late Muriel Wuchatsch.

BY ROB WUCHATSCH

The sale of Wuchatsch's Farmhouse at 74 Robert Street, Lalor followed a previous one by auction in May 2014 which did not proceed. The farmhouse had been owned and continuously occupied by members of the Wuchatsch family for 160 years until sold in December 2015 to Jawers Investments Pty Ltd.

Johann and Magdalena Wuchatsch settled at Westgarthtown in March 1850. Their old bluestone

farmhouse, which replaced an earlier dwelling, is believed to have been built during the mid 1850s. Johann and Magdalena's dairy farm was originally 78 acres, later enlarged to 92 acres by their son Charles Wuchatsch, whose son Norman sold 90 acres for subdivision during the mid 1960s. The remaining farmhouse block was 7578 square metres.

Following the death of Muriel Wuchatsch in 2007, her executors

Dorothy Kelly, Betty Barba and Robert Wuchatsch obtained a permit to subdivide a portion of surplus land behind the farmhouse and other heritage listed bluestone buildings. Their intention was to sell the vacant land, restore the old farmhouse and outbuildings, then retain them in Wuchatsch family ownership. Despite their application for an acceptable subdivision permit being approved by Heritage Victoria, the State government's

expert heritage body, they could not obtain such approval from the City of Whittlesea. As a result, the executors reluctantly decided to sell the farmhouse and outbuildings as well.

It is believed Jawers Investments Pty Ltd will develop seven lots for residential purposes and restore the farmhouse and other heritage buildings in accordance with the subdivision permit.



Photo : David Johns

The threat to Schultz's farm

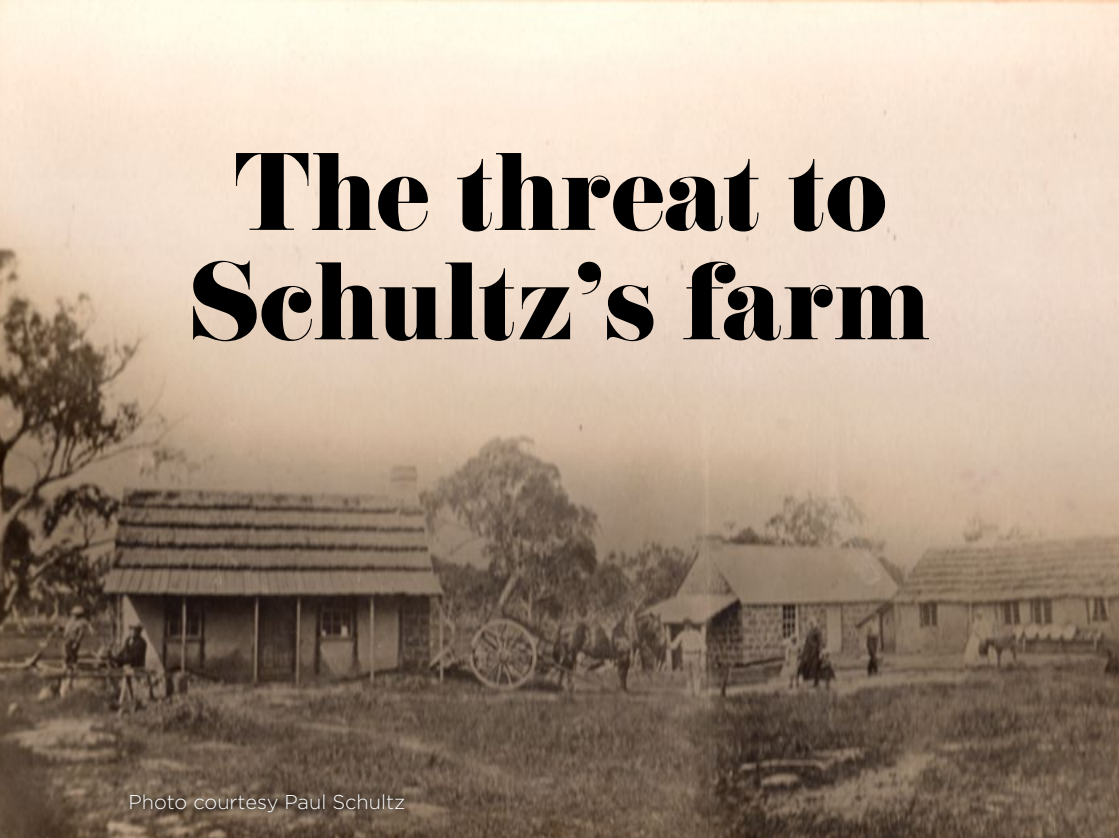


Photo courtesy Paul Schultz

A planning application seeks to demolish heritage buildings closely connected with Westgarthtown's heritage.

BY ROB WUCHATSCH

Earlier this year, the City of Whittlesea advised it had received a planning application (No: 715578) from Hanson Construction Materials Pty Ltd for a permit to demolish remaining heritage buildings, structures and vegetation

on the former Schultz's Farm at 45-135 Bridge Inn Road, Wollert where it operates a quarry.

The Friends of Westgarthtown believe the heritage buildings at Schultz's Farm must be retained and preserved for the benefit of future generations and, along with

many other community groups and individuals, have lodged an objection to the proposed demolition by Hanson.

The Schultz family, which from the 1850s – 1890s constructed the now threatened heritage buildings and structures, was closely connected with Westgarthtown. The Schultz family were members, including elders, of the Lutheran Church at Westgarthtown (now known as the Thomastown Lutheran Church) and many are buried in the Lutheran Cemetery there. Members of the Schultz family also married members of the Siebel and Ziebell families from Westgarthtown and Johann Gottlob Schultz's son-in-law Johann Friedrich

Topp built the now sadly demolished Lutheran School building at Westgarthtown in 1865/66.

In our recent submission to the City of Whittlesea, the Friends of Westgarthtown formally objected to the proposed demolition, concluding:

We believe it is entirely possible to retain and conserve these heritage buildings within the [City of Whittlesea's heritage] overlay. The local community, ratepayers of the City of Whittlesea and the public throughout Australia

have indicated time and time again that they support the retention of Heritage Places. We have 1000's of visitors to the Westgarthtown Precinct each year and the comments in our visitor's book indicate their support all the time. Heritage places are important and demolition sets a dangerous precedent for many Heritage overlays to be neglected. The Friends of Westgarthtown believe the remaining buildings and structures at Schultz's Farm have significant heritage value and must be preserved.

We agree with the assessment of these buildings and structures contained in the 1991 City of Whittlesea Heritage

Study which rated them as of 'statewide significance for the completeness of the complex as a whole, for the remarkably rare mud and "lathe" barn and for the illustration of a German farm adapted to Australian conditions in the nineteenth century.'

In September, the City of Whittlesea advised that '...a decision by Council on the proposal has been deferred pending further consideration by Council officers and Hanson on the issues raised in objections...'

"SCHULTZ'S FARM IS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE"

Film launch: Westgarthtown & WW1

BY JOHN FRY

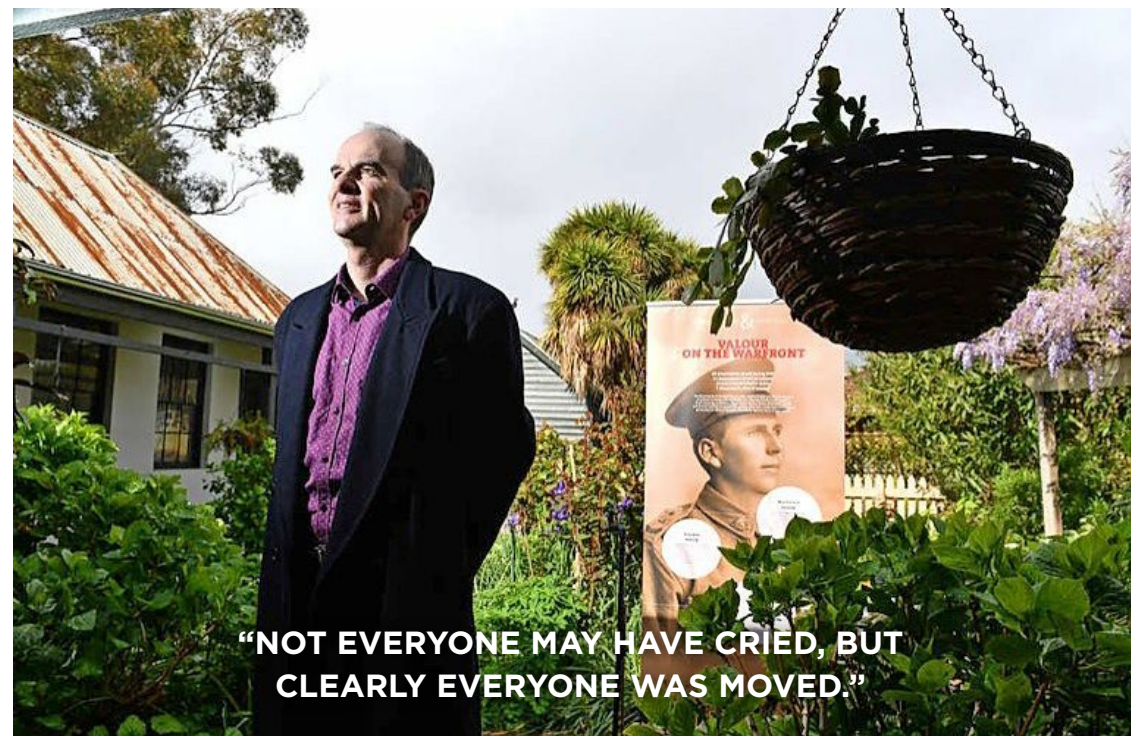
Almost 70 descendants of the German settlers of Westgarthtown fought for Australia during World War 1. At Westgarthtown, their relatives were viewed with suspicion by their neighbours.

As part of the of the 2016 National Trust Heritage Festival the Friends of Westgarthtown launched the film, *Westgarthtown and World War 1: German Descendants At Home and On The Warfront* on 1 May 2016.

We were pleased to have the Federal Member for Scullin, Andrew Giles, a strong supporter of our funding application, speak at the launch. The real dignitaries, however, were the descendants of

Westgarthtown who filled the house, there to see the family stories told on screen.

With a projector and screen on loan from Epping Secondary College, the film was launched. Lasting 16 minutes the film was shown in quiet solemnity. At the end of the screening it was clear there was not a dry eye in the house. Not everyone may have cried, but clearly everyone was moved. It was obviously the success we had hoped for when the Committee



**“NOT EVERYONE MAY HAVE CRIED, BUT
CLEARLY EVERYONE WAS MOVED.”**

Photo of John Fry by Damjan Janevski courtesy of the Star Weekly

first decided to proceed with this project.

As President I was so proud to lead this project. I have outlined in a previous report how everyone had their part to play to make this a success. In singling out just a few people here, Rob Wuchatsch, Léon Borrack, and Angela Belot, I do not wish to belittle the work done by everyone involved, just to note the hours put in by these people. Indeed the descendants themselves, whether agreeing to be interviewed

on film or being part of the final filming on Descendants' Day this year, were an integral part of our success.

Since then we have placed it on our website, purchased a TV to show it during tours, been invited to present it to the Yarra Plenty Heritage Group and submitted the film in the Victorian Community History Awards. Here's hoping the film gets the broader recognition it so richly deserves.

Descendants' Day 2017

BY DAVID ADAMS

The annual Descendants' Day for 2017 will be held on Sunday 5 March at Ziebell's Farmhouse in Gardenia Road, Thomastown kicking off about 12.00pm.

DESCENDANTS' Day is a great opportunity to catch up with family and friends and reminisce of times past. The past Descendants' Days have been a great success whereby everyone who has attended, young

and old, have enjoyed the opportunity to wander through the farmhouse, cemetery and surrounds and relive experiences and stories alike.

As an introduction to the day there will be a brief welcome to all

and an update of the all important work being conducted by the Friends of Westgarthtown. The rest of the afternoon can be spent relaxing in the garden, mingling and enjoying your picnic lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided.

There will also be publications relevant to Westgarthtown available for purchase on the day together with selected pieces of timber from the *Pribislaw*. These make great keepsake items and provide an opportunity to own a piece of history.

The Descendants' Committee are an informal group who work in conjunction with the Friends of Westgarthtown to help maintain the annual event of Descendants' Day. One of our focuses is to keep everyone in touch as much as possible about the day and part of

this is to maintain an up to date database of contacts and email addresses. If your details have changed or you would like to be included we would love to hear from you. My contact details are 0400 160 358 or david_f_adams@hotmail.com

We're always looking for new ideas to help make the day more memorable and new members are always welcome especially the younger generation.

We hope you can make it. Look forward to seeing you and your family.

Descendants' Day

DATE: Sunday 5 March 2017

TIME: 12:00 pm

WHERE: Ziebell's Farmhouse

INFO: 0400 160 358



2016 Descendants' Day (Photo: Jessa Rose)

Thomastown Lutheran Church Services

SERVICES are held on the second and fourth Sunday of the month at 2.30 pm at the Thomastown Lutheran Church, German Lane, Lalor.

For further details, contact Irma Hatty on 03 9338 9064 or see the Calvary Lutheran Church website at www.calvarychurch.org.au

Visiting Ziebell's Farmhouse

ZIEBELL'S Farmhouse is open to the public on the second Sunday of each month, 1–4 pm. For enquiries, call 03 9464 1805 or enquiries@westgarthtown.org.au

Tours can be organised for groups of ten or more people. For information and bookings contact Tatiana Joukoff on 03 9464 5062 or joukofftatiana@gmail.com

SWITCH TO DIGITAL

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Elements

OF WESTGARTHTOWN

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HISTORIAN Rob Wuchatsch

TOURS COORDINATOR Tatiana Joukoff

CARETAKERS Darren & Sheryl Kennedy