

FRIENDS OF WESTGARTHTOWN *Newsletter*

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EDITOR'S NOTE

In this edition of *Friends of Westgarthtown Newsletter* we feature three 19th century German families – the Koch and Unmack families of Wollert and the Bernhardt family of Epping – along with two local men who served during the Second World War – Albert Grutzner and Claus Bunz. Gordon Johnston's Ziebell's Farmhouse and Garden Managers' Update also appears as usual.

We also celebrate the lives of Nebel descendant and former Friends of Westgarthtown committee member Lorraine Flanders, who died in September 2020 and Margaret Borrack, wife of Ziebell descendant Geoffrey Borrack, who died in December 2020. Both Lorraine and Margaret made significant contributions to the Friends of Westgarthtown and Ziebell's Farmhouse and Garden.

In our image gallery, we include photos of John Robinson Bold and his youngest son Charles, taken during the 1920s at Winter's farm at Westgarthtown. These old family snaps were kindly provided by Charles' daughter Christine Bold. If you have any Westgarthtown photos we would like to see them.

After many years in foreign hands, the Pura Milk brand has now returned to Australian ownership, purchased recently by Bega Cheese. Pura Dairy was started by Albert Siebel at Preston during the 1930s to retail Westgarthtown's milk and grew to become a national brand name. Readers will recall Bega also purchased the Vegemite brand a few years ago.

Another Westgarthtown signatory to the famous Victorian Women's Suffrage Petition of 1891 has come to light. Augusta Ernestina Kreitling's name can now be added to that of Johanna Wuchatsch (née Graff), who we featured in our April 2008 newsletter. Augusta, the daughter of Johann Andreas and Alwina (née Karsten) Kreitling, was born at Westgarthtown in 1868. She married Charlie Bargling in 1891 and they had two daughters who both died young. Augusta was buried at Westgarthtown in 1935.

Descendants' Day 2022 will be held at Ziebell's Farmhouse on 6 March.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter.

Rob Wuchatsch



Above James Robinson Bold driving cart at Winter's Farmhouse, 1920s (Christine Bold)

Below Charles Augustus Bold on horse, 1920s (Christine Bold)



Ziebell's Farmhouse and Garden

MANAGER'S UPDATE

Hello Everyone,

I have a free offer, but you will need to read this to find it!

Even though COVID-19 impacted visitation, people are now venturing out as you would know. The website *Weekend Notes* recently published two feature articles about the museum and garden. With over one million readers, it meant an immediate increase in visitors and on several weekends, we were at our COVID-19 allowed capacity in the museum.

While increased visitation is pleasing, we have also had an increase in people tracing their ancestry and links to Westgarthtown along with a marked increase in locals coming for their first time. (This included a father and son who was doing his school history project on Westgarthtown.)

The garden tours with our horticulturist, Christine, have commenced. Feedback is very positive, and it is another way for people to experience Westgarthtown. Here is the offer. Our next tour is at 1pm on Wednesday June 2. I'll offer four tickets to members only. First to email me gets the tickets. I think you will enjoy it.

In the museum the second part of the Pribislav exhibition is being developed which will feature the original timber. The pantry and cart house will have interpretive signage and I'm working on a recording for the smokehouse. I am also working with the Thomastown Library to introduce a story trail from Edgars Creek to Ziebell's Farmhouse. Also, we are part of the inaugural *Walk Thomastown* event, which has performances, lighting and, of course Ziebell's Farmhouse and the Lutheran Church as you won't have seen them before. I'll include some photos in the next museum newsletter.

Finally, our *Turning Back to Edgars Creek* exhibition will go to print in the next week. You might remember we are printing it as a 'brochure' and distributing it to homes in Thomastown and Lalor. It will also be on the Westgarthtown website or I can mail you a hardcopy. Let me know if you would like one.

Overall, it remains a positive time for us.

All the best,

Gordon (gordon@westgarthtown.org.au)

The Koch Family of Wollert

BY ROB WUCHATSCH

The Koch family lived on a 75 acre farm on the north-east corner of High Street and Harvest Home Road at Wollert from the early 1850s to mid 1870s. In 1875, they moved to land they had selected at Waggarandall, near Dookie in northern Victoria. Three infant Koch children were buried on their farm at Wollert and their graves were still visible into the early 1900s.

Johann Gustave Wilhelm Koch arrived in Australia aboard the *Dockenhuden* in April 1849. A shoemaker from Paderborn in Prussia, Wilhelm married Charlotte Pauline Rudolph in Melbourne in 1850. Pauline arrived aboard the *Wappaus* in March 1849. On 16 May 1851, Wilhelm was naturalized as a New South Wales citizen, enabling him to own land.

On 5 November 1853, Koch purchased 75 acres of land from George Müller, a *Dockenhuden* shipmate. The purchase price for the land (part Portion 3, Section 11, Parish of Wollert) was £750. As Müller was also from Paderborn, he and Koch may have been friends in Germany. Both men were also recorded as Catholic on the *Dockenhuden* passenger list, whereas most passengers were Lutheran. Koch, however, does not seem to have maintained the Catholic faith in Australia, perhaps because his wife was Lutheran.

William, as he became known, had probably occupied the land for some time prior to purchasing it. In April 1853, William and Pauline were foundation members of Melbourne's Trinity German Lutheran Church. Their address then was recorded as Dry Creek [Westgarthtown], however, this may have been where they joined the church rather than lived. The Koch family contributed towards Pastor Goethe's salary and also donated £2 towards the cost of the Lutheran church and school building at Westgarthtown in 1855.

The Koch's first child, John, was born in 1851 and baptized at St Peters Anglican Church, East Melbourne. Altogether William and Pauline had six children – John (1851–1918 – did not marry); Pauline (1853– 1900) m. Heinrich Ludeman 1871 – nine children; William (1856); Elizabeth (1857–61); Mary (1859–61); and Elizabeth (1862–1947) m. John Fortune 1904 – no children. Of the three children who died in infancy, William died in 1856 aged three months of 'cramps' and Elizabeth and Mary died within five days of each other in 1861 of septic tonsillitis. It is not known why they were buried on the farm and not in the nearby Epping Cemetery.

In 1874, William Koch selected 319 acres of land in the Parish of Waggarandall. His selection adjoined those of his son John (319 acres) and son-in-law Heinrich Ludeman (320 acres). In January 1875, just prior to moving, William advertised his farm at Wollert. It was described as:

That valuable dairy farm, comprising about 75 acres of rich pasture land, with an acre of garden planted with choice trees and six acres under cultivation, the whole being well fenced. There is a comfortable cottage erected, built partly of wood and partly of bluestone, with cool cellar and large bluestone cowshed and other outbuildings.

The farm was also said to be permanently watered with some valuable timber on the land. Koch sold it to Louis Unmack for £820. Unmack, who arrived in Australia in 1852, married Caroline Ziebell of Westgarthtown in 1863. He had been a

High Street, Wollert, showing probable site of Koch family graves.



miner on the Bendigo goldfields since the mid 1850s. Koch's former farm, which became known as Leeds Grove, remained in the Unmack family until the 1920s when it was sold to the Hehr family, who owned an adjoining farm. Various owners followed until the farm was eventually sold for residential subdivision but the old house remains.

Both William and son John Koch established themselves at Waggarandall and later enlarged their farms there. Pauline died on 1 November 1891 aged 68 and William on 8 March 1909 aged 82. Both are buried in the Devenish Cemetery. William's estate was valued for probate purposes at £3,473/12/2.

In about 1991 I asked Tom Unmack, who grew up at Leeds Grove, if he knew where the Koch graves were. He showed me a small area beside a stony rise on the western edge of a paddock near High Street. He said there were several small mounds there when he was a child. The spot Tom showed me is now located about 10–15 metres from a southbound bus stop and appears to lie in the path of future High Street duplication works. Should the graves be found there, the children should be reinterred in the Epping Cemetery, or with their parents at Devenish.

The Unmack Family of Wollert

BY ROB WUCHATSCH

Johann Carl Ludwig (Louis) Unmack arrived in Sydney from Hamburg aboard the *Peter Godeffroy* in October 1852 with a cousin named



Carl Unmack. Louis was born at Colpin, Mecklenburg on 11 November 1829, the son of Wilhelm, a tailor and Luise (née Heidereich) Unmack. Carl was born at Neu Buckow, the home village of the Ziebell family of Westgarthtown, who arrived in Australia in 1850 on the *Pribislaw*.

Louis and Carl Unmack are believed to have taken a coastal vessel to Melbourne soon after arrival in Australia. They appear to have lived at Westgarthtown before moving to the Bendigo goldfields in about 1854. In 1856, Carl married Wilhelmine Westphal, who had arrived in Australia earlier that year on the *Helene* with Christian Ziebell, who was returning from a visit to Germany. After continuing goldmining and also cattle dealing in Bendigo, Carl Unmack established a butchery business there in 1876 in partnership with his son-in-law Bernhard Sprenger. Carl left seven children when he died in 1902 aged 71. Wilhelmine died in 1909.

On 9 March 1863 Louis Unmack, gold miner of Kangaroo Flat near Bendigo aged 33, married Caroline Ziebell at Trinity Lutheran Church, East Melbourne. Caroline, 22, was the daughter of Christian and Sophia Ziebell of Westgarthtown. Louis was



Carl Louis Unmack (Janet Hubbard)



Caroline (née Ziebell) Unmack (Janet Hubbard)

also naturalized as a Victorian citizen later that year. They lived at Kangaroo Flat until early 1875 when they bought Wilhelm Koch's 75 acre farm in Harvest Home Lane East at Epping for £820.

The advertisement for Koch's farm, part of Crown Portion 3, Section 11, Parish of Wollert) described it as 'rich pasture land, with an acre of garden planted with choice trees and six acres under cultivation, the whole being well fenced. There is a comfortable cottage erected, built partly of wood and partly of bluestone, with cool cellar and large bluestone cowshed and other outbuildings.'

Louis and Caroline Unmack raised a large family at Leeds Grove, as the farm became known. Their first five children – Franciska (1864–1925), Lily (1865), Ada (1867–1949), Otto (1871–1945) and Dorothea (1873–1969) – had been born at Bendigo and four more were born at Epping – Gilbert (1875–76), Sophie (1876–77), Sophie (1880) and Carl Friedrich (1883–1960). However, four died in infancy and the youngest two are buried at Westgarthtown.

The two eldest Unmack daughters Franciska and Ada married brothers William and Robert Young and raised large families nearby at Wollert. One of Franciska's sons, Norman Young, served as trustee and secretary of the Thomastown Lutheran Church for many years and his daughter, Irma Hatty, succeeded him on his death in 1990.

In 1895 Otto Unmack married Emily Cordell and they had 12 children before her death in 1914 aged 39. Otto then married Margaret Houston, who had a farm in Harvest Home Lane West, but they soon moved to Doncaster. The younger surviving son, Charles, married Margaret McDonald and had one child.

Louis Unmack died at home on 4 February 1917 aged 87 and was buried in Epping Cemetery. His obituary in the *Preston Leader* noted he believed 'that to live long a man must go on working to the end.' Son Otto took over the farm and Caroline moved back to Westgarthtown to live with daughter Dorothea, who had married her cousin Carl Alfred Ziebell in 1897. Caroline died on 10 October 1919 aged 80 and was buried with Louis.

Leeds Grove was subsequently sold to a neighbour Magdalena Hehr (née

Wuchatsch) and on her death in 1928 it passed to her son Jack Hehr, who then farmed it until 1956 with his wife Olive (née Young), a granddaughter of Louis and Caroline Unmack. Various owners followed until the farm was eventually sold for residential subdivision although the house remains. Today's Unmack Road at Wollert recalls the family's former presence in the area.

For further information about the Unmack family see Friends of Westgarthtown News Vol. 11, No. 2, November 2007.



Unmack Headstone,
Epping Cemetery
(Rob Wuchatsch)

VALE

Edith Lorraine Flanders (1930–2020)

Lorraine Flanders, a Friends of Westgarthtown member who served on our committee from 2004–08, died on 20 September 2020 aged 89. Her Nebel ancestors settled at Westgarthtown in 1856 and Nebel Street in Lalor is located on the former family farm.



Photo: Antony Lloyd.

Edith Lorraine Flanders was born at Brunswick on 23 September 1930, the third of Ernest and Hilda (née Nebel)

Flanders' five children – Myrtle, Gladys, Lorraine, Jim and Neville. She was raised in country Victoria and educated at Daisy Hill Primary School and Maryborough High School. She was then appointed a student teacher at Maryborough Primary School in February 1949, where in July her assessor wrote 'Good personal qualities, is very interested, shows definite promise.'

In 1950 Lorraine commenced study at Ballarat Teachers College and was recorded as 'A good teacher and a very good student. Quiet and unobtrusive. Interested in college life.' Over the next ten years she taught at Timboon, Preston South, Colac West and Cobden and in 1959 was reported to be a 'sound teacher who makes thorough preparation, organizes her grade on good lines and secures a satisfactory response to well directed teaching.' Anyone who knew Lorraine would recognize these qualities. She later studied for a degree at La Trobe University and still met up with her college friends regularly up until she went into aged care.

Lorraine settled in Melbourne after she returned from a stint teaching in the UK and taught at Belle Vue, Ruthven and Thomastown East Primary Schools before becoming Principal at Lalor West Primary School in 1981.

I first met Lorraine in the early 1980s. Although my two eldest children attended Lalor West Primary School, most of my discussions with Lorraine were research related. She was always very helpful when I was writing my 1985 book about Westgarthtown. Lorraine joined the Friends of Westgarthtown when it was established and as well as being a member of our committee, she also attended working bees in the garden at Ziebell's Farmhouse when she wasn't busy with her many other interests, which included a holiday house at Mia Mia, reading, patchwork and crocheting, or travelling overseas.

Lorraine was a passionate traveller who visited countries such as Bhutan, Britain, Egypt, Iceland, India, Israel, Pakistan, Peru, Russia, Zimbabwe and many other places, including the Galapagos and Shetland Islands. It wasn't until she turned 80 she decided to restrict her travels to Australia and let her passport lapse.

The Anglican Church of Australia was an integral part of Lorraine's life, having been baptized as an infant at St John's in Epping. As a young woman, she taught Sunday School at Maryborough and when she moved to her uncle Herman Nebel's house in High Street, Lalor she attended the Anglican parish of St. Paul's Thomastown and St. John's Epping, where she was a churchwarden and member of the Incumbency committee. Lorraine soon became good friends with Carole Lloyd who later married her brother Jim.

When Lorraine's youngest brother Neville was diagnosed with cancer, she nursed him, caring for him until his death. In her later years, she developed Alzheimer's disease and for the last two and a half years prior to her death she lived at Arcare in Epping. A funeral service to celebrate Lorraine's life was conducted at St. John's Epping on 25 September 2020 by The Reverend Raffaella Pilz, who was assisted by Lorraine's sister-in-law Carole Lloyd Flanders, the Reverend Deacon.

By Rob Wuchatsch with assistance from Carole Lloyd Flanders.

Nebel family relatives at Ziebell's Farmhouse on Descendants' Day 2014.

Back L-R: Peter Carlin, Sandra Christianson and Robert Voigt. Front L-R: Val Voigt, Lorraine Flanders and Diane Voigt (Ange Belot).



VALE

Margaret Christine Borrack (1938–2020)

Margaret Christine (née Oliver) Borrack died peacefully at home on 5 December 2020, from a late diagnosis of cancer, surrounded by her immediate family in the garden they created together at Deans Marsh over 28 years. Margaret, who was 81, was the first child born to Willian Reed Oliver and Margaret Helene Cousins on 24 December 1938, followed by younger sister Jane in 1950.

Margaret grew up in Templestowe at “Dunster Steep”, a property noted for its export quality stone fruits and undulating gardens. Margaret’s love of the outdoors was influenced by her parents and their love of travelling, camping, hunting, fishing and adventure. This instilled in her a continued love of these interests as a wife and mother. She was always highly organised and prepared and these events that took place within the family, with much enthusiasm and great fun, form a wonderful memory bank of people, foods and her creative energy. List making was an art for Margaret in commencing any event, and these were always undertaken and finished with great aplomb.



In 1963, Margaret married Geoffrey Charles Borrack and her connection to Thomastown was initiated with a visit to the farmhouse to meet Geoffrey’s extended family members including his grandmother, Dorothea Ziebell. The gathering took place in the kitchen with a spread of afternoon tea.

Margaret completed a course of study in horticulture at Burnley. This activated a deeper love and understanding of plants and gardening. This is reflected in the development and maintenance of her own gardens in East Melbourne, Ubud and later Deans Marsh. Margaret created extraordinary displays of flowers using the basis of ikebana to embellish the family home with her subtle touches and reverence for the natural harmony she worked to evoke and inspire.

Through her association with Geoffrey and his involvement in the refurbishment of Ziebell’s Farmhouse, she passionately supported the development of cultural projects which increased the community awareness of this historical project. She often assisted in a support role at Open Days, Garden events, fund raising and both German cultural and family gatherings in this unique setting.

Margaret throughout her life was a keen traveller and collector of artefacts and antiques, culminating in the development of her business as an antique dealer. Her knowledge and love continued to grow in this field and subsequent trips into Bali and South East Asia stirred her passion for Chinese antiques and particularly ceramics.

Margaret is survived by her husband Geoffrey; her children Jane, Martine, Luke and Simon; nine grandchildren; and her sister Jane Beatty.

By Jane (née Borrack) Gillan

Albert Edward Grutzner (1911–1974)

BY ROB WUCHATSCH

I knew Albert Grutzner (known to his friends as Grit) in his later years, from about 1960-67, when he lived in a small fibro bungalow on our family farm at Westgarthtown. A bachelor, he seemed hell bent on drinking his way through his share of the money following the sale of the old Grutzner farm in about 1959. He didn't work and each day rode his bicycle to the Epping Hotel around lunchtime, to drink with his mates, before returning home singing loudly or abusing passersby after the pub closed at 6.00 pm. Most Sundays he drank at the bungalow with Jim Callaghan then came to our house to drink with my father.

Albert Edward Grutzner was born at Thomastown on 24 April 1911. He was the son of Charles John (Jack) Grutzner and his second wife, Florence Amelia (née Thomas). Jack's first wife Augusta (née Proposch), who he married in 1891, died of tuberculosis on 5 January 1906, just four months after her sister Martha Wuchatsch, my grandmother, died of the same disease. Thankfully, another sister Lydia, who married Jack Siebel of Westgarthtown, enjoyed a long life.

Jack and Augusta Grutzner had two sons – Frederick (1892–1960) and Theodore (1897–1955) – so Albert had two older half-brothers. As a boy, I recall my father visiting his cousins Fred and Theo, as I usually waited outside in the car. Jack Grutzner remarried in 1906 to Florence Amelia Thomas. The daughter of Joseph and Ann (née Hawkins) Thomas, market gardeners, Florence was a member of the family which gave its name to Thomastown, where she was born on 29 October 1870. Jack died on 8 September 1929 aged 63, but Florence lived on until 18 June 1957, when she died at Greensborough aged 86. Jack was buried with his first wife at Westgarthtown but Florence is buried at Fawkner Cemetery.

I sometimes accompanied my mother when she visited Mrs Grutzner, by then in her mid-80s and almost completely blind, at the old farm at the southern end of German Lane [now Gardenia Road] during the mid-1950s. I never saw Albert on these visits – I presume he was at the Epping Hotel – but perhaps he was working around the farm. I see in my father's cashbook that from 1956–58 he paid Albert for spraying or cutting thistles on our farm. After that I had to do it.

Not long before she died Mrs Grutzner fell one hot day near her wood heap



Jack and Augusta
(née Proposch)
Grutzner, 1891 (Rob
Wuchatsch)

and lay there until neighbour Lorna Lovewell found her.

Fred and Theo had left the farm at Westgarthtown during the 1920s, married and lived at Preston. Albert remained on the 62 acre dairy farm, assisting his parents, then continued it with his mother after his father died. From the stories my father told me, Albert must have been a bit of a larrikin, as he was often in trouble at Thomastown Primary School. Newspapers record that in 1928, when he was 17, Albert and two friends were each fined £2 for using indecent language on the Whittlesea to Reservoir train and 10/- for travelling without a ticket, plus 13/6 costs.

Albert and his mother were original suppliers of milk to the Pura Dairy at Preston, established by his cousin Albert Siebel in 1934. When he died in 1973, Albert Grutzner had 3,598 fully paid up shares in Consolidated Foods Limited, the company which owned Pura Milk.

In January 1937, Florence was one of the first six farmers to pass the Metropolitan Milk Producers' Association's newly introduced Milk Standards Test for farm certification.

On 2 December 1939, shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War, Albert enlisted in the army (VX2318), giving his occupation as motor driver. Albert and his mother had disposed of their dairy herd of 25 milkers and 5 springers, 2 horses and all implements at a clearing sale on 21 November. Florence leased the farm and on 8 December the *Hurstbridge Advertiser* noted that she had moved to Preston and a Mr Belot of Tallangatta had taken over her former home.

On 9 December Albert was allocated to A.A.S.C. Unit, 6th Division, 2nd AIF at Puckapunyal, but was absent without leave from 28 January until 4 February 1940. He forfeited one week's pay, was confined to barracks for two weeks, then discharged from the army on 20 February 1940 as medically unfit for service not occasioned by his own default. No further details are provided in his personnel file.

On 30 March 1942, shortly after the Japanese took Singapore, Albert completed a Mobilization Attestation Form and underwent a medical examination. He gave his address as Pender Street, Preston and occupation as farm labourer. It was 24 December 1942, however, before he commenced full time service in the Citizen Military Forces (V504968). After three months training at Watsonia, he was allocated to 33 Employment Company, then moved to Queensland on 19 May 1943. On 30 May he embarked at Townsville for New Guinea and on 15 July 1943 was transferred from the Citizen Military Forces to the 2nd AIF (VX142491). Employment companies were logistical and construction units, doing heavy physical work.

Albert returned to Australia on 9 July 1944. While in New Guinea he had been hospitalized after receiving accidental chest injuries while on duty on a wharf on



Jack and Florence
(née Thomas)
Grutzner, 1906.
(Rob Wuchatsch)



13 November 1943. He suffered fractured ribs when a number of packing cases fell on him. Then in January 1944 he suffered a bout of malaria.

On 18 March 1945 Albert embarked from Townsville for Aitapi, then flew to Morotai on 29 May, where he rejoined 33 Australian Works Company (formerly 33 Employment Company) until 15 November. He then served in various units until his return to Australia on 13 February 1946. He was discharged on 18 April 1946, after 1,212 days service, including 739 overseas.

After the war, Albert worked for the Victorian Railways for a while, then returned to dairying at Thomastown, where he milked about a dozen cows until the farm was sold and he retired to the bungalow on our farm with his dog named Patches.

One time when Albert was hospitalized, I was given the task of cleaning up the bungalow, then caring for him for a week or so after he returned home. I still have some old army badges and buttons he gave me. I liked Albert – he had a gentle side under his rough exterior – even if he clearly had his demons.

Albert eventually had to move when we sold our farmland in 1967 for subdivision. The bungalow was then unceremoniously bulldozed. Albert lived nearby in a bungalow at Siebel's old house in Mount View Road, Thomastown for a while, before moving to Preston, where he died on 23 July 1973 aged 62. He was cremated at Fawkner.

For further information about the Grützner family see Friends of Westgarthtown News Vol. 15, No. 2 of October 2011 and Vol. 20, No. 1 of April 2016.



Albert Grützner's army photo, 1942. (National Archives Australia)

The Bunz family of Epping

BY ROB
WUCHATSCH

The Council Club Hotel at Epping, which stood on the corner of Epping Road and Hall Street, operated from about 1876 until 1909 when it was closed by order of the Victorian Licences Reduction Board. The bluestone building, along with two adjoining lots, was purchased in 1914 by the Bunz family who occupied it until 1960. It was demolished about ten years later.



Hans Bunz (Rob Wuchatsch)

Hans Jurgen Bunz arrived in Australia on 27 August 1906 aboard the *Scharnhorst* from Bremen in Germany. Born at Nindorf, Schleswig-Holstein on 23 March 1866, he was the son of Jasper Bunz, a farmer and Anna Elsabe (née Kiekse) Bunz. In September 1906, shortly after his arrival in Melbourne, Hans married Mary Jane Betz, daughter of Conrad Peter and Magdalena Betz. Mary also came on the *Scharnhorst* with her younger sister Magdalena.

Hans worked at Berrigan in New South Wales for nine months, but by May 1907, was living at Epping. In November 1908 Mary was awarded second place in the 'Best Collection of Needlework' category at the Whittlesea Show. Shortly after, on 26 February 1909, Hans and Mary's only child Claus Conrad Gottfried Bunz was born at Epping. Claus, better known as Clarrie, attended Epping Primary School from 1915–21 and is believed to have then trained as a wool classer.



Claus Bunz as a boy (Rob Wuchatsch)

Hans Bunz was a poultry farmer and dealer at Epping. He was naturalized as an Australian citizen on 31 August 1914 but like many other German-Australians in the district, he appears to have suffered persecution during the First World War. Albert Wuchatsch mentions him in one of his satirical poems in the *Evelyn Observer* in 1917. In 'The Gallant Bombadiers', Albert writes about drunks terrorising German-Australians at Epping and in one verse refers to them wanting to scare 'Hansy Binzy' off his roost. When I was young, I only ever heard the Bunz family's surname pronounced as Binz, so that must have been how they were always known.

Mary's sister Magdalena Betz died at Epping in 1914 and then further tragedy followed when another sister, Anna Betz, committed suicide in 1919 while working as a housekeeper at Charles Zimmer's farm at Epping. Perhaps it was for this reason Mary apparently always wore black. She is also said to have taught sewing at Epping or Thomastown Primary Schools, or both. Hans and Mary Bunz appear to have lived quietly at Epping until his death there on 18 August 1945 aged 79. Mary died at Preston on 6 December 1949 aged 78 and was buried with Hans in the Lutheran Section of Springvale Cemetery.

Claus, or Clarrie Bunz, was frequently mentioned in newspapers, as he was a very good sportsman. In July 1928 the *Argus* reported that Clarrie rode a horse named Chook in a Findon Hunt Club meet at Wollert. The late Len Taggart told me Hans

Epping Football team c.1936 (Rob Wuchatsch)



Bunz once carted a dead horse from Woodstock to Epping and the next day a Findon Hunt meet took place and the hounds went crazy following the trail of spilt blood.

Clarrie's nickname at the Epping Football Club was Chooka, a reference to his family's occupation of poultry farmers and dealers. A tall man, described as a good mark and kick, he played in the ruck for several Epping premiership sides during the 1930s.

On 3 October 1942, during the Second World War, Clarrie enlisted in the Australian Army (VX90446). He gave his address as Hurstbridge, occupation as truck driver and religion as Lutheran. After nine months training at Royal Park, Watsonia and Camp Pell, he was posted to Bonegilla near Wodonga. In November 1943 he was transferred to the Australian Centre for Jungle Warfare at Canungra. He then spent the rest of the war at various Queensland bases before being discharged from the army on 14 September 1945.

By 1938, Clarrie had become interested in greyhounds, racing many over the next 40 years. On 25 October 1955 his dog Feather's Luck won the First Division Straight at Nelson Park in North Geelong. I know this because I have Clarrie's old 78-inch record of the race broadcast, a souvenir he kept until he died. It is said he kept his greyhounds in the house at Epping.

Clarrie never married. After he sold the house and land at Epping in 1960, he moved to Horner's Lane at Mernda.

From 1963 to 1977 his occupation at Mernda was given as miner in electoral rolls. Later he lived for a time with my mother's cousin, Doug Hudson, at Wollert. Clarrie died at Bailey House at North Melbourne on 21 June 1988, aged 79, but it was not until September that his body was identified. As he was an ex-serviceman, the late Ted Gason of Epping RSL organised a collection to raise money for his burial, which took place at Epping Cemetery on 5 September 1988.

Following Clarrie's funeral, I arranged with another of my mother's cousins, Don Hudson, a monumental mason, to provide Ted Gason with a plaque for the grave. In 2011, however, when I decided to write this article, I went to photograph Clarrie's grave but it was unmarked – there was no plaque – and even though I had attended his funeral, I couldn't find his grave after 23 years. I spoke with Glenys Williams, another Hudson relative, who soon discovered the plaque was still at the monumental mason's yard. She quickly retrieved the plaque and Roy Ward from Epping RSL arranged with the City of Whittlesea for it to be erected on plot 235 in late 2011. Now, ten years later, I have finally found time to complete this article. Rest In Peace Clarrie.



Above Claus Bunz's memorial plaque, Epping Cemetery (Rob Wuchatsch)

Below Claus Bunz, right, drinking at Mernda Hotel (Rob Wuchatsch)



The Bernhardt family of Epping

BY ROB WUCHATSCH

Bernhardt Drive, located in Epping North, is one of several streets named after Epping's 19th century German settlers. The Bernhardt family, bounty immigrants recruited by emigration agent Wilhelm Kirchner, first settled in Tasmania, before moving to Victoria in 1856.

Friedrich Andreas Bernhardt, his wife Anna Rosina (née Witzlau) Bernhardt and their five-year-old daughter Johanna Augusta arrived in Hobart aboard the *San Francisco* on 2 November 1855. They were from Grünberg, Silesia in Prussia. Friedrich, the son of a coach driver and Anna, daughter of a farmer, were married at Glogau in about 1844. On arrival in Australia Friedrich's age, occupation and religion were recorded as 44, shepherd/labourer and Lutheran and Anna's as 44, dairywoman and Lutheran.



On their arrival in Tasmania, Friedrich and Anna Bernhardt were engaged by Robert Nichol of New Town, near Hobart for 12 months at £30 plus rations. In 1856, after presumably fulfilling their contract, they moved to Victoria. Friedrich was a farmer living at Epping when he applied for naturalization as a Victorian citizen in 1862 and on 6 April 1866 purchased four two-acre town lots in Epping (Section 6) for £4 each. In 1875 the Shire of Darebin rate book recorded him as a gardener on four acres he owned at Epping.

On 19 November 1872, Augusta Bernhardt married Charles Koyan of Fitzroy at Trinity German Lutheran Church, East Melbourne. Koyan, from Retnitz in Brandenburg, was a former shipmate from the *San Francisco* and had also been employed at New Town by the Nichol family. He had arrived with his parents Wilhelm and Dorothea and two brothers. Augusta was then 22 and her birthplace was given as Läsger, a small village near Grünberg. The Paulke family of Epping were also from Läsger.

In 1873, Charles Koyan selected 320 acres at Moglonemby near Violet Town in northern Victoria, where several other former Epping district Germans also had farms. Koyan, however, died on his selection, which he named Ravenswood Farm, on 20 August 1881 aged 42. There were no children. Augusta later married William Henry Lehman, a grandson of Johann and Johanna Graff of Westgarthtown, with whom she had a son in 1889.

Anna Bernhardt died at Epping on 8 July 1887 aged 74. Friedrich sold most of his land at Epping on 14 January 1888 and died of prostate cancer at the Austin Hospital, Heidelberg on 7 March 1904 aged 92. He had been an inmate of the Austin Hospital for five years prior to his death. He was buried with Anna at Westgarthtown.

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.com.au

VISITING ZIEBELL'S FARMHOUSE

Ziebell's Farmhouse is open on Sunday 11:30 am–3 pm and Tuesday 9 am–12 noon.

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 John Fry on 03 9464 5062 or johnsdfry@gmail.com

FRIENDS OF WESTGARTHTOWN *Newsletter*

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