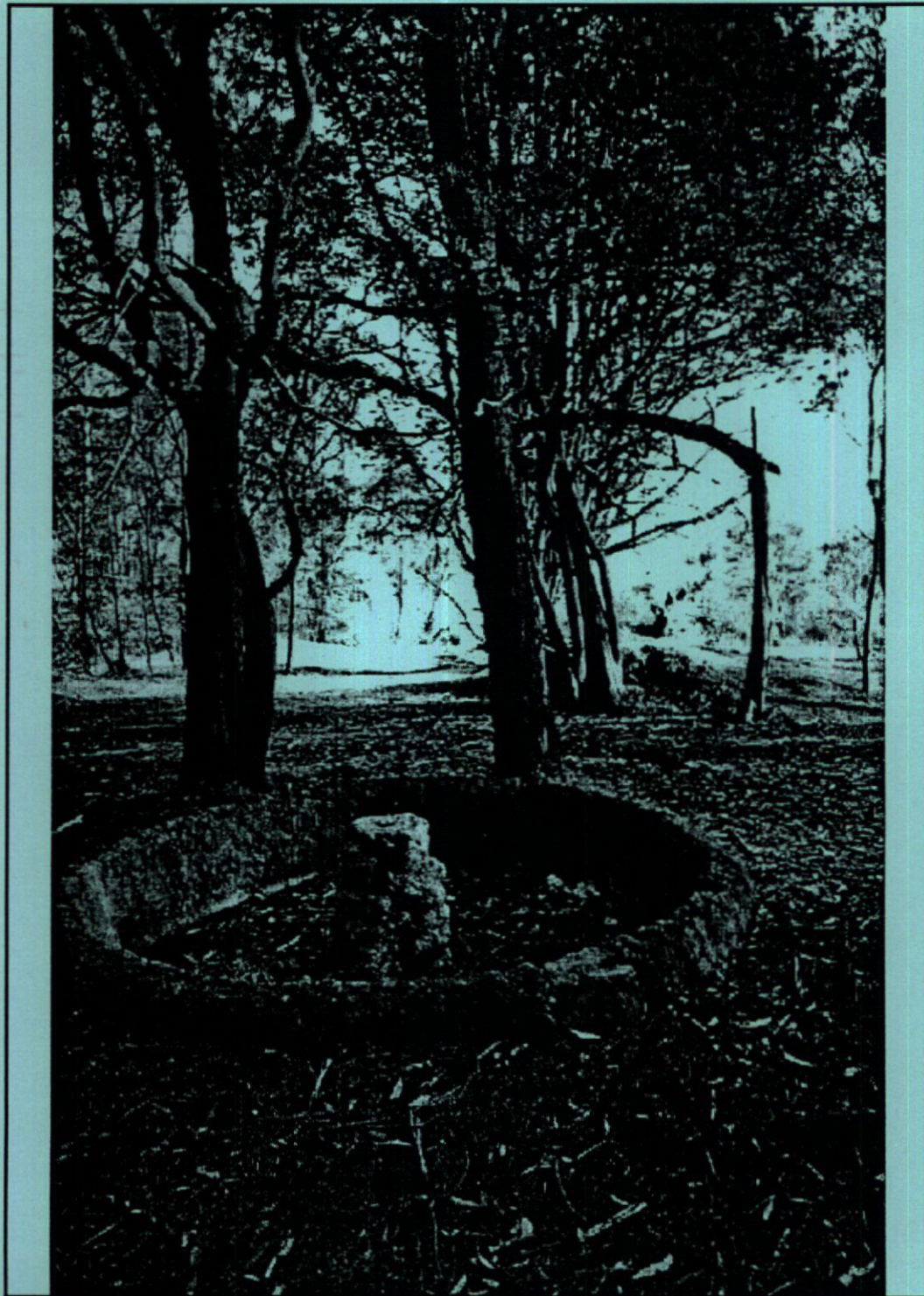




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Frankston City (East) Heritage Study Stage Two



Graeme Butler & Associates, 1997
Volume Two-Environmental History

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Environmental History of Frankston City

Introduction

Frankston: The Mediterranean of the Southern Hemisphere



¹

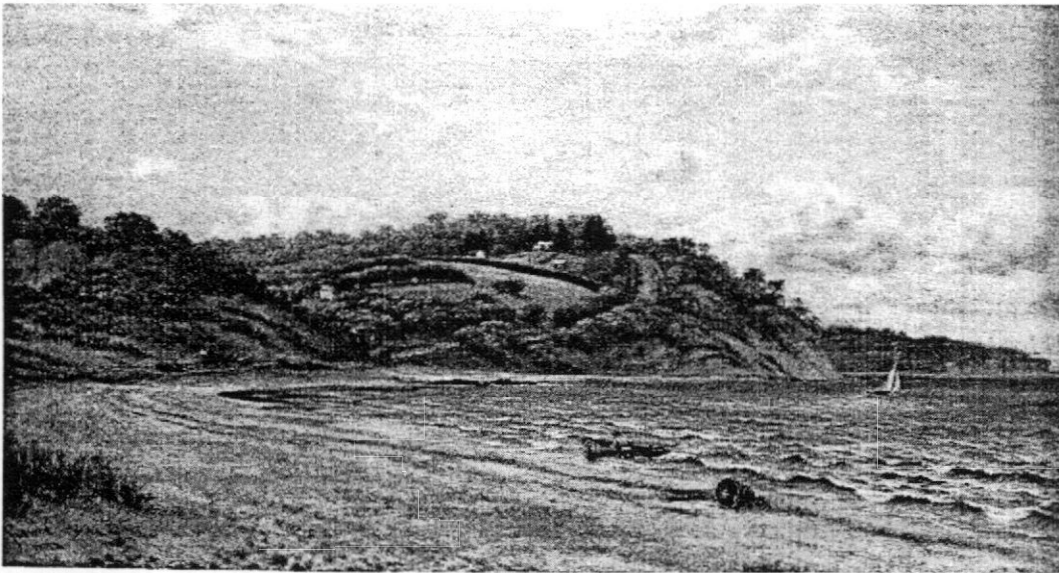
'Olivers Hill and the new road which meant the end of isolation from Melbourne, 1913 (Jones, p.152)

In 1921 an anonymous author in the Frankston Standard wrote about the "idealistic solitude of Davey's Bay"

Away from the hustling crowds and the hum-drum of city life, away from the shrill and far-reaching echoes of the Hedald(sic.) boy...lies Davey's Bay, the Mediterranean of the Southern Hemisphere.¹

This article followed after a series in the Frankston newspaper identifying local "beauty spots".² About the same time a promotional film "Beautiful Frankston" was shown in Melbourne picturing scenes of Seaford's "perfect beach" and Frankston's "rocky coastline"³. The film and the beauty spots were extolled so as to draw

¹ Frankston Standard 8.4.1921
² ibid., 11/3/1921
³ ibid., 1/4/1921



2

View to Oliver's Hill by James A Turner, 1888, from the beach showing the rural bayside paradise which attracted many for years to come (Jones, plate, courtesy Christopher Day

wide attention to Frankston's marvellous "seascapes and landscapes" composed around the "fine residences of Mornington Road and the silvery placidness of the waters." Frankston was intent on promoting itself as a popular holiday resort and drawing crowds from Melbourne. And in promoting itself in this manner Frankston stressed the character of its coastline. The views, the beaches and the fine homes built to take advantage of sandy beachfront in Frankston or stunning bay views in Mt. Eliza were the prime assets of the district.

Since the 1920s when these images of the Mediterranean of the Southern Hemisphere were shaped, much in Frankston has changed. It is no longer a secluded

beachside resort. It is now a major suburban centre and a stopping point for travellers to more popular resorts further down the bay. Yet even as the quiet holiday town has been overtaken by the more mundane functions of suburbia, Frankston retains a distinctive character. The changes from the 1920s onwards are in themselves significant. Indeed the descriptions of the charms of Davey's Bay coincided with a wave of new building in which summer residents built holiday homes shaped by some of the more advanced architectural ideas of the time. New suburban housing estates, changes in retailing techniques and buildings, the impact of the motor car on the townscape, in all of these

Frankston sometimes reflected but more often showed the way to home builders and municipal planners throughout Victoria. And surviving within the character of the modern city there are important elements of an older Frankston. Frankston does have a distinctive environmental character.

The New Areas to the East

The more rural areas to the east, recently added to Frankston City Council - Skye, Carrum Downs, Langwarrin and part of Baxter - share some of these 20th century changes. However, in these areas the local farming communities and picturesque village townships lasted over a longer period. Despite the opening of large residential estates and regional shopping centres in the 1970s and 1980s in the growth areas of Carrum Downs and Langwarrin, some elements of the district's earlier farming heritage and rural landscape remain.

Nor have these eastern areas been drawn into the fringe tourism of Melbourne, like Frankston. And, rather than having Port Phillip Bay as a defining element in the building histories of these areas, the eastern townships, if they relate to any coastal areas, are defined rather by Western Port Bay to the south.

However, the strongest historical links for the eastern farming settlements were with the markets of Cranbourne, Dandenong and Melbourne. In addition, another distinguishing feature of the eastern parts of Frankston are two large sites that are unique within the history of the municipality. These are the former Langwarrin Army Reserve (now the Langwarrin

Flora and Fauna Reserve), which relates to other military establishments on the Mornington Peninsula, and the Carrum Downs settlement originally developed as a welfare scheme providing affordable homes for the unemployed and, more recently, for the aged poor.

As an aid to identifying and protecting important heritage sites within Frankston this history explores major themes in the shaping of the present townscapes. These have been identified as follows.

The Coastline

Through all of the environmental changes which have taken place in Frankston since the middle of the nineteenth century the character of the shoreline has remained one of the major interests of local residents and visitors. The flat beachfront to the north and then the heights to the south are major dividing lines within the present city and have distinguished discrete locales within the municipality. The important elements of waterfront history in Frankston can be distinguished as follows

Beach structures

The beaches and their buildings especially the piers, clubhouses

and shelter sheds have always identified a special place to Frankston visitors and residents. Though they have constantly been altered and reworked, they can still remind us of the long history of Frankston as a beachside holiday town.

Kananook Creek.

For the entire history of European Frankston the creek has been a major dividing line in the Shire and then City. It has been the centre for protracted debates about land use and for many abortive schemes of management. It has also been the site of some more successful endeavours in landscaping and water management.

Mt. Eliza and Oliver's Hill.

The heights to the south attracted a group of distinctive residents to Frankston and also became the site for some unusual designs in holiday housing. The secluded bays of Mt. Eliza have a special charm jealously guarded by local residents. In the yacht clubs at these bays there are also some valuable heritage buildings.

Western Port Bay

Western Port Bay, centre of an early fishing industry, and a major depot from the 1840s for the coastal trade between Melbourne and Gippsland, became an important commercial and recreational area last century. There were strong transport linkages between Western Port Bay and townships to the east and south of Frankston. Langwarrin, Carrum Downs and Baxter were places which had access to these road systems, such as the routes between Frankston and Flinders,

Dandenong and Hastings, and between Baxter and Tooradin. These roads were important tourist routes.

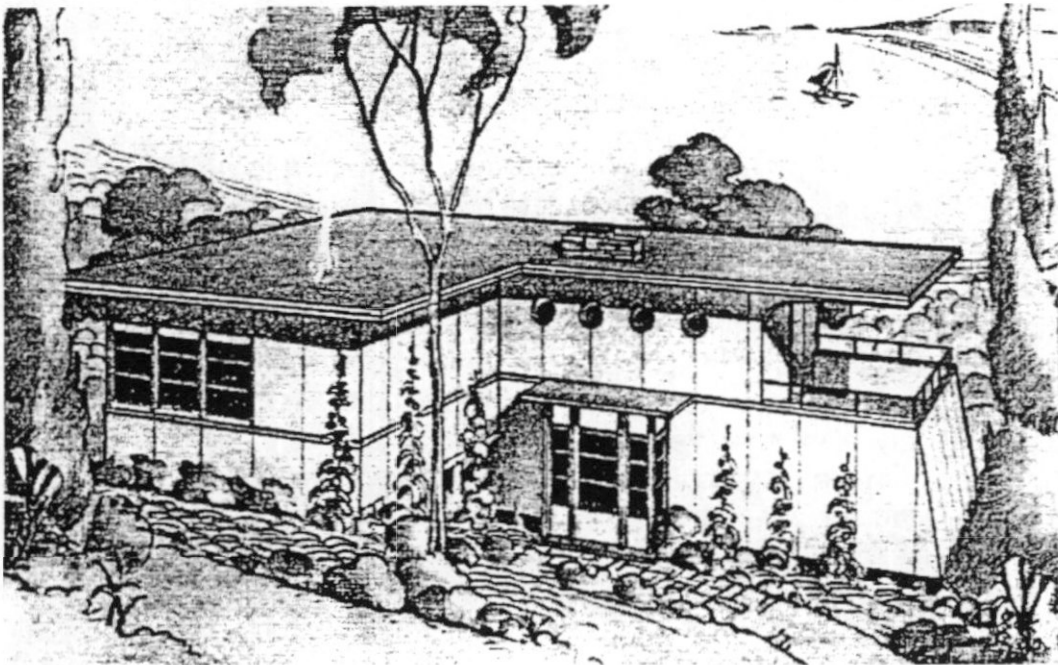
Agriculture Industry Housing

Agriculture and Industry

Frankston was for many decades an important centre for orchards. There are still some buildings from this period of the city's history surviving particularly in the eastern areas, and as well other buildings which reflect the pastoral era in the district and the later more scientific approach to rural business. Frankston sustained many small industries in the later nineteenth century. Since the Second World War it has been a favoured site for larger industrial concerns and for a large industrial workforce. While few of the industrial structures from earlier years have survived, the role of industry must be noted in any environmental history.

Housing

Much of the housing in Frankston is similar to suburban housing anywhere in Melbourne. But Frankston does have an interesting and distinctive building history. The shape of the present town has been in part determined by a succession of building waves. In the first of these small shacks for fishermen and scrub-cutters were built. To the east of Frankston, there are surviving farm houses and an orchard house or two from the Selection era. They were followed by the mansions of Melbourne's wealthy, men and women wanting a retreat away from the city but within reach of the



3

One of many modern houses illustrated in home journals of the 1940s-60s: this was Bruce Sutherland's nine-square design to house six persons and one car (under): all overlooking the bay. Flat roofing, use of local rubble stone in chimneys and a modular light-weight structure were all very modern concepts for their time and were used many times in following years. [The Australian Home Beautiful' 11.1946 p.27]

busy streets of the centre of Melbourne. At the same time the quality of many of the houses in Frankston (especially those architect-designed holiday homes in the south of the present city) have given the place a distinctive character. More extensive and innovative holiday designs followed the building of holiday mansions. These later designs were often shaped by the principles of the modern school of architects. After the Second World War an expanse of cheap housing for commuters was built in Frankston, especially in the area to the north of the commercial centre. The fine houses were often

restricted to the heights of Oliver's Hill and Mt. Eliza. In the north of the present city, holiday accommodation often meant cheap shacks, many of them condemned by health inspectors. These were often surrounded by equally cheap and rough permanent housing especially after 1945. Eventually in the later 1950s and 1960s some more regulated, and from a planning perspective, more innovative estates were built in the east of the city, in the growth areas of Langwarrin and Carrum Downs.

Civic and Commercial Frankston

Civic Frankston

Beyond Frankston's history in holiday-making, housing and farming it, like other municipalities, has several buildings and parks which served as focal points for local social life. These, parks and buildings, have often undergone dramatic changes over the last fifty years. But still they can remind us of the history of the suburb, as can the many churches in the suburb, particularly those with the most dramatic siting, those which have played a central role in local activities and the churches which make the best use of traditional designs.

The small townships to the east, Langwarrin, Carrum Downs, Skye and Baxter, also contained a cluster of buildings, such as churches and schools, that were centres of social activity, although they depended for many services on the larger town centres at Frankston and Cranbourne.

Commercial life

The business hub of Frankston has been reshaped in recent decades. Yet there are still some important buildings in this district which predate the Second World War. There are also buildings which were designed as prototypes for the standard supermarket and shopping malls of every post-war suburb.

Transport

The character of modern Frankston depends on the links it has had with Melbourne. At first it was

reached by a rough road and occasionally by sea. The railway opened up Frankston to many more holiday-makers from the city. Finally the motor car has reshaped much of the character of Frankston bringing to the suburb distinctive forms of street architecture and new functional buildings, amongst them drive-in cinemas and petrol stations. The present suburb is, in common with the rest of urban Australia, still being reshaped by the motor car. Similar trends are observable in the townships to the east, where the first rough tracks gave way to unmade roads and, after the formation of the Country Roads Board in 1912, and the advent of the motor car, to improved metalled roads by the 1920s.¹

Historical themes

This environmental history is presented as an aid to the identification and management of significant historic sites in Frankston. It traces the principal forces at work in shaping the existing townscape and identifies the major elements in the changing material form of Frankston.

These have been identified as:

- (1) The changes about the shoreline,
- (2) The changes in agriculture, industry and housing
- (3) The forces at work in altering the central core of modern Frankston.

Frankston today is largely a product of the years between 1950 and 1990. Yet within this modern landscape are many sites of real historical and architectural interest.

1 1925 Army Ordnance map. 'Cranbourne.'

Their significance becomes more apparent when individual buildings, landforms and areas are set against the themes outlined in this history.

The rural areas to the east had close links with Frankston last century and were subject to many of the same changes that took place this century, particularly relating to agriculture, industry and housing. However, because of some differences in development patterns, some of the historic themes identified as most important in understanding the character of modern Frankston, are less relevant when considering the townships to its east. The manner in which these themes may diverge is related to factors such as the longer period of pastoral and farming activity: the village-like character of some eastern townships until quite recently; and the unique quality of sites like the Langwarrin Army Reserve, which relates to the history of military establishments on the Mornington Peninsula rather than to the various themes associated with suburban Frankston.

Frankston and the Bay

Creek, beach and hill

The present city of Frankston follows an arc of the eastern shore of Port Phillip Bay. A large part of the present character of Frankston derives from this curving boundary between land and sea. Frankston's character has largely been shaped by this waterfront, especially in the appeal of the locality to holiday-makers from Melbourne. At some stages these were predominantly day-trippers, at other stages monthly or weekly visitors, and in some parts of the municipality,

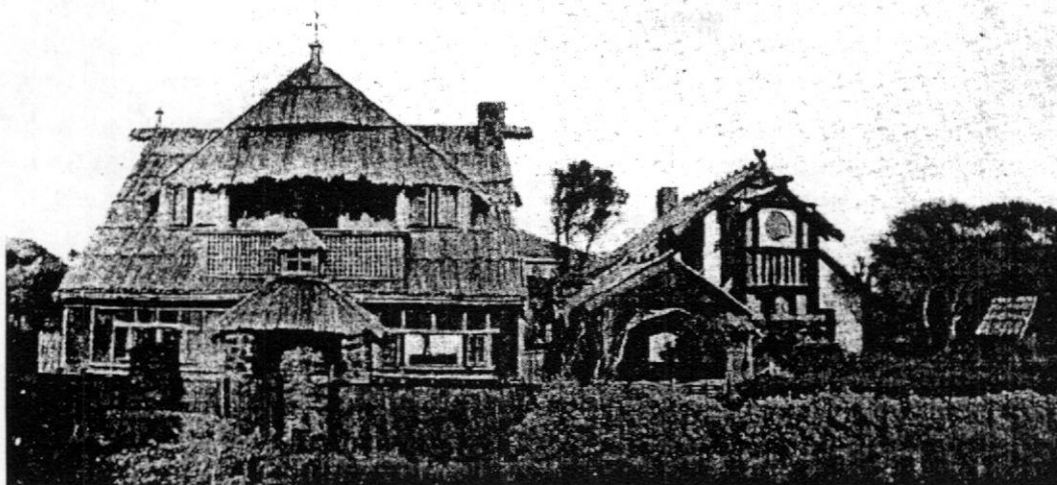
especially Mt. Eliza and Long Island, these have become long-term residents building retirement homes or holiday homes close to the water. At the southern end of the City, the hills of Mt. Eliza and Oliver's Hill stand out over the northern stretch of Frankston. The course of the Kananook Creek separates these heights of Frankston from the flat land following the beachfront to the northern boundary. The beach, the hills, cliffs and bays of the southern parts of the city and the course of the Kananook Creek establish the physical parameters of Frankston's urban form.

Beach buildings

As a place of recreation and occasional industry, through lime kilns, boatbuilding and fishing, the Frankston beachfront has been a site for various buildings, many of them temporary but some of greater long-term importance. Perhaps the most significant, certainly the most immediately visible foreshore structure is the Frankston Pier.

The Pier

The first pier was apparently sited beneath Oliver's Hill, to the south of the present site; as late as 1960 its pylons could still be seen running in a broken line out into the bay. The present pier is thought to date from 1857 when a pier was recorded on this site but of shorter length than the present structure. In 1863, possibly in the hope of attracting some maritime trade, the local residents petitioned the Public Works Department and asked that the pier be extended into deeper water¹. While it has remained a key physical feature of the



4

Harry McClelland's incredible studio and 'barn', (the latter still survives) examples of an informal beach architecture which was inspired by the rustic qualities of the locality early

Frankston waterfront it has not really played a major part in the commercial life of the suburb and has been mainly a focus for tourist activity. During the 1880s the Frankston Brick Company prepared works on approaches to the jetty to ship out their products¹. At about that time a permanent light marked the end of the pier and a lamplighter was employed to make certain that the light was kept burning in both fine and foul weather. The company's main interests were in shipping out bricks and bringing in firewood from the jetty to their brick kilns on the foreshore. Wharfage rates in the 1880s were set by the customs department however there seemed to be little passenger or goods movement through Frankston pier. Old residents recalled that the most exciting visitor to the foreshore was Lord Brassey, who sailed around the world in 1876-7. His yacht Sunbeam tied up to the pier during his Port Phillip sojourn. Other well-known users of the pier

in its first decades were Thomas and James Wren who took fish up the bay and returned with food and manufactured goods for sale in Frankston. Yet as a stopping point for shipping up the bay or a place for which excursion steamers might bring crowds from Melbourne, the Frankston pier never really attracted great interest. There were more fashionable and more convenient destinations along the Mornington and the Bellarine Peninsulas. Occasionally visitors hired fishing boats, but only after arriving in Frankston by train. The pier remains still the as the one single beachfront building visible from vantage points along the bay to the north and south of Frankston. But it appears to have never really attracted much interest for commercial use.

The railway naturally altered the way in which the pier was used. An old resident, David Kelly, of Young St had carted firewood in bullock wagons to the pier in the 1870s and 1880s². He traded

4 G Steel, Frankston- an outline of the district's early history. (Frankston, 1977) ; - Conservation of historical sites, buildings and monuments within the city of Frankston, n.d. (copy held by FCC)
1 Frankston Standard 5.2.1887

in other goods brought down from Melbourne. In 1948, one of Frankston's oldest residents, Charlie Willcox, recalled that few passenger or goods steamers used the Frankston pier. It was, he recalled, mainly a pleasant place for summer promenading¹. Once the railway arrived in Frankston it captured the little trade in goods taken to and from Frankston by boat. At the same time the railway brought Frankston closer to the Melbourne holiday trade. The summer visitors took to the pier as a place for a pleasant walk, visiting tea gardens or beachside stalls and kiosks on their way. Yet without the interest of commercial users in its protection and following several storms, the pier became more and more dilapidated and from the turn of the century onwards, Frankston residents sought to find both new uses for the structure and to maintain its physical quality. During the twentieth century the pier gradually deteriorated so that by the 1920s the local council was dismayed by the collapse of sections and asked the Public Works Department to carry out long-delayed repairs. The Ports and Harbour Department rejected local appeals for a breakwater but agreed to continue with repair work to the existing pier.² In the meantime the local council tried to have the pier gazetted as a passenger wharf (they were informed that there was no real need for this).³ Repairs were not

completed before the pier suffered further damage from storms in the 1930s.⁴ By then Frankston had an alternative place for fishing or promenading, at Seaford, where in 1929 engineers completed a pier as part of their works on the Kananook Creek.⁵ But sited less majestically and some distance from the commercial and residential centre of Frankston, it never had quite the appeal of the first pier.

Debate about the state of the pier continued beyond the Second World War when a new lot of day-trippers began arriving in Frankston, travelling by car and not the train. Most of these visitors took their ritual stroll along the pier. For others it had become a standard fishing spot and for the foolhardy a convenient diving tower. Despite local pleas for massive surgery on pylons and decking, the Public Works Department insisted in 1950 that the Frankston pier could be maintained with only minor work, but a year later the pier again suffered rapid deterioration.⁶ In 1951, the delayed repairs to Frankston Pier again caused a problem with a section of the pier coming adrift.⁷ The Ports & Harbours department of the Public Works Ministry worked on the pier and in May 1952 the local paper congratulated the Ministry on its "fine job" in reconstructing the pier.⁸ The pier continued as a major attraction for holidaymakers and fishermen and eventually

4 Frankston Standard 22.5.1936

1 ibid, 28.10.1948

2 Minutes Shire of Frankston and Hastings (after M) 6 December, 1926, and 3 February, 1928

3 The gazetted followed several schemes to run passenger excursions from the pier to Melbourne during the summer months

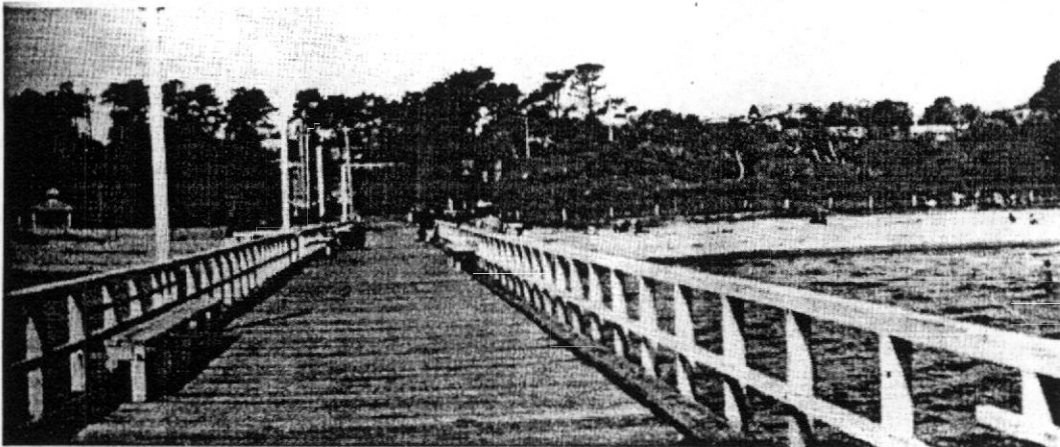
4 Minutes 28 September, 1934

5 Argus, 26 October, 1929

6 Minutes 11 August, 1950

7 Minutes 26 October, 1951

8 Frankston Standard 1 Amy 1952



5

Frankston pier, c1935 (Jones, p.163)

attracted boat-owners wanting to revive passenger services. In 1966 the Port Jackson and Manly Steamship Company were granted a three month trial for hydrofoil excursions from the pier. A concrete pad on the shore near the pier entrance was the site for the departures by hovercraft in the early 1980s. For a time, Flotilla

Pty Ltd were running Argonaut pleasure cruises from the pier.¹ Each summer paddle boats and surf-skis were rented from the shore around the pier. Where much else along the Frankston foreshore has disappeared, the pier survives as an evocative relic from Frankston's heyday as a tourist resort and still fulfils an

¹ Minutes 12 September, 1966 and 17 October, 1966



6

Jetty at Davey's Bay, 1991. has the rustic quality of some of the earlier jetties around the bay

important recreational role for residents and visitors alike. In its length, form and siting this pier distinguishes the Frankston foreshore from all those other expanses of sand and ti-tree which ring Port Phillip Bay. The pier is perhaps now more than ever before a key site for beachside recreation of all sorts and a key focal point for the maritime identity of Frankston.

Public and community buildings

The Frankston pier was the first of many buildings which drew people to the foreshore. Over the years, the beach, ti-tree and creek banks have all attracted local clubs and

societies looking for cheap and convenient sites for clubrooms. At other sites along the waterfront, Seaford, Davey's Bay and Canadian Bay, residents put up boat sheds, summer shelters and community buildings. In many ways the foreshore rather than any civic precinct has been the communal heart of Frankston, helping us understand why for so long the town lacked a town hall¹.

Frankston community groups saw the beachfront as a natural place for recreation and over the years erected, and demolished, a series of buildings. Most of these were built for a particular club or society and shaped along strictly utilitarian

¹ the mechanics hall served this purpose for some; there was also the local cinema

lines. During the nineteenth century brick kilns, shanties and shacks, boat sheds and some kiosks were dotted along the coastline at Frankston. Some order was brought to this array of buildings in 1910 when the foreshore was gazetted as a reserve for public recreation.¹ In 1911 the waterfront at Frankston was placed under the control of the shire council. Apart from trying to collect fees from campers, the shire wanted to establish a network of paths from Seaford to Frankston and a series of shelter sheds and viewing points along the coast. There were plans for a more complete "beautification" of the foreshore, a scheme which was abandoned through disputes over funding. During the 1930s there were several debates locally and then with the Ministry of Public Works about how to manage the foreshore and about how much clearing of ti-tree could be carried out. Much of this argument centred on the problems over the Kananook Creek. At the same time several local recreational bodies saw the foreshore as a perfect site for clubhouses. From the 1930s onwards clubrooms and their recreational users have gradually transformed the character of the Frankston foreshore, so that the wild expanse of ti-tree and sand which so attracted campers between the wars and the pleasant gardens and walkways near the Frankston commercial heart have all but disappeared. As a result, the surviving remnants of this landscape become of course

more interesting as elements of local heritage.

In 1937 the Frankston Dinghy and Yacht Club commenced their new club rooms on the north side of Kananook Creek. Over the years other local societies followed them to the foreshore, looking for sites close to the commercial heart of Frankston and generally to the north side of the Frankston pier. The Surf Life Saving Club also asked council for permission to erect new club rooms near the creek mouth.² Despite all the problems with the creek's silting and pollution, the creek-mouth attracted a series of users, many of them organised local societies able to call on volunteer labour to erect, alter and extend buildings. In 1955, for example, the Frankston Sea Scouts applied to build a club house on the banks of the Kananook Creek.³ Other buildings near the creek mouth included the new Surf Life Saving Clubhouse, built in 1959, a two-storey brick building largely constructed by local volunteer labour.⁴ The Sea Rangers had taken over an older beachfront building and extended it in 1954.⁵ Following these moves the local Anglers Club approached council wanting a new clubhouse. With 110 members they claimed that they had just as much right to a beachside home as any other local group.⁶ The coastguard building was for a time used by other local groups and stands near to what was once the site of the Frankston Bowling Club's green. The Frankston Yacht club building

1 Victorian Government Gazette, RS3203, 1910
 2 RS19 and 20 November, 1937
 3 Minutes 28 January, 1955 and 11 March, 1955
 4 Frankston Standard 9 December, 1959
 5 Minutes 19 November, 1954
 6 Minutes 20 May, 1957

is on a site which has been rebuilt several times, most recently in 1972. There is also an Elderly Citizens Clubrooms on the foreshore built in 1961.

The memories which visitors to Frankston have of the foreshore relate to the tea gardens and kiosks which traded during the summer months. At the entrance to the pier there used to be a 'fairy garden' with five or six small buildings with pyramidal roofs.¹

Just one of these survives.

After the Second World War several of the older waterfront sites vanished although along the foreshore some private boathouses survived in the gardens of homes abutting the beachfront (off Gould Street, Long Island). In 1960 the older jetty piers were removed from below Oliver's Hill in cleaning up the general beachfront environment.²

Probably more significant than these clubhouses were the bathing boxes. These were once familiar in many Port Phillip Bayside municipalities including Frankston. In the later nineteenth century these bathing boxes were sited at the foot of Oliver's Hill near to the enclosed Frankston baths. When bathers took to swimming in the sea outside the confined baths they often requested bathing boxes for private use. The last of these structures still survives on the Long Island beach with isolated boxes on Davey's and Canadian Bays. The popularity of bathing boxes declined during the middle years of the twentieth century so that in

1947 the local newspaper decried the "falling-down condition" of Frankston bathing boxes.

Frankston had some of the best beaches in Victoria but these were being ruined claimed the paper because council failed to enforce local regulations for bathing boxes.³ Foreshore structures did seem to deteriorate after World War Two, amongst them the bathing boxes. In 1955, Palmer's Boatshed was beginning to collapse and in the same year the wall of the Frankston High School boat shed was blown down.⁴

Several owners lost interest in keeping up their bathing boxes. At Oliver's Hill, the council wanted to "beautify" the view and found that the collection of old boxes and remnants of piers and baths detracted from the beauty of the suburb's most scenic spot.⁵

Over the next few years council cancelled several bathing box leases and the foreshore committee began demanding minimum sizes and set building standards for any new bathing boxes.⁶ Under regulations proposed in 1958, bathing boxes could not be smaller in floor area than 25 by 15 feet and had to have brickwork of four and a half inches thickness. The foundations were to be of reinforced concrete with piers sunk to six feet and with entrance heights etc. regulated. Moreover to cut down on demand, lessees had to be Frankston ratepayers.⁷ The regulations also required the boxes to be all of brick or concrete and to have fire proof fittings as

1 Information from Ian Armstrong
 2 Minutes 18 July, 1960
 3 16 January, 1947
 4 Minutes 19 August, 28 October, 1955
 5 Minutes 8 February, 1956 and various dates 1959
 6 Minutes 20 February, 1956, 28 November, 1958
 7 Minutes 28 November, 1958



7

'Kananook Crk, c1900, the sort of rural image which attracted tourism to the area (Jones, p.135)]

well as approved form of access ramps.¹ From 1959 onwards the Foreshore Committee began to serve notice on owners of decaying wooden bathing boxes and removed most of the older-style boxes from the beachfront.² Over the next few years council also demolished other older buildings along the beachfront.³ Some of these survive on Long Island Beach at the north end of a long line of more recent boxes.

Elsewhere leases were granted to residents wanting bathing boxes or boat sheds at some of the more

isolated beaches, Davey's Bay for example. But complaints from nearby residents who feared that their access to the beaches would be obstructed reduced the number of such leases.⁴

Kananook Creek

The first Europeans who arrived in Port Phillip Bay were attracted to the mouth of the Kananook Creek when they were looking for a reliable supply of freshwater. Since then the creek has played a part in the deliberations of local councils and local citizens, state and colonial governments and the

1 *ibid.*, 20 October, 1958
2 Minutes 18 March, 1959
3 Minutes 4 April, 1960
4 Minutes 7 October, 1950

harbour and ports authorities of Port Phillip Bay. Initially seen as a prize environmental asset, the creek has over the years brought vexing political and health problems to Frankston.

Charles Robbins, a member of the first British expedition to enter Port Phillip Bay, explored land alongside the creek and with Charles Grimes they supplied drinking water from the Kananook to the ship *Cumberland* anchored in the bay.¹ Grimes' party went on to identify parts of the Carrum Swamp before sailing further around the Bay. As a natural landform the creek thus has close links with the initial European exploration of Victoria. And today it is still a key natural landform in the City, forcing a sharp turn in the coastal road from Melbourne and cutting off the section of Frankston known as Long Island. During the later nineteenth century several schemes were drawn up through which the Carrum Swamp could be drained for farming and new water outlets were envisioned by which the Kananook Creek would no longer run as a free-flowing stream through Frankston. As a result of such engineering works the creek became a stagnant string of ponds in the twentieth century. With the growth of Frankston into a village and new farms on the Carrum Swamp the creek ceased, at least near its mouth to have the qualities which attracted Grimes and Robbins. In 1928 the *Argus* reported a visit by the Premier Sir

William McPherson to Frankston to inspect works at Kananook Creek. What was once a clear waterway "suitable for boating and fishing" had by then become "a dirty stagnant drain". The stench had become "abominable" and campers and visitors were driven away from Frankston shops and beach.²

Attempts at farming in the Carrum Swamp had resulted in engineering works draining swamp water into the Patterson River. The Kananook Creek, running through the township of Frankston collected household waste and some sewage and the creek level was often not high enough to take this out into the bay.³ Several efforts were made to undo damage caused by swamp drainage and by the end of the 1920s, the State Rivers and Water Supply had installed an electric pump to flush the creek at low tide. This was one amongst several attempts to identify ways of restoring the creek to its former beauty and to remove the major health risk in Frankston. As early as 1886, councillors from the Shire of Frankston and Hastings were meeting with the Minister for Public Works to find a better drainage solution to the creek water.⁴ In 1897, the Minister of Public Works thought that flood gates at the mouth would solve drainage problems, banking water up so that it could be suddenly released.⁵

After one summer in which several holiday makers vowed to never return to Frankston unless the

1 Moorhead, L Mornington in the Wake of Flinders: historical survey, Melbourne 1971, p.24 and Frankston Standard, historical series, 26 November, 1956

2 A more detailed history of the Creek is available in J.A Douglas, Stories of the Kananook Creek, Melbourne, 1985

3 *Argus*, 3 July, 1928 and 5 February, 1929

4 Shire of Frankston and Hastings, Minutes of Shire meetings, Minutes vol.3, 15 May, 1886

5 Minutes 20 October, 1897

creek was cleaned, the Public Health Commission took up the dangers posed by the creek. The Ministry of Public Works had by then installed a centrifugal pump to discharge saltwater into the creek, taking water in from Seaford Pier.¹ Evidently this failed to solve the problem and the following year the local paper complained about the threat, not only to local health, but also local business, since tourists would go to one of Victoria's other beaches.

Frankston councillors embarked on strenuous but often misguided efforts to improve the creek surrounds between the wars and after. In 1930 the Minister of Lands had to order the cessation of work between Kananook Creek and Seaford where the council had employed 35 men to clear ti-tree and level the ground for a boulevard, outraging the Department of Crown Lands. The creek-side land could not be alienated, claimed the Minister, "by the King himself."² There were several moves to create a boulevard along the creek bank; in 1938, crown lands officers had to restrain council workers and some Frankston Councillors who had cut ti-tree and levelled land for a boulevard and in 1955 the MMBW Chief Planner Mr. Borrie cooled council ardour for a scenic drive on the east (landward) bank of Kananook Creek.³

While beautification schemes were drawn up, begun and abandoned, a more imaginative attempt to solve drainage problems was

introduced. This plan called for works and barriers so as to divert water from the Dandenong Creek into the Kananook Creek, one which doubtless would have produced a similar problem in the Dandenong Creek itself.⁴ At the same time the local boat owners were asking for a boat harbour in the creek.⁵ Along with an effort to attract more visitors after the Second World War, local residents and the council tried again to improve the flow of the creek and to make it a safe harbour for small boats. Yet despite their best efforts, the local paper continued to report at regular intervals that the creek was in a shocking state, giving off nauseous smells, full of thousands of dead fish and eels and remained stagnant unless flushed at least once a week.⁶ Frustrated by official confusion about what works were best to improve the creek, local fishermen continued removing boulders from the creek mouth to try and speed the flow of water and also to make an easier entrance at low tides.

In the 1950s the MMBW took over works along the creek banks and in 1956 the Board began to replace masonry around the creek mouth.⁷ By then it appeared to many local residents that the creek mouth was not important to the MMBW. They feared that a metropolitan body like the MMBW was not really attuned to local concerns and was more intent on promoting fishing and boating on the upper reaches of the creek. Along with the unpleasantness of stagnant water

1 Argus, 20 February, 1929

2 Frankston Standard 24 June, 1930

3 Minutes 28, March, 1955 and Argus n.d.

4 Minutes 19 November, 1937

5 Frankston Standard, 10 September, 1937

6 Frankston Standard, 13 February, 1947

7 Minutes 14 December, 1956

and difficulties in boat access from the sea, shopkeepers, holiday makers and nearby residents in the 1950s had to put up with rubbish strewn along the creek banks. As well, these creek banks were regularly reported as "crawling with rats"¹ In 1957, fishermen, local sea scouts and others interested in the creek formed a Kananook Creek Improvement Association through which they continued with work around the creek mouth. Professional fishermen had complained that at high tide, even after works on the entrance, it was impossible to get a cabin boat under the footbridge at the mouth and others pointed out that a rescue boat could not get out into the bay at low tide. Following more efforts by this local group, the PWD again took up the possibility of flooding and flushing the creek with elaborate plans to take water out via a new aqueduct at Seaford. This was to be combined with flood gates to bank up creek water at low tide and a new pumping plant near the northern end of Long Island. In 1958 a special Parliamentary Committee asked for outlet culvert drains into Eel Race Drain, a tidal gate to Pattersons River and a new flushing system taking water into the bay near the Riviera Hotel.² In June 1961 the new flushing scheme opened and council and state authorities set aside £20000 for improvements to the banks of the creek. However local residents complained a few months later that the new scheme was "a complete flop" since the flood gates were not operating in a way

which would back up water to the Eel Race outlets.³ In December the new gates were proclaimed as working "at last" and residents could look forward to a slow revival of the clear brook which attracted Grimes and Robbins more than a century and a half earlier. Today the creek, with its bridges and curving course, is one of the key environmental features of Frankston and the long history of engineering works and local efforts to clean the creek and make it a viable boating course together make up a major aspect of the environmental history of the Frankston waterfront. Timber footbridges near the northern end of Long Island and at the rear of Nepean Highway properties still conjure up some of the rural charm of Frankston which holiday-makers found so appealing many years ago.

The southern cliffs and hills

While some part of the character of the foreshore was shaped by buildings such as the pier and bathing boxes and by works around the creek, for much of the last hundred years and beyond, work has gone on to shore up the southern cliffs and hills. For years, Oliver's Hill was known as "Insurance Hill", not just for the expense of the buildings, but for the constant fear that their footings would disintegrate and the owners would need to make insurance claims once their homes had tumbled into the sea. The extensive concrete footings of White Lodge (q.v.), on the Nepean

1 *ibid.*, 24 February, 1958, 10 May, 1961

2 Minutes 26 September, 1960

3 Frankston Standard 7 June, 1961 (the new works were valued at £9000) Frankston Standard 16 November, 1961



8

Detail of Black's 1891 plan of the Mornington Peninsula showing the thin sprinkling of buildings and cultivation among the rural landscape. (CPOV M/Def 58)

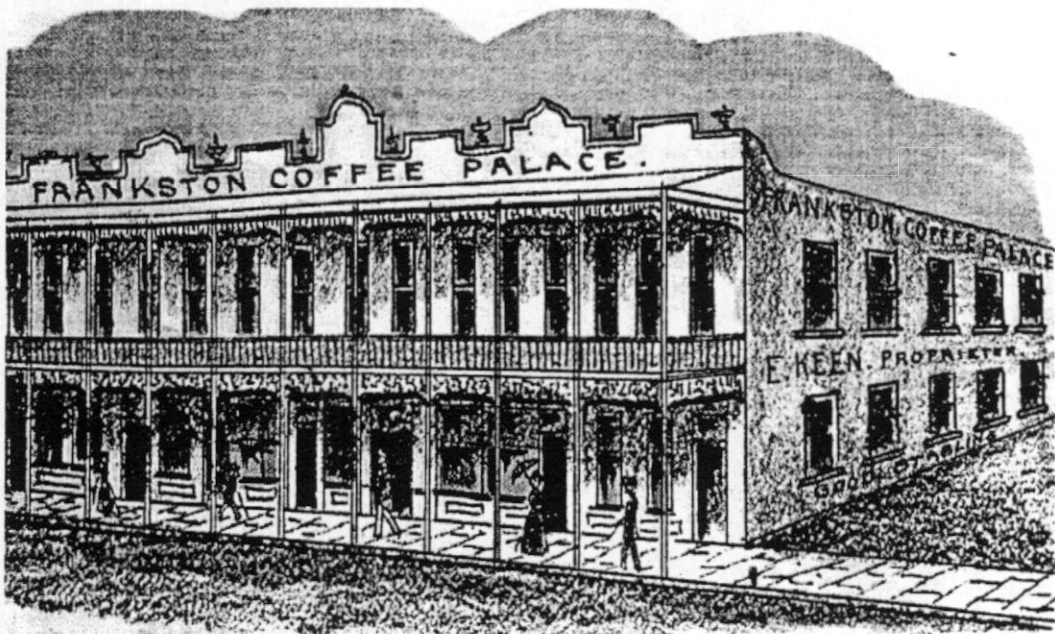
Highway, illustrate the precautions taken by private owners to ensure sound foundations.

Oliver's Hill was also a favourite vantage point since for views over the bay, rivaled only by the peak near to Heatherhill Road where the Old Dutch Windmill once stood, the work of a local builder Stan Chapman.

This fear of erosion and collapse grew throughout the 1930s.

Attempts to make the foreshore a quarry had led to the first signs of slippage. Removal of granite from

Oliver's Hill raised fears of landslide from the hill.¹ Erosion at Oliver's Hill spread during the 1930s and in 1933 many residents began to fear land collapse on a grand scale.² In 1935 several Frankston houses were imperiled by land slippage. When the Foreshore Erosion Board visited Frankston in November 1935 they saw spots on Long Island where "hundreds of tons of sand had been washed away by the sea."³ Even though the council had put in a brush fence some years earlier a



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CASH STARLING

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9

Frankston House was reputedly developed from Thomas Ritchie's house built in the 1880s and later served as a popular guest house, backing onto the Kananook Creek and close to the Frankston and Pier Hotels. The site is on the corner of Playne and Bay Streets and has since been redeveloped. (Jones, plates, from State Library of Victoria)

¹ Frankston Standard 8 January, 1887

² Minutes, 30 September, 1933

³ Argus, 15 November, 1935

recent storm had washed this away.¹ On Oliver's Hill the Foreshore Board saw a more difficult problem with "in parts great masses of earth slipping into the sea at the base of the cliffs". Already three fine homes had subsided and for a time Pt. Nepean Road had been closed.² The Board members reported that the "preventative measures adopted by the council showed a policy of self-help that was appreciated by the board."³ Earlier Frankston had begun to deal with the foreshore erosion through a £2000 government grant and £4500 put up by the Shire.⁴ At the Seaford end of the beach the Public Works Department had commenced anti-erosion works near Keast Park in the 1930s.⁵ Apart from the general guidelines of the Foreshore Erosion Board, the council had been engaged in a metropolitan meeting of councils at Brighton Town Hall in 1946 in which 20 councils and the PWD discussed building a sea wall around the entire bay foreshore.⁶ While this plan was never completely followed, sections of sea wall were speedily completed and in 1949 a sea wall was constructed at the foot of Oliver's Hill.⁷ The state government set aside two million pounds for erosion work in 1951, but still the problems around Oliver's Hill and to a lesser extent Davey's Bay concerned residents.

Travelers passing through Frankston to Portsea or Sorrento had to climb Oliver's Hill before passing on around a series of peaks. The first of these peaks was Mt. Eliza, a high promontory jutting into the bay and separating Frankston from Mornington. This high land was eventually prized for secluded holiday homes but from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, two small coves, Davey's bay and Canadian Bay became important sites for pleasure and to a lesser extent for trade.

James Davey had taken up much of the land around Mt Eliza as a pastoral run in the 1840s. Born in Penzance, Cornwall in either 1811 or 1818 [there is some dispute over the exact date] Davey first settled in South Australia with his father. Davey took up a large pastoral holding extending along Port Phillip Bay from what is now Boundary Road to the Kackeraboite Creek.⁸ He built a jetty at the western end of Davey's Bay from where his ketch carried farm produce up to the Melbourne markets. From the jetty to the clifftop a wire rope carried goods up to the homestead. It also took out his produce, including by some accounts live animals lowered in a sling. These rough cliffs made Davey's Bay a secluded spot throughout the nineteenth century and until recently the bay remained a tranquil and hidden retreat for nearby residents. Cars

1 See Correspondence files, City of Frankston, P/G 34; Council had put up a three hundred foot brush

fence, Public Record Office of Victoria

2 Argus, 16 November, 1935

3 ibid.

4 Argus, 12 March, 1929

5 Minutes 2 July, 1937

6 Minutes 17 October, 1946 and Minutes 20 September, 1946

7 Minutes 1 September, 1949

8 For more detail see 'Early History of Mt. Eliza' typed manuscript held in the biography file of the Latrobe Library, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne. Davey first built a house on the site of the 'Marathon' block and in 1851 erected a larger home Marysville, later replaced by another residence 'Denistown.' Davey put considerable effort into developing the garden of this property, planting 'Polygalas' which was to spread across the surrounding open country.

and better roads brought larger numbers of holiday-makers in the twentieth century. Local residents lead by Mr Peck staked their claims to the bay in 1903, forming the Davey's Bay Yacht Club. Decades later, Davey's Bay Yacht Club was able to obtain a 150 lease and began work on a new clubhouse in 1959.¹ The second secluded bay at Mt Eliza, Canadian Bay took its name from three Canadians who cut and shipped firewood from the beach. The three men, Hodgins, McCurley and Jones took their wattle and sheoak logs by lighter to the schooner "Liverpool" anchored offshore from where it was taken for sale to Port Melbourne [Sandridge].² Canadian Bay also survived as a hidden cove sheltered by dangerous cliffs and local residents just as at Davey's Bay began to build a yacht club in the 1950s. The Canadian Bay Yacht Club were given access to the beach for a clubroom in 1958 and scout groups were allowed to camp above the bay in the 1950s.³ The Bay also brought Frankston to the cinema screens of the world. Scenes from *On The Beach* were filmed in Canadian Bay [and in the Frankston shopping centre] stimulating local interest in American style and progress. The rebuilders of central Frankston never quite relinquished this fascination. Soon after winning great fame the Bay suffered rapid deterioration and there were doubts about how many activities could be sustained there. In 1963

major collapses occurred above the bay and cliffs became dangerous for visitors.⁴ The unstable cliffs and eroded gullies of Mt Eliza have continued to cause problems. In contrast to the dangers of cliff collapse in the south of the municipality, the shore at Seaford in the north has regularly faced different threats with storms eroding the beach at regular intervals. In the 1950s some councillors claimed that the waterline at Seaford at high tide was advancing at two feet a year.

Holiday Frankston: guest houses and fishing

As a Victorian seaside resort Frankston attracted sedate holiday-makers who stayed in guest houses. Only with the railway and then the motor car did this pattern of holiday-making make way and beach began to attract more and more day-trippers. Over the years Frankston remained popular amongst fishing parties who often went out in boats rather than fishing from the shore. To fishing groups and other visitors, Mark Young's Pier Hotel was for many years the most familiar landmark on the foreshore at Frankston. The hotel was thought to have been initially built from pieces of a prefabricated building brought to Victoria from the Isle of Jersey. Over the years it has been added to and altered although the original skeleton of a fashionable resort may still survive encased within more recent additions.⁵ The many guest-houses in Frankston drew regular crowds between the

1 Minutes 16 March, 1959
 2 *ibid.*
 3 Minutes 8 March, 1957
 4 Minutes 12 March, 1963
 5 Frankston Standard 14 March, 1949

wars and beyond, although by the 1950s their numbers were reduced. Amongst the popular places were the Clendon Guesthouse, Osborne House [beach side of Nepean Highway] and Frankston House [corner of Bay and Playne Streets], Fernlea [on Oliver's Hill] and Sunnyside [Bay Street]. Visitors to these places amused themselves by a day at the beach and nearby tea gardens or for the more energetic a favourite outing was a walk from the guest houses to the Old Dutch Windmill where afternoon teas were served by a pulley lift system as the visitors enjoyed the wonderful view across the bay.¹ The Summer Tea Gardens were another famous spot well-known in Melbourne and locally but now vanished.²

Holiday makers sometimes rented boats although during the nineteenth century but at one inquiry in the 1890s local fishermen found little cause to keep crews on for renting. Fishermen sold their catch to the Frankston Fish Company for sale at the Victoria Market in the nineteenth century. Their numbers remained small and agriculture was always a far more important industry. During the 1930s depression fishing received a boost with men fishing along the shore and with a few professional fishermen working out of Kananook Creek. However casual holiday fishing was more significant than professional fishing and in the long run camping and day-trippers outnumbered the visitors staying in

Frankston guest houses or bungalows.

Parking, campers and holidays

Foreshore work continued beyond the 1950s and 1960s with several new structures and constant "improvements" to visitor areas. Sporting clubs were given new facilities along the beachfront (to the dismay of some residents who opposed alienation of land for bowling and tennis clubs). Long Island was a favoured site for such clubhouses with a new tennis club built in 1957.³ Yet many felt that the great days of Frankston as a holiday resort were over. The local paper reported that in 1947, while there were thousands on the beach at New Year, the crowds lacked the "gaiety" of prewar vacationers.⁴ Ten years earlier the paper had been able to report that Frankston became a new town in holiday season with thousands about the pier and along the shopping streets.⁵ Many of these visitors came to stay in the motor camp or to camp free from any restriction in the ti-tree scrub. Council constantly sought to regulate these rough camping sites even if it meant driving tourists further down the peninsula. Yet by the end of the 1930s long-stay holidaying in Frankston was clearly declining. Local reporters often canvassed holiday-makers hoping to identify what aspects of the town would bring visitors back in the following year. Many responses to Frankston began to sound negative by the middle of the

¹ Information from Ian Armstrong

² Pier Hotel

³ Minutes 27 March, 1957

⁴ Frankston Standard 3 January, 1947

⁵ *ibid.*, 31 December, 1937

1930s. Two women interviewed asked "why don't they clean up that foul creek" and complained that Frankston needed a nice ballroom. One Ballarat holiday-maker liked Frankston but remarked "we don't want the mosquitoes though... they swarm into the house as soon as the sun sets...however it is a good excuse to stay up all night". Fred from Perth said Frankston needed more dressing sheds and one visitor from Mildura returning after sixteen years thought that "it [Frankston] is practically a new town" though it did not have enough trees, a problem which still lingers.¹ Frankston council made some attempt to satisfy these demands. In the 1930s council had put up concrete tables along the foreshore. By the 1950s most of these had begun to fall apart with broken tops.² Council made several attempts to provide access for cars to the beach but in the 1950s cars were constantly getting stuck in sand and visitors were unable to reach picnic spots. Parking remained an important aspect of foreshore management since revenue from parking was the only source of funds for foreshore improvement.³ In 1953 a deficit prompted the foreshore committee to look for ways to expand parking.⁴ Land at the foot of Oliver's Hill had already been declared a parking area and this was the spot from which the committee thought they could raise most money.⁵ The Foreshore Committee had previously faced a

cash crisis in trying to deal with demands for maintenance along the beach and since they had no power as a separate body to borrow they had handed power to the council; the Lands Department approved of the foreshore committee acting through the council.⁶

Some of their improvements and the Shire's work to give better access for motor vehicles upset residents more so in Mt Eliza than in Frankston. Plans to improve access to Davey's Bay prompted one resident (D Osborne) to complain of dangers from better access and the clearing work of fire authorities. Osborne felt that "the area should not be desecrated in the process as most of the appeal of this area is the rustic atmosphere that prevails".

Osborne did not want the road extended since "the vast undesirable element" would inundate the essentially private bay.⁷ Since then Davey's Bay has become more popular but has retained an air of pleasant seclusion which has been lost at Frankston beach with its massive car park and fearsome passing traffic.

Residents and the council could with prudent management maintain a rustic atmosphere at Davey's Bay but by the 1950s, seclusion and quiet were lost causes at Frankston beach. Visitors to the beach at Frankston still did without public facilities. Those that existed were often run-down, like the dressing sheds, described in 1951 as "a few

1 ibid.
2 Minutes 11 December, 1936, 15 February, 1956
3 Minutes 20 November, 1953
4 Minutes 20 November, 1953
5 Minutes 11 September, 1943
6 Frankston Standard 17 February, 1949
7 Minutes 19 November, 1962

small outmoded dressing sheds...most times found to be dirty and untidy with papers, discarded garmentry and debris."¹ Motor access and conditions in the camping areas of Frankston lay behind most debates about the quality of the foreshore. The railway initially brought campers to Frankston. The beaches had become increasingly popular with campers once people got access to cars. Long Island had been a favourite camping spot before the First World War. Generally this was rough camping with almost no fixed facilities like water or toilets.² In 1950 a "gypsy camp" on the Island was closed and its residents prosecuted.³ This gypsy camp was one of the few remnants of a broader camping population who traveled to Frankston in the early twentieth century.⁴ Tents were set up on Crown Land and in the season during the First World War there were ten to fifteen holiday camps in Frankston paying 5/- camping fee each week.⁵ As the local policeman reported, Frankston was not dangerously crowded like places more accessible from Melbourne:

we do not get the class of people at Frankston that go to Chelsea and Aspendale because we are outside the suburban radius;...that has the effect of keeping the undesirable class back.⁶

Between the wars the shire had set up an official motor camp at

Frankston. This motor camp was opened in December 1934 bounded by an extension of Playne St and the Kananook Creek. It had an assembly hall, two kitchens and gas cookers [penny in the slot]. The camp was supposedly regulated to prevent "close" camping and was established within reach of Frankston shopping and town facilities. The basic camp was later shifted to Seaford and camping was regulated by a series of by-laws governing the number of tents on private land and regulations about toilets. By the 1930s the foreshore motor camp filled to overflowing in summer.⁷ Locals quickly tired of the swarm of motoring campers and in 1939 protests to the Lands Department followed by petrol rationing during the war [which increased usage since Frankston was not a long drive from Melbourne] led to more camping being opened north of the official camp. Campers cut down ti-tree to build shelters or light fires and the camp became derisively known as Chinatown. Eventually complaints led to its closure in April 1944.⁸ Over the following years many private camp sites were set up on private blocks but tighter council regulation led to the closure of several of these prompting one disgruntled holiday to write:

finding the camp everything that could be desired in cleanliness, orderliness and comfort we booked our sites again for this year. Now we find the camp has been closed by the council. Why

1 Frankston Standard 11 January, 1951
 2 See S E Chaplin Fishing, sand and village days: an oral history of Frankston from the early 1900s to 1950, Frankston, 1985
 3 Minutes 23 June, 1960
 4 As well as the gypsies, Frankston had a famous hermit who inhabited the ti-tree near to the beginning of Long Island
 5 Royal Commission on Housing, 1917, Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1917, Q7457, Const. W H McCormack
 6 ibid.
 7 4 January, 1934
 8 Lands Department Reserve File, RS3203

should the council be able to say whether or not a man may make an honourable living off his own property? During the war people willingly submitted to all restrictions but where is the cause or need for this.¹

Such restrictions ensured that post-war Frankston lost its appeal for many holiday makers. Mr Olsen, a long-term resident who ran a motor garage had pointed out in 1947 that many of the wealthier holiday-makers were driving on down the Peninsula. He claimed that many campers stopped at his garage for supplies and directions and he had to tell them to go on as there was nothing for them in Frankston. All these people were moreover "a splendid type...with doctors, barristers and other professional men making the majority."²

As more and more holiday-makers got cars, resorts like Frankston, close to the city and becoming suburban, would have been by-passed no matter how many services they provided.

Nevertheless, the council attempted to improve its camp and protect camp sites by planting pines and poplars.³ In 1953 amongst the users of the Seaford Motor Camp were the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria Caravan Club.⁴ In 1957 regular Seaford Motor Park campers petitioned for improvements to the basic amenities of the campsites.⁵ During the following decade nearby residents complained about the inconvenience from noise and rubbish in the motor

camp. Some residents were upset that they had fruit stolen from trees. Numbers seemed to fall off markedly as holiday makers went further afield and sought more sophisticated facilities than those available at the motor camp. By then Frankston was losing money on the camp. The toilet block needed repairs and the camp itself had no hot water. Even long-term residents wanted their surrounds improved and council received a petition from campers who were regular long-term users, one group had been holidaying there for twenty years, two for sixteen years and many for seven years.⁶

During the 1960s boys on holiday at the Church of England Langwarrin Camp were given permission to swim off Long Island near to McClelland's studio. They evidently behaved better than scouts from Richmond who so disturbed quiet Frankston some years earlier that scouts were banned from Long Island.⁷ Yet as a place for beachside camping, Frankston no longer could compete with the more rural and less crowded beachside camping areas of Rosebud, Rye and Blairgowrie. The motor car which had brought campers to Frankston between the war was used by visitors increasingly for day trips to Frankston's beaches and pier and not for long-term stays.

Conclusion

The beach and other landforms of the waterfront have remained

1 Argus, 5 January, 1946
 2 30 January, 1947
 3 Minutes 10 June, 1949
 4 Minutes 27 August, 1953
 5 Minutes 25 January, 1957
 6 Minutes 5 December, 1966
 7 Minutes 14 November, 1966

central to the character and identity of Frankston. Over the years the major use of this great natural asset has remained recreational. These vary from the people who throw fishing lines off the pier at Frankston to the families who sit on Seaford and Frankston beach [and who some years ago may have competed in the Herald Annual Sand castle competitions]. Around Kananook Creek and at Davey's and Canadian Bays sailors dart out into the deeper waters of Port Phillip. Not so long ago the holiday-makers of Mt Eliza got together in their gardens in summer evenings. From there they could look out across to the lights of shipping in the bay channels while musicians from the city played in the background. The sybaritic recollections of those who stayed at Mt Eliza between the wars contrast with the cramped and hot scenes around the Frankston beach car-park today. While the character of the waterfront as a holiday resort has changed, there are still a range of buildings from the pier to bathing boxes which remind us of Frankston's holiday past. The beach has played a part in the lives of many Melburnians who have never been Frankston residents. Generations of children competed in Sun News Pictorial sand castle competitions on Frankston beach. In the 1960s members of the Greek community arrived in Frankston for the Annual Blessing of the Waters. And a world-wide audience learned of Frankston through Stanley Kramer's film *On the Beach* in which scenes were filmed at Canadian Bay and at the Frankston

Railway Station. The waterfront, its surviving buildings and landscapes provide a tangible link with the Shire's past when so much of the city, away from the bay, has been fundamentally altered.

Agriculture, Industry, Housing

Farming and factories

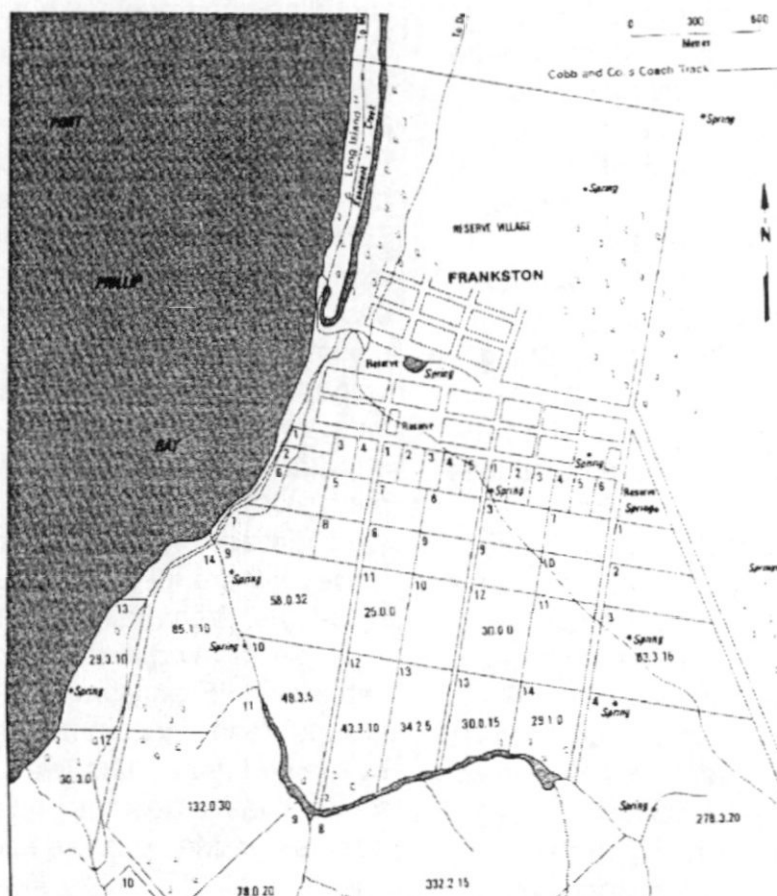
In 1855 a visitor from Melbourne recorded (in the *Argus*) that on approaching Frankston "the intelligent traveler observes a change in the country... he has left behind him the desert-like aridity of the beach track between (Hobson's Bay) and the Carrum Swamp". On the land around Frankston and away from the flat shoreline the traveler would come to "the scene of the several agricultural efforts of Messrs. McMahon, Liardet and Carr."¹ Frankston won an early reputation as a prosperous farming area. This derived firstly from the pioneer graziers, then the work of orchardists (see Inverell House, now part of Linton's nursery Canadian Bay Road). Secondary industry remained minimal until after the Second World War when parts of the shire were speedily industrialized. More numerous however were the new domestic land uses. From being identified as a fringe farming and fishing settlement, Frankston developed around resort accommodation and by the inter-war years was the site for innovative designs in holiday homes for Melbourne's elite.

1 *Argus*, December, 1855

Herds and orchards

McMahon, Liardet and Carr were among the principal early European landholders and graziers in Frankston. Of the original squatting runs the Long Island run lay along the waterfront (with the station somewhere near the Riviera Hotel).¹ Others were on higher ground to the south and west. Best-remembered amongst the first wave of European pastoralists were men like James Davey who arrived in Frankston in 1840 and after holding a grazing and orchard property along the bay from 1840 to 1853 also held other runs, including the lease for the Gardiner's Creek run in 1840. At

the time of the Argus visitor's trip to Frankston, Frederick Liardet is believed to have begun building his Ballam Park home between Frankston and Cranbourne. Liardet had arrived in Victoria in 1839, settled first at Port Melbourne (Sandridge) and then moved around the bay to Brighton where W. F. Liardet was the licensee of the Brighton Pier Hotel. After running coaches during the gold rush, Frederick E Liardet built Bellam Park from where he managed a grazing run of eight thousand acres.² Today the Bellam Park homestead faces Cranbourne Road. Over the years it has acquired additional outbuildings and later extensions



10

rural allotments in Frankston after the 1854 land sales [from Jones, p.37 cites Frankston Standard plan]

¹ Minutes Jones, Frankston, resort to city, 1989

² Victorian Historical Magazine, vol.5, no.1 March, 1916, pp.2-3

and alterations. It is still even with these additions a reminder of the lifestyle of the first pastoralists in the district. Now owned by the Frankston City Council the central homestead building is the oldest house in the municipality. It is important to the history of Frankston but as well it has few direct parallels within the metropolitan area of Melbourne. There are too, additional elements in its historic character. It was here that Justice H.B. Higgins is thought to have drafted his Harvester Judgment, establishing the existing structure of industrial arbitration and making a "basic" living wage central to social policy in Australia up to the mid-1970s¹. The homestead has another added interest since as well as the building the grounds include much vegetation, planted soon after Liardet arrived in Frankston. Amongst these are a row of olives, thought to have been planted as a windbreak and several fruit trees surviving from the orchard. We can still look at the homestead and see a building which once stood in isolation and in whose top window a lantern was often kept alight as a beacon to shipping in the bay.

In Mt Eliza the first European pastoralist was James Davey who acquired a pre-emptive right to 640 acres at Mt. Eliza in 1845.² James Davey purchased the freehold to his pre-emptive right in the following decade and built a cottage on this land [this was near to the present Marathon house]. The site near Marathon, while less

immediately distinctive as the site of a squatting homestead than Ballam Park, still serves as a reminder of the municipality's first Europeans and Marathon and Bellam Park are the two major reminders of the squatting era in Frankston.³ Another property with some pastoral connections is Yamala in Mt Eliza. The owner James Madden had a greater interest in Melbourne's business and professional life than in farming. Nevertheless, during Madden's time at Yamala, the property was used for raising cattle, however Madden still had many interests in Melbourne and spent much of his life there. During the 1830s, squatters, often overlanders from New South Wales, established extensive pastoral runs for their flocks of sheep and cattle on land within the Cranbourne district. The earliest of these runs was known as Tomaque. Here in 1836 the five Ruffy brothers settled after their arrival from Van Diemen's land. The Ruffys are reputed to have also owned the Cranbourne Inn. The Ruffy's run was taken up in 1850 by Hugh Glass, often called "Australia's wealthiest man". The lease then passed to Andrew Linton and, in 1852, to James Butchart, a young Scottish overseer, and his partner, John Ralph Blois, who managed the station.⁴

Another large district run located five minutes south of Frankston, was the Carrup Carrup, or Baxter's Cattle Station, which covered 15,360 acres. Captain Benjamin

1 This is questioned by those who point out that he had quite a good summer house close by for working in.

2 Jones, Frankston, p.32

3 Mt. Eliza Biography file Latrobe Library

4 Gunson, p. 38.

Baxter (1805-92), of County Cork in Ireland, owned this run from 1838 to 1860.¹ Baxter was Commissioner of Crown Lands in 1851.²

The Lang Waring, or Langwarrin run, south of Cranbourne, was originally part of the Carrup Carrup run until 1843 when William Willoby, who bought Jamieson's Cape Shanck run in 1839, obtained Lang Waring.³ This run covered 6400 acres. From 1861 to 1868 the Langwarrin run was owned by Michael Callanan, who was later colonial Surveyor-General.⁴

Towkeet, a run which adjoined Cranbourne on the east, covered 12,800 acres, and was associated with Sam Webster in 1844. By 1848, Hugh Glass, of County Down, who became one of the wealthiest colonial landholders, took up Towkeet. He later took up Tomaque.⁵

Most of these runs were cattle stations but the Websters ran sheep at Towkeet, as did Butchart and Blois at Tongola, the later name of Tomaque.⁶

Today, there is little physical evidence of this important phase in the district's history, apart from elements in the division of farm lands and tree planting. The influence in the landscape of the first waves of settlement are still observable. Moreover some places have pastoral associations. When H.B. Foot surveyed the Cranbourne and Lyndhurst district in 1852, the Township of Cranbourne was reserved out of

the pastoral runs of Towbeet, Mayone and Barker's Heifer Station.⁷ The present Baxter township and the Mullberry Hill property at Golf Links Road, Baxter, are located within the old Carrup Carrup run. Baxter's homestead has been demolished but his paymaster's cottage is said to remain on the Hastings Road.⁸

Pre-Emptive right properties

On 11 March 1852 squatters within the Settled Districts, which included the Cranbourne area, were told that they could secure the pre-emptive right to the homestead blocks on which they had carried out improvements. Many took advantage of this and, when they could, secured land adjoining their PR block. Within the present study area, only one PR property was obtained. Butchart and Blois of Tomaque/Tongola secured 200 acres in Crown Allotment 30, Parish of Lyndhurst. This PR allotment was located to the north-east of the Skye township, and was approved on 16 June 1853.⁹ Little remains on this PR site today, (located at 410 Hall Road, Skye) to suggest earlier pastoral usage. However, some landscape features, such as the Hawthorn hedges opposite the present 20th century farmhouse, may relate to the first wave of settlement. An archaeological investigation of the site might reveal evidence of building ruins or sub-surface deposits of archaeological value. Willoby's

1 Billis & Kenyon, 'Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip,' p.189.

2 Ibid, p. 23.

3 Gunson, p. 38.

4 Billis & Kenyon, p. 234.

5 Ibid, p. 292.

6 Gunson, p. 39.

7 Ibid, p. 56.

8 National Trust File.

9 Marjorie Morgan, 'Crown Lands Pre-Emptive Right Applications, p. Victoria 1850-1854; p.18.

Langwarrin PR was located in the Parish of Sherwood, outside the present study area, while the Carrup Carrup PR was also located outside the study area in the Parish of Tyabb.¹

The Selection Era

After a brief pastoral period, many of the large estates were subdivided and the land sold at auction, or thrown open for selection for farming and agricultural purposes. From this time until the inter-war period and later, farming became the major district industry, giving the area a predominantly rural aspect. Many of the pioneer farmers who came to the Skye area in the 1850s were from the Island of Skye in Scotland. The name of Skye was adopted at an early stage, later changing to Lyndhurst South, and back to Skye again. Some of these settlers spoke Gaelic alone.² One of the best known residents was John Alexander Gamble (1828-1898). It is not known if any evidence remains of the properties of these early Scottish farmers. Gamble is commemorated in the naming of a street near the old Skye township site. Further south, in the Langwarrin area, Donald Lanarch (1817-1896), an influential banker and director, became the largest landholder in the 1870s and 1880s. Earlier, at the land auction on 21 December 1860, Lanarch purchased 723 acres for one pound per acre. He increased this by other purchases, which included most of Callanan's

Langwarrin run when the licence was cancelled in 1868.³

Under the 1869 Land Act, it was possible to select up to 320 acres for agricultural or farming purposes. This land had to be held for at least 3 years before it could be bought, and improvement had to be made in the form of fencing, housing, and cultivation of crops. If the farmer did not, or could not, purchase straight away, a 7-year lease could be arranged.⁴

Selection file numbers are marked on Parish Plans. An examination of these files allows a greater understanding of the nature of many early district farms. Among the Langwarrin selectors was Albert Lloyd, a bacon curer, who built up a big business on W. Henderson's property on the south side of the Cranbourne-Frankston Road. The Langwarrin Public Hall, once on the Langwarrin Military Reserve, was moved to Lloyd's bacon factory in 1944. A photograph in a recent history of the Langwarrin school shows part of the Memorial Hall being moved by Albert Lloyd with his tractor.⁵ A selection file survives for the Lloyd property.⁶

The Baxter area was another place where selectors established farms in the 1870s and 1880s. One of the earliest was Carl Feldman, a Frankston labourer. His property on Golf Links Road still had a four-roomed, weatherboard farm house on it when it was purchased by the Lindsay family in the 1920s.⁷ Of course selection did not stop with the 1869 Act, which was

1 Rail 32B. Parish of Langwarrin, 1881 map, CPOV.

2 Gunson, p. 59.

3 Gunson, p. 122.

4 The Lands Manual Peter Cabena, Heather McRae, Elizabeth Bladin, p.4.

5 Langwarrin. 100 Years of Schooling. 1890-1990, ed. Norma Parkin, 1990, p.32.

6 Land File 40798/19.20.

7 Baxter and its Primary School, 1890-1990 ed. Lois Comeadow, pp.19-20.

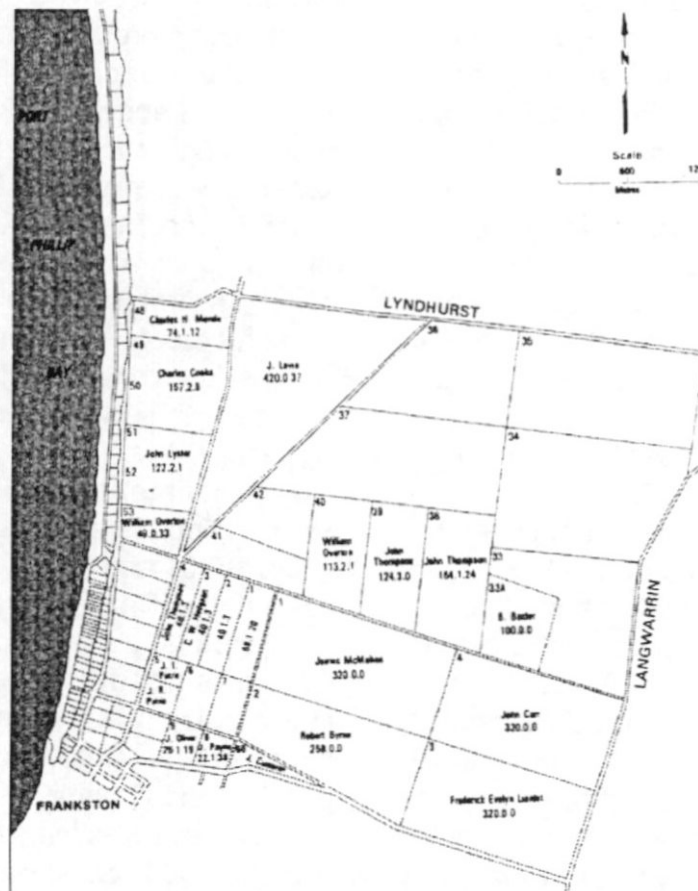
followed by a series of Selection and Settlement Acts, including the Closer Settlement Acts from 1904. After land sales in the 1850s smaller more intensive farming allotments were carved out in Frankston with an emphasis on orchards. Somerville for example was regularly referred to as "the centre of a magnificent orchard district" from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century.¹

From the selection era, farming and agricultural properties were established across the eastern parts of the city. These sometimes developed into important local, or even regional, industries.

Orcharding, for example, was

widespread throughout the district, from the 1880s until about 1910.

Dairy farms operated at Skye and Langwarrin in the 1880s and 1890s, while, at a later date, there was some poultry farming. Some district farmers combined these activities with timber-cutting, quarrying, and even brick making. Orchards were once widespread in the Cranbourne Shire, particularly along the Cranbourne-Frankston Road and along North Road at Langwarrin. It has been said that "most of those who settled at Langwarrin in the eighties were orchardists". This was after 7,000 acres in the Langwarrin East Estate were sold by Larnech in



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Some of the rural allotments in Frankston by 1878, including F.E. Liardet's and John Carr's 320 acres each at Ballam Park, Cranbourne Road. [from Jones, p.41 cites Public Records Office plan]

1 'Victorian Municipal Directory', 1929

1889 to the Cosmopolitan Land Syndicate.¹

Well-known district orchards included Corlett's 320 acre property on the north side of Cranbourne Road, east of McClelland Drive - Corlett's three sons planted the orchard, sending the fruit to the Melbourne market, via trains from Langwarrin Station. John Corlett Senior was one of a number of Langwarrin residents who helped to form McClelland Drive early this century. An old photograph shows these local farmers working on the road. They included John Corlett Senior, and Steve Corlett, who owned a property alongside what is now the McClelland Gallery.²

Another Langwarrin orcharding family was the Ridouts, who were also involved in market gardening and timber-cutting until the mid-1920s, when they opened sandpits and a brick making business.³ Old photographs of North Road in the years between 1902 and 1910 show orchards "where houses now sprout up like mushrooms".⁴

Several Langwarrin orchardists turned to poultry farming, particularly in the years after the First World War. Cranhaven Poultry Farm owned by Sydney N. Lloyd provided "free range eggs" and dressed poultry, delivering them throughout the district by the Farm's business van, a familiar district sight.⁵

There are accounts of dairying at Skye and Langwarrin from an early date. John Alexander Gamble, a

Skye farmer, became a successful dairyman. However, according to the historian Gunson, the Mount Tabor property was largely worked by his wife and family.⁶

By 1960, when there was still some district dairy farming, it was said that one-third of the dairy farms in the Cranbourne Shire were under separate milk contracts and were serviced by Associated Dairies direct to the Melbourne market.⁷ During the 1920s and 1930s poultry and onion growing again expanded in the shire with many local growers taking produce to Victoria Market each day.⁸ By then parts of Frankston, especially the farmlands away from the coastal strip had become identified as amongst the leading orchard concentrations in Victoria. Between the wars, several model farming industries were developed in the shire.

Amongst these were Lloyd and Sons bacon curers, Cranbourne Rd, founded by Jack Lloyd from Hampshire. During the 1920s LLoyd took up 30 acres then took over an adjoining poultry farm to create a "commodious and snugly placed factory and residences...situated upon one of the most pleasant hillsides in the district". The Somerville Annual Fruitgrowers Show still displayed the Shire's apples and berries and continued as a major event on the agricultural calendar. After the Second World War the place of fruit-growing in local life had diminished. Encroaching housing had swallowed up some of the best

1 Gunson, p. 122.

2 Parkin, p. 29.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid, p. 30.

5 Ibid.

6 Gunson, p. 59.

7 Fred Hooper, *The Good Country - Into the Dawn of a New Day*. 1968-1988, p.13.

8 Frankston Standard 23 April, 1937

FRANKSTON POPULATION AND HOUSES 1881-1966									
Year	1881	1891	1911	1927	1933	1940	1947	1954	1966
Town:									
Houses	29	160					432		
Residents	173	794	1153	1500	2901	4393	6449		
Shire									
Houses	515				1782			5862	12759
Residents	2250	3750			6851			18000	42085

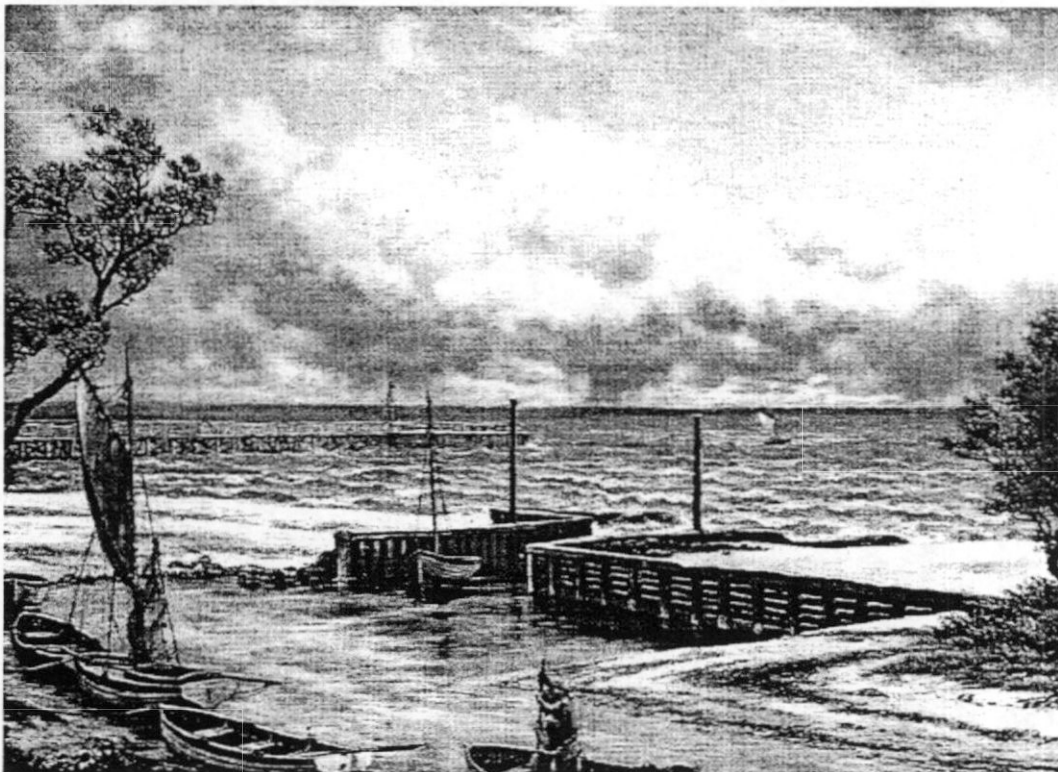
12

Source: Jones, 'Frankston' p.98ff

farmland. Around Baxter the orchardists continued to plant and prune trees and take produce to the wooden local cool stores or to Melbourne and local markets. But they were fewer in number and only a handful of orchardists

survived the building boom of the 1960s.

However, there are some buildings in the eastern parts of the present city which still reflect the importance of orchards and fruit-growing in Frankston. For the most part these are not reminiscent



13

Mount Eliza architect designed house overlooking the bay as illustrated in building journals of 1889 and showing a Queen Anne style design: one example of this type survives nearby at Mount Martha but this house appears to have gone.[Jones, p.106 cites 'Building & Engineering Journal']



14

Cruden Farm, house designed by noted architect Harold Desbrowe Annear in an adapted American Colonial Revival style, one of the many architect designed houses which set the pace for the peninsula early this century.

of the small fruit-growing properties but rather were built for some of the wealthier Melbourne families who moved to Frankston, combining agriculture with other interests. Most interesting amongst these buildings and grounds is Westerfield, formerly owned by Russell and Mabel Grimwade. Westerfield in Robinsons Road Frankston was designed in 1924 by H. Desbrowe Annear and shaped in a Y-plan with granite base and half-timbering. According to some accounts this pattern is reminiscent of French country houses; it suggests something of the holiday ambience of the Mornington Peninsula and

prefigures some of the experimental geometric designs employed later in local holiday houses.¹ Westerfield is interesting as much for the plantings on the property as for the house itself. The Grimwades planted their property with eucalypts. In association with his close friend, Charles Lane-Poole, (first Principal of the School of Forestry in Canberra), Grimwade photographed and recorded these eucalypts as in an attempt to combine conservation of native species with productive agriculture. The grounds were also used during the Second World War to planting used in drugs; poppies, lavender,

1 National Trust [Victoria] Classification Report - Westerfield

foxglove and belladonna. There is as well a third social significance attached to the house and grounds. Nearby were the homes of Daryl and Joan Lindsay [Mulberry Hill], the Cruden Farm home of the Murdoch family and Netherplace belonging to the Fairbairn family. The rural landscape and the agricultural lifestyle enjoyed by those who lived at Baxter and Langwarrin, has attracted a number of affluent Melbourne families to the area from the 1920. It was in that decade that the wealthy Lindsay and Murdoch families bought old district properties still containing old timeber farm houses from the selection era. The Lindsay's Mulberry Hill at Baxter and the Murdochs' Cruden Farm at Langwarren were transformed by the fashionable Melbourne architect, Harold Desbrowe Annear, into stylish residences

more suited to their sophisticated lifestyle.

Daryl (later Sir Daryl) Lindsay, artist and from 1941 Director of the National Gallery of Victoria, purchased the old farmhouse (later named Mulberry Hill by the Lindsays) in 1924.¹ This followed his marriage in 1922 to the writer, Joan a'Beckett.² Lindsay drew up plans for "a simple wooden house to be incorporated with the existing four rooms". Later, after "suggesting a few minor alterations in Daryl's plans", the architect Annear personally supervised the building at Mulberry Hill. The garden was also remodelled.³ The Cruden Farm property was purchased in 1927-28 by Keith Arthur (later Sir Keith) Murdoch, managing editor of the Herald newspaper. This purchase coincided with Murdoch's marriage on 6 June 1928 to the 19-year old Elisabeth Greene, daughter of a



1 RB 1924-25 No. 1130.
2 'Australian Dictionary of Biography', Vol. 7, p.114.
3 Joan Lindsay, *Time Without Clocks*, pp.46-49.

Melbourne merchant. The Murdochs, who lived most of the year in their splendid city mansion, used Cruden Farm for family holidays. According to their friend, Joan Lindsay, "The Murdochs out riding on Sunday mornings made an unforgettable spectacle - a sort of medieval cavalcade of children, servants, horses and dogs, - along the rough tree-lined roads of Baxter and Langwarrin. At the head... rides Keith, mounted on a massive charger,..."¹

A stables and dairy block was designed in 1930 by the architect, Percy Meldrum. The stone came from the Moorooduc Quarry. In 1929-30 the Cruden Farm garden, which is regarded as notable, was remodelled to the designs of Edna Walling. Walling's plan included two walled gardens, the round

lawn, and the avenue of 129 Lemon Scented Gums along the main driveway to the house. This distinctive avenue, planted by Dame Elisabeth in 1929, although partly destroyed in the 1944 bushfire, remains as an important feature of this significant district property.²

Both Mulberry Hill and Cruden Farm are still notable district properties. Sir Daryl Lindsay of Mulberry Hill was a founder of the National Trust in 1956 and, after Joan Lindsay (the author of 'Picnic at Hanging Rock' written at the Baxter property) died in 1984, the house and its contents were left to the Trust for use as a house museum, illustrating the lifestyle of its owners.³

When there was a proposal in the 1980s to develop the Baxter area,

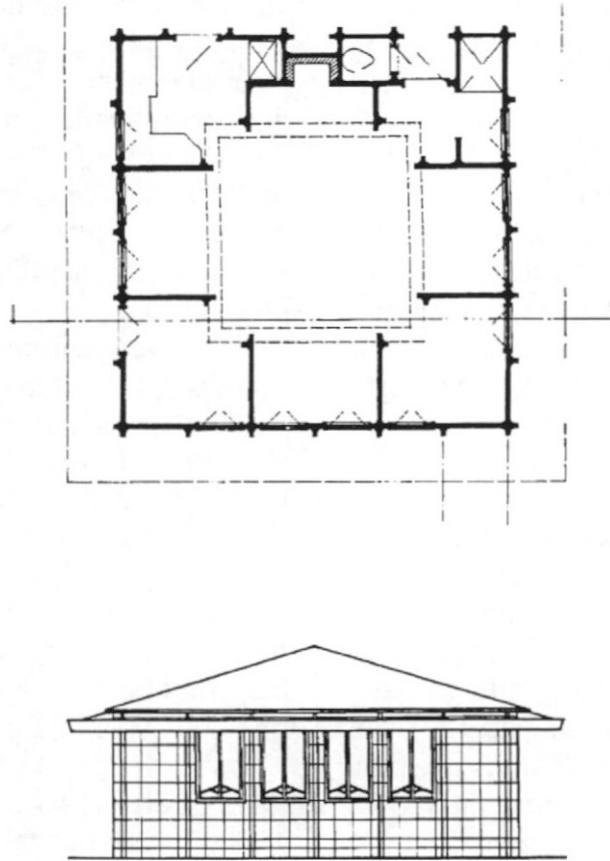


16

Former packing and drying shed used by Grimwade for his experiments in rural industry, bridging the gap between the holiday house and farm activity, formerly at Westerfield [now part of Costerton (q.v.)]

1
2
3

Lindsay, p. 214.
National Trust file.
National Trust Files 3485,



17

Burley Griffin's minimum house prototype, Pholiota in Heidelberg, c1919, was the basis for other modest houses in the Frankston area and, with other Griffin designs, served as an inspiration model for the 1950s houses of Chancellor & Patrick [Johnson, 'The Architecture of Walter Burley Griffin', p.61 noted as based on working drawings.]

in the same way that Langwarrin and Carrum Downs were developed in the 1970s, it was argued that it was important to retain the semi-rural character of this part of the Cranbourne Shire. Its "mosaic of small pastures and wooded areas among which trees shelter well-established residences" was the kind of physical environment and visual landscape that had attracted so many commuters, residents, and visitors to the area.¹

In all of these important residences, the owners were attracted by the picturesque peninsula landscape. Each of the homes was altered or built to suit

the sophisticated tastes of wealthy Melburnians between the wars and as a group they reflect form a unique combination of houses and landscape. Few other such groupings give us so rich an insight into the world of wealthy Melburnians whose social, domestic and professional routines were shaped by the artistic and intellectual circles of the inter-war city.

The Grimwades, their friends the Lindsays attempted to combine an interest in agriculture with a love of the local landscape and pleasure in its holiday character. Over the twentieth century the holidaying attractions grew more significant

1 Proposed Baxter Outline Development Plan. Comments by Winty Calder, Dec. 1989.

than agricultural production. Some properties were still farmed intensively after the Second World War but the important years of orcharding and of experiments like those at Westerfield were over. Agricultural occupations declined through the twentieth century, especially when the more rural parts of the shire were separated from Frankston and became the Shire of Hastings.

Rural camps and rural settlements

The Langwarrin Military Establishment.

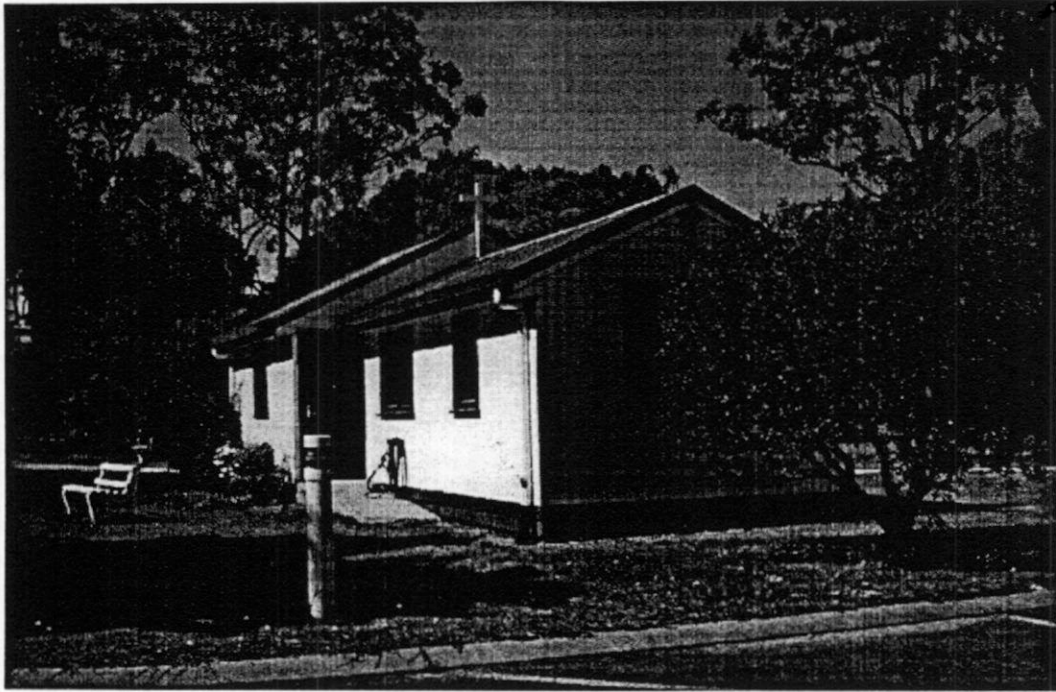
One of the most notable events in the early history of the area east of Frankston was the opening of a military camp at Langwarrin in the 1880s in response to the fear of a Russian invasion of Australia.¹ It was one of a number of military establishments opened on the Mornington Peninsula at the time. The choice of Langwarrin, as with the other military establishments on the Peninsula, related to the district's location, which combined easy access by road and rail to the city with proximity to the Frankston district, recognised as a recreational and healthful environment. The well-established transport routes between the district and Western Port Bay was another important factor, as many believed that the Russian invaders would land at Western Port and then advance on Melbourne.² In December 1886 a 109 acre site was permanently reserved as a military camp at Langwarrin. After

three more transfers, the Military Reserve on Crown Allotments 51 and 51C, Parish of Langwarrin, was extended to its present 509 acres. An irregular site, it extended to Taylor (now North Road) on the north, along Camp Road (now McClelland Drive) on the west, to Warrandyte Road on the east, and down to Robinsons Road on the south.³

From Easter 1887 the Victorian Government used the Reserve for a variety of military purposes. An 1887 Mornington Peninsula map shows the Langwarrin Army Camp with its parade ground and roads "named for military purposes only". Some of the new names included Napoleon, Wellington and Marlborough, and the names of popular colonial Governors Darling, Barkly and Hotham.⁴

The Military Reserve became an important district landmark and tourist site, and attracted development in the vicinity. As we have seen, a railway station was built on the other side of Camp Road and a school was opened within the Defence Ground. There was an attempt in March 1888 to establish "Aldershot... a New Military Township... immediately facing the Permanent Camp of the Victoria Forces". An advertisement in 'The Age' offered 451 business and villa sites "with the railway station on the land". It was pointed out that the Victorian Government had carefully chosen a site with "a central and commanding position" to "protect the capital in a vulnerable point".⁵

1 Gunson, p. 189.
2 M. Jones, 'Frankston. Resort to City', pp.170-172.
3 M/Def 65, 1891, CPOV.
4 M/Def. 74, 1887, CPOV.
5 'Age' 10 March 1888.



18

Tucker settlement chapel, Carrum Downs, 1997]

At Federation in 1901, the military reserve passed to the Commonwealth Government. Various military activities continued there until 1979. In 1980 it was leased to the Ministry of Conservation as a flora and fauna reserve to be managed by the National Parks Service. This followed a study by Winty Calder in 1975 commissioned by the Shire of Cranbourne. This study documented the reserve's natural and historical features and highlighted its conservation values.¹

The Carrum Downs settlement

The questions of unemployment, slum housing and other serious social problems in Victoria were of particular concern during the Great Depressions of the 1890s and 1930s. Among the solutions favoured by the church and other groups, often with government

support, were schemes for moving poor families from the inner suburbs to country areas accessible by public transport where it was thought that the healthier environment and lifestyle might lead to rehabilitation and a cure for this social malaise. Carrum Downs was one of the places chosen for the establishment of such a welfare housing scheme during the 1930s depression. This settlement was particularly notable among social experiments in Victoria during recent times. At a time when the Carrum Downs area was still regarded as a remote and isolated country place with Frankston the nearest town of any size, the Brotherhood of St. Laurence in 1935 decided to establish a settlement there for the unemployed from Melbourne's inner suburbs. George Coles, the major business figure of G.J.

¹ 'Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve Management Plan', June 1994.



20

Frankston township c1886 [Jones, p.23 cites 'Illustrated Australian News' 12.12.1886]

Coles, gave a grant of 500 pounds towards the purchase of a farmhouse and 45 acres of Carrum Downs land.¹ According to one account, "To the nature lover the place had a charming rustic atmosphere, with its weatherboard farmhouse and the clumps of gum

problems encountered, however, it was known as "Tucker's Folly" after the Rev. Gerard Kennedy Tucker, the founder of the religious order.³ Another 50 acres with a farmhouse was rented. Gradually more cottages were built, often of second-hand timber with iron roofs.

FRANKSTON BUILDING 1951-5					
Year	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
BUILDINGS	551	549	551	719	888
DWELLINGS	294	297	299	351	471
[Source: Frankston Shire Building Inspector's Annual Reports]					
FRANKSTON BUILDING VALUES [in £1000s]					
Years	1951	1952	1953	1954	
Ridings					
Frankston	299	420	505	661	
Seaford	218	223	247	233	
Mt. Eliza	313	248	278	480	
South	44	49	55	37	
East	58	62	55	79	

[Source: Building Surveyor's Reports, Frankston City Council, 28.10.1955]

19

Figures which illustrate clearly the suburbanization of a once semi-rural bay-side town.

trees".² Because of the practical

They usually consisted of two

¹ I.R. Carter, 'God and Three Shillings', 1967, pp.38-39.

² Ibid, p.41.

³ 'Standard', 5 Oct. 1989.

bedrooms, a living room, fire stove, bath and tiny verandah, and could cost as little as 100 pounds.¹

Many school children from the Frankston region and Melbourne came to the settlement for work camps to help construct the small cottages.²

The design of the settlement was the work of Saxil Tuxen, engineer, surveyor and town planner. His original plan survives showing The Avenue (now Tuxen Avenue) extending east from Dandenong Road. The complex contains houses built over a number of decades, comprising architectural styles from each era. These include the 1940s fibrous cement sheet bungalows, the single unit Besser Brick Cottages of the 1950s and the brick veneers of the 1960s. There is also a chapel and an Op Shop.³

A pioneer home for the aged.

The solution of another social problem, housing the aged, was also associated with the Carrum Downs settlement. From 1946 the settlement became a home for aged people. The criteria was that accommodation would be available for low income older people, where the maximum rental would be 25 per cent of their income, usually obtained from the pension and an accommodation allowance. By the late 1960s there were 114 home units, hostel accommodation for 27 persons and an 8-bed hospital.⁴ Brotherhood of St. Laurence buildings are still an important

component of the Carrum Downs township.

New Frankston occupations 1933 Census:

Fishing 50
Fruit Growing 341
Mixed Farming 174
Dairying 70
Other 90
Building 151
Manufacturing 132
Transport 126
Commerce 283
Professional 159
Domestic Service 73⁵

Factories

Census returns indicate the general decline of farming and the growing importance of industry during the twentieth century. While in 1933 agriculture was still the major employer, in the years immediately after the war the shire supported many new small industries. Some of these were based on finishing agricultural produce. In 1955 Stewart's New Cheese Factory opened at Baxter and at the same time intensive factory farming was used to revive the district's poultry industry.⁶

Some small industries had employed local people before the First World War. There is evidence that, at least at Langwarrin, there were once commercially viable timber resources. A township sawmill was noted in 1889 which, however, closed down in 1890. Its closure led to the decline of the early settlement.⁷ This became Pearcedale.

1 Ibid, p. 40, 41.

2 'Standard', 5 Oct. 1989.

3 'G.K. Tucker Settlement. An Historical Record. 1935-1995,' ed. Ben Bennett, 1995.

4 Gunson, p. 213.

5 Commonwealth Census, 1933

6 Frankston Standard 22 April, 1955 and 22 May, 1953

7 Gunson, p. 158.

Wood-carting and wood-working provided some work and the many springs in the shire were used bottled mineral water. Best known of these was the Frankston Springs Bottling Company owned and operated by the Vitreon family company. But gradually a wider range of manufacturing industry moved into Frankston. During the 1950s Frankston shared in the general manufacturing expansion of Melbourne's urban fringe. In 1951 Barnett's Cordial Factory building was used as the starting point for a new industry, Dowd's Bra and Girdle Manufactory.¹ For a time it appeared as if Frankston would become the site for Australia's motor car industry. The Peninsular Automotive Engineering works assembled Hartnett Cars in 1952.² This failed to give an edge to the local area in securing major motor plants. Ultimately the General Motors factory was sited at Dandenong rather than Frankston. Nevertheless Frankston still does have a very important link with the Australian motor industry, in the former home of Sir Laurence Hartnett. Hartnett was born in England in 1898, attended Epsom College Surrey and went into an

engineering firm. Hartnett served in the RAF in the First World War, travelled widely after the war and then in 1934 became General Motor's Managing Director of the Holden Motor Car Company. Instead of winding up the company as his American employers wanted him to do, Hartnett expanded production for several years. He then went on to play a key role in aircraft manufacture during the Second World War. After experimenting with car assembly in a small plant in Frankston he sought to have a major Holden plant established in Frankston. This bid failed, however Hartnett's house Rubra in Watts Parade Mt Eliza is a reminder of his role in motor manufacturing, an industry central to the modern character of Frankston and of most other places in Australia.

Even if Frankston failed in its bid to become a Victorian centre of motor manufacturing, other industries were established in the 1950s and 1960s. Many of these produced brands of consumer goods with names almost as familiar as the Holden car. Amongst the major local industries was the Bata Shoe

BUILDINGS FRANKSTON 1958-1968

Year	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Houses											
<i>started</i>	481	586	691	671	754	972	n.a.	911	824	n.a.	798
<i>finished</i>	438	589	796	644	760	966	n.a.	1067	811	n.a.	761
Flats											
<i>started</i>								103	76		65
<i>finished</i>									95	117	32

21

Chronicle of the 1960s boom [Source: Commonwealth Dept. of Building and Construction], Building Statistics

engineering apprenticeship with Vickers, the leading English

Factory established in Seaford and Wormald Industries, both in Wells

¹ Frankston Standard 27 September, 1951
² Frankston Standard 7 February, 1952



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Sir Lawrence Hattnett beside one of his Holdens [Jones]

Rd.¹ Besides these major firms many small manufacturers and finishing workshops were located on main roads leading east and north-east from Frankston and Seaford. Frankston remained a favourite site for extractive industries as well. Sand and gravel were extracted from quarries around the municipality. The extend of these industries resulted in several disputes. The longest-running such battle centred on the Frankston Pine Plantation, where there were several attempts to extend sand- mining during the 1960s and 1970s.²

The Frankston Pine Plantation surrounded one of the highest points in the municipality. Land was set aside here as a timber reserve during the nineteenth century and in 1909, after the a new Forest Act was passed in the Victorian parliament, the area was defined as a "State Pine Forest". In July 1909 fifty men were employed

under the direction of W. J. Hartland the conservator, planting trees, the most common of which was *Pinus radiata* [Monterey Pine]. In the depressed 1930s a saw-mill was set up in the plantation and unemployed men on "sustenance"³ were employed in the plantation. In 1956, almost three hundred acres of the plantation were acquired for state housing. Other attempts were made to extend sand-mining in the plantation, but after some resistance by residents and councillors inquiries from the Housing Commission of Victoria, much of the site was set aside for housing.⁴ Only a small remnant of the forest plantation survives [near the route of a freeway]. The former plantation office cum residence also survives at 355 Frankston-Dandenong Road. The Pine plantation never really employed many Frankston residents and only when house-building began on the site

¹ Frankston Standard 10 May, 1961 and 27 February, 1959

² Bata Shoe Factory

³ N Hunt, 'The History of the Frankston Pine Plantation' typescript, no date

⁴ Minutes 10 April, 1949 and 15 March, 1960

did it employ many local residents. However by the end of the 1950s Frankston had become far more industrial than agricultural. The workforce of Frankston while not all employed in local industry had become far more industrial in character

Occupations Frankston 1961-1971

Agriculture

1961:

General 102

Fruit growing 33

Dairying 58

1971:

Total 192

Manufacturing

1961:

engineering and transport 1065

textiles 70

clothing 415

food 208

milling 49

paper manufacturing 177

other 604

1971:

total 5859

Building

1961: 1315

electricity/gas supplies

1961: 601

1971: 414

transport

1961 361

Commerce

1961: 288

1971: 447

Finance

1961: 443

1971: 2235

Professional

1961: 1171

1971: 983

Amusements

1961: 608

1971: 443¹

Frankston by the 1960s had ceased to depend on agriculture. The city had become like many other outer suburban areas of Melbourne with a mixture of factory and white collar workers as the most typical residents. Some parts of the present city still bears the agricultural flavour of the later nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century. A few buildings do relate closely to this history. Most of those surviving however are the larger buildings connected with early grazing properties or wealthy residents who came to Frankston looking for a retreat from city life. Bellam Park, Marathon, the original home of Dr James Madden, Yamala and Westerfield are amongst the few surviving buildings which reflect the City of Frankston's rural past. Elsewhere in Frankston the development of the twentieth century has erased many of the reminders of the prosperous local orchards.

Houses and holidays

During its first fifty years of European settlement, Frankston remained a small village with few permanent buildings. The outer parts of the Shire were then even more sparsely settled and the townships appeared to consist essentially of rough huts, tents and a few small public buildings. As the Shire grew from the turn of the century or more especially from the Second World War many of the surviving smaller structures were swept away so that the present city is largely composed of quite recent

1 Commonwealth Censuses 1961, 1971

buildings. The older houses are for the most part properties in the southern, higher areas of the present city.

The domestic building of Frankston can be divided into several waves.

1. From the 1850s until 1914 much of the building was rudimentary, using rough materials and simple design. Most houses were small and had few services apart from sleeping space an attached cooking area and perhaps a small sitting room, all at ground level and with a simple floor plan.

2. From 1880 through to the First World War, wealthy Melburnians made Frankston a favoured site for holidays and thus second homes. At first these were large, often two-storeyed, mansions which replicated the form of houses in Melbourne's wealthiest suburbs (see Fig. 20). Their seaside location and siting for views, breezes and their surviving grounds and plantings distinguish these from similar buildings closer to the city.

3. A third wave began in the twentieth century and characterised Frankston from the late-1920s onwards. The more experimental designs of these holiday homes resulted in a range of floor plans, materials and siting. Some Melbourne professional families turned to the followers of the International Style for their holiday homes in Frankston seeking convenient yet unusual buildings, supposedly designed to ensure easy maintenance and trouble-free holidaying.

4. A fourth form of housing appeared in Frankston after the

Second World War. As the suburb was drawn more closely into the orbit of Melbourne some of the smaller holiday houses and old shacks were converted into permanent housing. A lot of the new building, especially in the north of the shire was small and extremely basic. Council struggled to control this wave of building and wrestled with new by-laws in an attempt to ensure that better housing would be built.

5. The final wave of building, in the 1960s and 1970s did produce larger, better-serviced dwellings on more systematically planned subdivisions. In both public and private estates, Frankston helped change the shape of many of the new suburbs of the 1960s. Ideas first implemented during the 1950s and developed in the 1960s at Frankston became standard in other parts of Victoria.

Wave One: The fishing village

In 1865 Balliere's Guide listed Frankston as having only thirty people. The other local settlements, Baxter, Langwarrin, Somerville and Hastings were even smaller. By 1891 the Shire population had risen to more than three thousand and that of Frankston to nearly eight hundred in 160 houses.¹

Recalling life in the rough cottages of Frankston at the turn of the century, one resident remembered that "the little house we had was just really one long room and it was divided into three by hessian walls."² There were some larger and more permanent houses scattered through Frankston. Well into the twentieth century, the

¹ Jones, Frankston, p.98
² Interview recorded in Fishing Sand and Village Days, p.6

summer tourist trade created several larger boarding houses in the town of Frankston. In the 1930s for example the Clendon Guest House took in twenty summer boarders (many of them from Gippsland or the inner Melbourne bayside)¹ Frankston House, The Fernery and Osborne House were other popular guest houses which still attracted summer visitors until quite recently.

More often the holiday and temporary homes built during the early twentieth century were small and thrown together from odd materials. Many had only hessian dividing walls, no proper toilet (most holiday makers were slow to put in septic tanks) and a rudimentary kitchen (often cooking was done on an open verandah). Even the smallest cottages were often rented out to several families. So acute was the summer housing shortage after the First World War that one local estate agent (J Robertson of Robertson & Stephens) pointed out that, "we have not a house vacant for the holidays, we could let fifty more if we had them."² Houses and bungalows let by the week had become overcrowded and the Royal Commission on Housing heard evidence from the local police inspector that the "construction of houses and bungalows of recent structure is very poor and in my opinion far too small."³ Part of the problem lay in the failure to enforce building by-laws and the speed with which owners put up shacks and let them, even before any notice was given

to council's building inspector. Constable McCormack informed the Royal Commission on Housing that

As soon as they get the places up on this small block they place it in the hands of the agents for disposal. On that account there are a lot of unsightly little houses around the town. The by-law if enforced would prevent congestion.⁴

For the remaining years between the wars, Frankston struggled with the problem of controlling small bungalow building, preventing these being converted for permanent residency and tent camps clustered around half-built bungalows in often unsanitary surrounds. The problems were felt most acutely in the northern half of the Shire and around Seaford many small shacks went up in the ti-tree. In 1936 as a result, the Seaford Progress Association approached council asking for the building by-law to be enforced strictly. Many of the buildings were, according to Councillor Klauer, "a disgrace to Frankston". Other Councillors were slow to suggest that regulations ought to be tightly enforced. As Councillor Armstrong reminded his fellow councillors, it was "a difficult thing to prevent a man doing what he wished to his own property."⁵

Wave Two: Mansions for holidays

The heights of Mt. Eliza supported a much different type of housing. Around the home of the first grazier, James Davey, Mt. Eliza became a popular spot for the

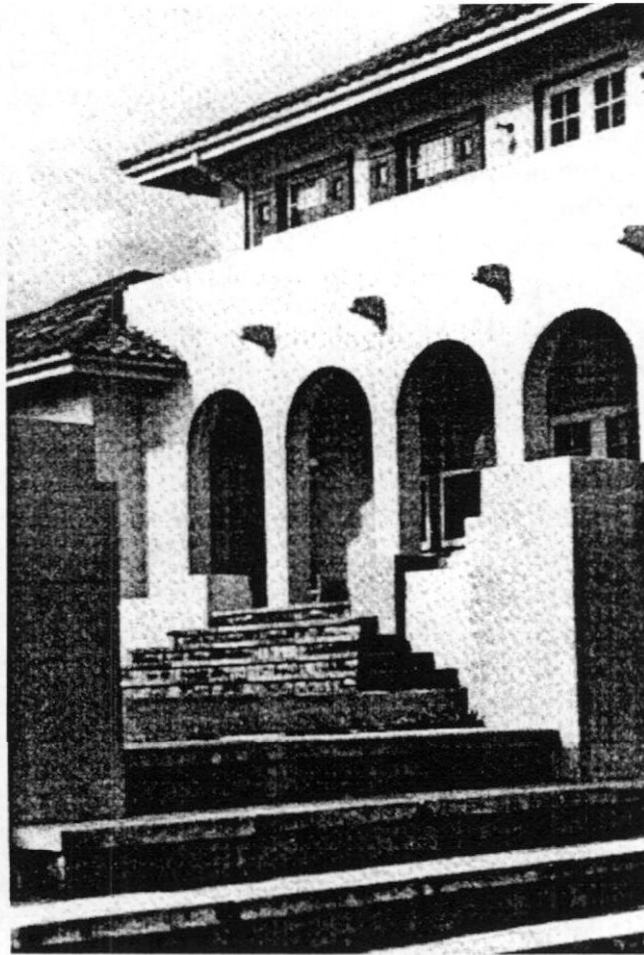
1 Frankston Standard 31 December, 1937

2 Frankston Standard 21 October, 1921

3 RC on Housing 1917, 2nd Progress Report, VPP 1917, vol.2, Q7396, McCormack

4 ibid., Q7459

5 Frankston Standard 11 December, 1936



23

The Prime Minister's house, Pinehill, was symbolic of a new type of large seaside property in Frankston: the modern equivalent of Yamala and others of the 19th century.

wealthy of Melbourne. Amongst the oldest of their surviving mansions is Yamala built between 1866 and 1876. John Madden, a promising Melbourne lawyer had married Gertrude, daughter of Francis Stephen, who owned Marathon at Mt. Eliza. Madden and his wife still had a home in St Kilda but used Yamala as a retreat from the city. More and more of Melbourne's prominent families followed the example of the Maddens and buildings were erected for them in Mt. Eliza and on Oliver's Hill. Another much later grouping of quasi-holiday homes for Melbourne's upper crust was inland from the sea and included Westerfield, Cruden Farm and Mulberry Hill (see above).

Amongst the last of this wave of construction was the home of the Australian Prime Minister, Stanley Melbourne Bruce: Bruce Manor [Pinehill]. This was built in 1926 and was designed in association by R. B. Hamilton.

Wave Three: Machines for taking a holiday

The style and form of these more privileged holiday houses altered between the 1870s and the 1920s and, with the use of Burley Griffin's Knitlock (q.v.) construction system for experimental holiday housing at Frankston (see Fig. 22) and the eccentric manners of the McClelland artist complex in Palm Court¹, the shire became an experimental ground for holiday

architecture. One of the more radical departures from the appearance of the Frankston holiday house was erected on the flat of Long Island, not the heights of Mt. Eliza.

On Long Island several innovative holiday homes were constructed for families of Melbourne businessmen and professionals. Whereas suburban house-builders often resisted the principles of the architectural movement which was to be known as Modernism, the owners of holiday houses were often prepared to take a risk with new designs. The modernists after all promised simplicity and flexibility in design, the qualities most prized in a holiday rather than a permanent home.

Amongst these new designs, was one house built in 1937 on Long Island and held up as a model for holiday home style. Designed by Roy Grounds for a Collins Street doctor, the house was presented as a building with no expensive finishes so as to cut down on maintenance. The building had hardwood floors and simple architraves and skirting boards. "In keeping with the holiday spirit everything in the house was subdivided". A light timber frame was covered with asbestos cement, all the main rooms faced onto the beach and the main room was designed on an open plan. The roof had porcelain chipping. Along with other holiday home designs the building expressly included sleeping space which could be easily subdivided so that

relatives and guest could easily visit.¹

The building of holiday houses many of them designed by innovative architects continued in Frankston between the wars. The number of these houses increased in the 1950s and 1960s when the firm of Chancellor & Patrick designed several experimental modern holiday homes (and permanent homes) in Frankston but more especially in Mt. Eliza.² Amongst these was the house at 30 Gould Street, Long Island, built in 1956 by Arthur Moore for the Bennett family. David Chancellor's own house in Gulls Way adapted new techniques of construction to a relatively small floor space. The living area had no internal walls, the external walls sloped outwards at a 25 degree angle and a cantilevered bookcase and dining table gave a greater sense of light and space to the interior of the home.³

Another architectural firm Godfrey & Spowers brought modern shapes to parts of Frankston after the Second World War. Their house for J. K. Dougall in Mt. Eliza, Seaview, was thought in 1946 to "express the gaiety of the seaside spirit."⁴ Built to three storeys to take advantage of sea views, the building had a flat roof, used local stonework both inside and out and had slender iron pillars and railings.

A few years later an even more striking design was built on Oliver's Hill; Moonacres, coloured pink and with a flat roof reached by a ship's companionway boasted a silver

¹⁰ see 1A Palm Court

¹ Argus, 4 February, 1937

² See site schedule

³ Australian Home Beautiful, December, 1954

⁴ Australian Home Beautiful, September, 1946, p.27

sundeck. From it the owners the Rodwell family could take in a "view to inflame the soul and lighten the heart."¹ The house made full use of its site and was designed as an open plan to make for easier movement and so that sunshine and sea breezes could penetrate to the heart of the building. With its Chinese bamboo blinds, the "Pale grey immaculateness" of its kitchen and built in sideboards and robes, it added a touch of the modern world to the old seaside resort. In Mt. Eliza the grounds of some of the older estates were sold off and more of these modern designs were built. When sited so as to take advantage of seaward views the flexible open-plan designs proved more significant than in any ordinary suburban house. One such house stands at 6 Yamala Drive on the former grounds of Yamala. The house here was built for Lady Jacobena Angliss in 1961 to a distinctive modern design. These modern holiday homes are amongst the truly distinctive buildings in Frankston. They are important for their links to innovative designers and to the established figures for whom they were often built. In addition elements of their design have been copied at beachside resorts around Victoria. the small, simple space living spaces, with fold-away tables, built-in bookcases, benches between kitchen and living area and wooden and stone surfaces have been mimicked in the most mundane holiday home. The easy relaxed living and the communality supposedly inspired by these

spaces extended to the outside of the building. Modern materials were used in the hope that holidays could be maintenance-free. The houses were sited to give views and windows were placed so as to bring sunlight and air inside. Entrances were planned to avoid formal front and rear doors. A view almost always meant a balcony and even houses without views were often given sun-decks. Informality, relaxation and accommodation for more than the nuclear family unit were almost always major considerations in these houses. The work of Chancellor & Patrick and of other architects in Frankston used the principles of modern design, the house as a machine for living, to create innovative spaces for happy holidaying.

Wave Four: Suburban housing, the problem of new estates

Most of Frankston was built without the benefit of such ideas. Increasingly through the twentieth century Frankston became a site for suburban commuters rather than holiday makers. In the first wave of this suburban building few controls were exercised over size, materials or services. By the end of the Second World War the problem of enforcing building by-laws had apparently overwhelmed the council's limited staff and councillors themselves often had little knowledge of the purpose or character of their by-laws. New buildings were being erected at such a rate that the council staff

1 Australian Home Beautiful, June, 1949

were unable to keep up with changes.

Frankston had sought inclusion within the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works area as some sort of avenue to control.¹ Council followed with a deputation to the Ministry of Housing to seek an answer to the shortage of housing materials, which they claimed was the cause of so many inadequate houses around the town. This moved failed and the town had to deal with post-war growth "rapid and expansive, towards a permanent dwelling area rather than a holiday resort with its floating population."² The small rude holiday houses were now let to permanent tenants. In some housing estates, especially around the Riviera Hotel new owners were living in shacks made up from the wooden crates used for shipping cars. The local paper reported that new arrivals, ninety per cent of whom were European immigrants, were living in packing case houses on the Seaford Heights Estate.³ In 1947 the shire building inspector claimed that ninety per cent of buildings put up since the war would not have been tolerated in the 1930s. Those not built of timber were inferior since poor bricks were almost always used.⁴ In 1950 the building inspector reported to council on inferior roofing material used in new subdivisions and informed councillors that he could not approve a cheap Indian roofing tile used on new subdivisions.⁵

Along with substandard housing it took several years before basic services were provided on several estates. Riviera Estate appeared to be the most primitive. For a long time the estate had no regular garbage service and as late as 1960, the rubbish truck was a 4 wheel drive because the roads were so rough.⁶ For several years residents argued with council about fire hazards, removal of ti-tree and access to Frankston via new bridges across the Kananook Creek.⁷ Poor roads frustrated new home-owners on several estates. One resident wrote in exasperation to the council disgusted by the poor roadway and the sewage around her home

When are we going to have our road made- we are not asking for something for nothing as we all have to pay our share. This street is a disgrace-filthy household water runs out the low parts of the street and the noise of the frogs is not pleasant if you rise at 4.45 as we do...I have been told for the last twenty years that the street will be made - which councillor is going to fight to make Addicott Street?⁸

On other estates council occasionally refused to take over roads from developers because they were, despite some improvements, still sub-standard. On Dobson's Mile Bridge Estate residents formed their own progress association contributing £2 p.a. to maintain roads with crushed rocks.⁹ Services often depended on state rather than local agencies. Mr Alan

1 Minutes 20 October, 1944

2 Minutes 23 September, 1948

3 S 29 March, 1951

4 Frankston Standard 24 April, 1947

5 Minutes 14 July, 1950

6 S 4 June, 1960

7 See for example Minutes, 19 November, 1956

8 15/5/47 Letters to Frankston and Hastings Shire, VPRO Bertha Young, 9/47

9 Frankston Standard 15 April, 1948

Croxford, head of the MMBW, came to Frankston in 1966 and told councillors they would have to wait for the completion of the South-East Trunk Sewer Scheme before they could get a sewerage system. Gas supplies came more speedily with the Gas and Fuel Corporation connecting homes from 1957 onwards.¹ Other initial problems on new estates occurred with residents owning cars and driving onto properties without proper vehicle access, siting of new garages. More significantly for some residents in Seaford, there was the sudden discovery that their homes were more than seven foot below sea level and so technically valueless.²

Removing old Frankston

A few years later when council debated demolishing sub-standard buildings, Councillor Tomasetti remarked that "if Frankston removed all its unsightly buildings there would be little of Frankston left."³ As part of the clean-up the oldest existing home in Frankston (on the corner of Bay and Wells Streets) was moved to the rear of W. Richards property. This house had been owned by Henry Cadby Wells and the first white child in Frankston was supposedly born in the building.⁴ More speedily than buildings were demolished, new shacks had gone up near the Seaford beachfront that the *Standard* referred to them as "Riviera Mia Mias" ; none of the

builders had applied for permits.⁵ Nearby Vic's Caravan Park which had become a permanent home for many was declared a slum area.⁶ Frankston, charged one councillor, has become the untidiest town in Victoria.⁷ A further problem occurred with the large number of second-hand houses brought into Frankston. While council objected to these, they could not prevent re-erection of buildings which met Uniform Building Regulations. In 1958 for example houses were moved from the works village of the Upper Yarra Dam into Frankston.⁸

Still some efforts were made to control through new by-laws, one of which banned camping in residential districts.⁹ New supplies of materials, greater control through planning and building regulations and new more professional builders gradually altered the building from the 1950s onwards.

Wave Five: The modern suburb

One of the first responses of Frankston council to the housing shortage was to approach the Housing Commission of Victoria (HCV) to ask that Frankston be included in plans for country public housing quotas. The deputation was told that they would have to present the Housing Commission of Victoria with a housing and population census through which they could demonstrate shortages.¹⁰

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- 1 Minutes 19 September, 1966, April, 1957
 - 2 Minutes 10 July, 1953, 110 May, 1953 and Frankston Standard 1 January, 1957
 - 3 *Frankston Standard* 1951
 - 4 *Frankston Standard* 10 April 1952
 - 5 *Frankston Standard* 6 March, 1952
 - 6 Minutes 2 August, 1951
 - 7 Minutes 15 February, 1951
 - 8 Minutes 9 March, 1956 and 14 February, 1958
 - 9 Minutes 14 August, 1947
 - 10 Minutes 6 October, 1944, 23 June, 1950

Frankston also approached the Forestry Commission to ask that 400 acres of their local pine plantations could be handed over and used for housing. At first the Forestry Commission was unwilling to part with land given that around the plantation there were broad areas available for new housing at relatively low land values. However by the end of 1950 the HCV had gone ahead with plans for the building of concrete homes on the new estate, formerly controlling a part of the Pine plantation in 1956. Frankston council requested brick homes facing the main roads and by 1956 the estate also included units for the elderly.¹ In 1957 the HCV presented plans for a second stage development in the Pines.²

Other public agencies were involved in the extensive building of the 1950s. A Frankston Co-operative Housing Society was formed in May 1946 and within a year had more than 100 members.³ One year later the co-operative had commenced work on 38 houses in Frankston.⁴ Supported by the CBA bank which provided finance the co-op went on building houses throughout the decade. War Service Homes were also built in Frankston around Cranbourne Road.⁵ These and other schemes raised the gross value and number of buildings throughout the 1950s (see Fig. 25).

More noticeable over the period was the valuation rise and the increasing concentration of

building activity in the southern coastal areas of the Shire rather than inland or around Hastings. Perhaps the most extensive single development in the suburb of the 1950s and 1960s was by a private developer, A.V. Jennings, whose initial proposals were approved in 1960.⁶ Jennings eventually commenced building on land at the corner of Skye Road and Karingal Drive for the Karingal Estate in 1966.⁷ This development with its extensive plantings and wide street verges as well as its move away from a strict suburban grid of right-angled streets is thought to be one of the prototype estates on which much of the suburban subdivision of the later-1960s and 1970s was based.

These and other large-scale private subdivisions lay behind the massive rise in building in the suburb in the late 1950s and 1960s. By 1966 when Frankston issued more than 2000 building permits in one year, it ranked amongst the leading six municipalities in Victoria in number of dwellings and value of works.⁸ Frankston's house-building was most dramatic during the 1960s. Frankston by the middle of the decade was one of the fastest growing suburban zones of Melbourne, after Doncaster and Templestowe, Waverley and Moorabin and for a time Broadmeadows and Dandenong. With few flats (suburbs like St Kilda or Caulfield had more than ten times the flat-building of Frankston)

1 Minutes 26 October, 1956, 25 May, 1956, 31 October, 1950 and 14 May, 1954

2 *ibid.*, 19 August, 1957

3 Frankston Standard 14 August, 1957

4 *ibid.*, 16 September, 1948

5 Minutes 13 September, 1951

6 Minutes 11 July, 1960

7 *ibid.*, 19 December, 1966

8 Minutes 17 October, 1966

it was a typical suburban example of the building boom of the 1960s (see Fig. 27). Then more readily available materials, more stringent regulation and new expectations about numbers of rooms and comfort altered the appearance but not necessarily the fundamental form of the suburban house. In Frankston this new, better-regulated and serviced suburb contrasted sharply with the remnants of the nineteenth century fishing village, the holiday resort of the inter-war years and the unregulated shack profusion of the immediate post-war years.

Many of these new estates were created to appeal to buyers on moderate incomes. Sometimes owner-builders put up small but original homes. One such was built in 1948 to a design by Ross Stahle.¹ The innovations in local holiday homes was reflected in some of the commuter homes in Frankston and architects straddled both markets. Godfrey & Spowers [with Hughes, Mewton and Lobb] for example designed two small suburban homes in 1947 in Frankston. These employed several of the modernist interior devices familiar in holiday homes [using timber and natural stone for example] but in exterior appearance the houses were not as striking as the holiday homes of Long Island and Mt. Eliza.²

In Mt. Eliza and on Oliver's Hill in new estates were created with an eye to attracting wealthy buyers. One of the most significant

subdivisions was that around Marathon, the home of the Grimwade family. The Grimwades subdivided their landholding into 23 blocks of between one half and two and a half acres in 1951, whilst retaining the home in the former grounds on Oliver's Hill.³ In 1956 the original landholding, Davey's Pre-emptive Right at Mt. Eliza was subdivided into six building allotments.⁴ Over the following years many other large properties in Mt. Eliza and on Oliver's Hill were subdivided for housing. One of the most well-known was Yamala View Estate subdivided between 1957 and 1963 and eventually encroached upon by flats in 1963.⁵

Prominent in these high points were dramatic engineering and architectural designs many of them distinct in the Melbourne's mostly uniform suburbia. One of the most recognisable buildings was designed by Roy Grounds for Mr Henty of Portland Lodge. This completely round house on Oliver's Hill was one of the most striking modern domestic designs of the 1950s.⁶ The builder was Norman Echberg who had built more than 500 dwellings on the Mornington Peninsula, completing seventeen buildings in 1952 alone. Echberg had left his mark on "fashionable Long Island" and there was hardly a Frankston street concluded the local paper, which was untouched by his work.⁷ Similar striking designs by Grounds (with Boyd) were several holiday homes in Mt. Eliza (some outside the shire

1 Australian Home Beautiful, March, 1948

2 *ibid.*, January, 1948

3 Minutes 19 April, 1951

4 Minutes December, 1956

5 Minutes, 26 July, 1957, 29 April, 1963

6 Frankston Standard 22 May, 1952

7 *ibid.*

boundaries). The best-known amongst these is perhaps the holiday home built for Ken Myer.¹ The council maintained a faith in distinctive designs in 1966 when it permitted A-framed design houses in the City.²

Mt. Eliza and Oliver's Hill had been identified since the later nineteenth century with Melbourne's wealthiest families. Many of these influential figures [prominent in charity work as much as in business] had second homes in Frankston and several moved their permanently when their active life in Melbourne finance, industry and the professions diminished. The distinctive cachet of parts of Frankston was firmly established when the former Governor Sir Dallas Brookes, retired to Frankston where he bought a new home off Golf Links Rd.³ This house survives today at the end of a notable avenue of trees (formerly the front drive) along Crathe Court.,

Frankston by the end of the 1960s had developed into a major suburban municipality. Along the Mt. Eliza waterfront and on Oliver's Hill were some examples of large houses built for Melbourne's elite. On Long Island were smaller holiday homes, although still occupied by influential families such as the Smorgans, and in the north of the city were the remnants of the smaller houses dating from the mostly unregulated inter-war suburban growth. In the east were broadacre public and private estates.

By the 1970s and 1980s new trends were observed with the

development and urbanisation of some of the former village townships to the east. Major development projects at Langwarrin and Carrum Downs contrasted with the area between, by this time "taken up by hobby farms and open country ranging to the west towards Cranbourne".⁴

The developments of the 1970s and 1980s resulted in the establishment of large regional residential estates and the opening of regional shopping centres at Langwarrin and Carrum Downs, completely changing their earlier rural image.

Of the distinctive building types of Frankston the one to have disappeared most completely is the small pre-suburban shack. From all of these types of housing, the two most significant domestic building types in Frankston are those large homes associated with principal figures in Victorian history and the many modernist holiday homes especially those of Mt. Eliza and Long Island. The style of holiday home seen in Frankston from the 1930s onwards inspired the appearance of seaside resorts around the entire coast of Victoria. The holiday mansions of Mt. Eliza form a unique enclave, matched in Victoria by perhaps Portsea and parts of Sorrento, by some parts of Queenscliff and in some aspects by Mt. Macedon. The more recent suburban building of Frankston, especially the larger private estates developed by the Jennings company and the public housing on the Pines are more difficult to assess since they are so

1 S 17 September, 1958

2 Minutes 12 September, 1966

3 Frankston Standard 21 June, 1961

4 Hooper, p. 36.

recent and appear to share characteristics with suburban estates in many other parts of Melbourne. Yet any detailed account of post-war suburban building would have to make substantial reference to these seminal estate designs. Although now looking very much like any fringe municipality in Melbourne, Frankston includes several examples of distinctive housing. Interesting in design they are also valuable for their links with prominent figures in Victorian and Australian history and for the inspiration which they provided for builders and designers elsewhere in Victoria.

The town centre

The public buildings

The high land to the south of Playne Street in Frankston rises above shops and the water reaching an abrupt plateau before the heights of Oliver's Hill and Mt. Eliza. This rise was reserved for government buildings. Today it is still the centre for much of the public life of Frankston. The public buildings here still evoke some sense of the history of Frankston and of the communal life of the suburb.

Mechanics Institute

For many years the best-known building on this government reserve was the Frankston Mechanic's Institute. It is still a prominent structure for anyone passing along the Nepean Highway from the north. The first

Mechanic's Institute was erected on a Crown grant in 1880.¹ For the next seventy years the institute building served as a meeting place for the Shire of Frankston and Hasting throughout one in every three years. Before the separation of Frankston, the Council met for one year in Frankston, another in Hastings and a third in Somerville. Growing from a meeting of the Independent Order of Good Templars, the Mechanics Institute was extended in 1918 and 1929.² By then the Mechanics Institute was firmly established as the major meeting place for people in a scattered district with no true public hall. As the Standard acknowledged the Mechanic's Institute was

a democratic institution [whose] original purpose was for the education and betterment of the working man or mechanic as the name implies. However since its inception it has become to be regarded as a community centre where all may meet and enjoy the benefits of social and educational contact."³

As an aid to this educational role the institute had built up a library of more than 2000 books. Yet residents, many of them members of the building's 24 regular user groups in Frankston complained about the poor facilities provided by the hall and demanded a replacement to that "obsolete mechanics institute."⁴ Extensions were completed in 1938.⁵ The war gave residents more weighty matters to think about but it became clear within a few years that the extensions were inadequate.

1 Frankston Standard 5 October, 1949
2 Frankston Standard 26 November, 1952
3 Frankston Standard 7 October, 1938
4 ibid.
5 Minutes 22 July, 1938

Rumblings about the problems with the old hall surfaced after the war. In 1953 the old and increasingly inefficient telephone exchange was moved to Playne Street and the Post Office approached the Mechanic's Institute trustees to lease vacant land on the institute's property.¹ In 1953 serious plans were put forward to rebuild the hall, create a new municipal library and to transfer control to the shire council.² Over the next three years new plans were drawn up. But the incident which eventually forced the community into action occurred with radio personality Jack Davey's visit to Frankston. More than 500 fans had crammed into the Mechanic's Institute when a fire scare and crushes of people at the exits made clear not only the lack of comforts but the real dangers which might flow from continued use of the hall. In February 1956 the Mechanic's Institute held its last meeting in the hall.³ In August 1956 the Frankston Choral Society performed in a farewell concert to the old hall. By October the building had been partly demolished.⁴ M. Gamble won the tender for rebuilding and in the following year the new hall was complete and by October 1957 the new library was opened in the Institute building.⁵

Law courts and police

Post-war complaints had also been made about the poor facilities in the Frankston Court House and

Police Station. However repeated requests to the Crown Law Department for new buildings were turned down because of the shortage of building materials.⁶ Eventually, in the 1950s, the new court house opened, altering the character of another section of the government reserve.⁷ Similar demands were made to get a new police station for Frankston; the old station being dubbed "the blue hole of Frankston."⁸ Police facilities improved marginally when they moved into two rooms of the building occupied by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission nearby.

Village townships to the east.

The earliest village township established within the area to the east of Frankston after the cutting-up of the large pastoral estates was at Skye, where Scottish farming families settled in the 1850s. An 1863 Lands Department map of the Village of Skye showed a township reserve with a township centre at the intersection of four main roads composed of small lots, surrounded on four sides with larger allotments mainly of five to 19/20 acres. The southern boundary, North Road, was the boundary between the Parishes of Lyndhurst and Langwarrin.⁹ In the Langwarrin Parish to the south, the 'boom town' of Langwarrin emerged in the 'eighties', after the 1886 land sales at Langwarrin East. In January

1 Minutes 12 June, 1953
 2 Minutes 13 November, 1953
 3 Minutes 19 February, 1956
 4 Frankston Standard 18 July, 1956, Minutes 28 September, 1956
 5 Minutes 16 October, 1957
 6 Minutes March, 1946
 7 Minutes 22 June, 1956
 8 Frankston Standard 8 February, 1951
 9 'Village of Skye', 1863, CPOV.

1887 twenty township allotments were sold. By April 1888, a 'very commodious and lofty' public hall had been erected and by mid 1889, a flourishing community occupied the 7,000 acre estate planted with orchards and cornfields.¹

An 1881 railway map shows the small Skye township and, to its east, the larger Cranbourne township. To the west the much larger Frankston township is already linked by rail to Melbourne and by road to the Cranbourne and Hastings areas.² Early 1890s maps shows the railway stations on the west side of Camp Road (now McClelland Drive), near the Langwarrin Military Reserve and, to the south, the Mornington Junction (now Baxter) station. At this date, a number of properties are shown near the Baxter Station, suggesting an infant village settlement. There are village clusters at Somerville and in the vicinity of Pearcedale.³ From the opening of the Langwarrin Railway Station in the 1880s a small village settlement developed there, taking the name of Langwarrin. The earlier settlement at Langwarrin East became known as Pearcedale. In 1895 an English family named Pearce bought all the township blocks in the old Estate settlement, "pulled the shops down and built their house with them...". In 1906 there was a revival of the township. The first general store and post office was built, run by Ralph Hatch, who also had the Somerville daily mail run. The name change to Pearcedale was made in 1907, the Langwarrin Railway Station

settlement having taken over the name of Langwarrin.⁴ Pearcedale is outside the study area.

By the 1920s the Cranbourne Army Ordnance Map indicated village settlements at Skye (then known as Lyndhurst South) and at Carrum Downs. A small Langwarrin village settlement was shown along the Warrandyte Road near North Road, on the east side of the Military Reserve.⁵

Development of township services.

Although the small villages within the study area depended for many services on the larger town centres at Frankston and Cranbourne, some local services were provided to the district farming communities. There were, for example, local post and telegraph offices. These were often as, in the case of Langwarrin, associated with the opening of local railway stations. In addition, local schools and churches (discussed below) were built, and a local hall was opened at Langwarrin. As the centre of a prosperous orcharding and farming community early this century, Langwarrin had an active Progress Association and a local fire brigade. Many services, however, only came to these rural villages in recent times, as development and urbanisation occurred.⁶ Water mains were not laid on to the township of Baxter until 1962-63 and to Langwarrin in 1966. Carrum Downs' sewerage plant was not completed until 1975. Nevertheless, with the advent of district residential estates and

1 Gunson, p. 157.
2 Rail 32B, 1881, CPOV.
3 M/Def. 65, 1891, CPOV.
4 Gunson, p. 158-159.
5 Cranbourne, 1925, CPOV.
6 Parkin, p. 15-42.

regional shopping centres, by 1988 Langwarrin and Carrum Downs were regarded as among the four growth areas in Cranbourne Shire.¹

Road Boards

Local government offices have never been located within the townships to the east but in the major towns of Cranbourne and today at Frankston. A Cranbourne Road Board proclaimed on 27 March 1860 included the four Parishes of Cranbourne, Sherwood, Langwarrin and Lyndhurst. This board was responsible for the maintenance of roads and bridges, fixing district rates and levying tolls. In 1866 the Cranbourne Road district was divided into Cranbourne, Lyndhurst and Yallock subdivisions.²

Shires

Two years later the road district became a Shire and in 1971 a Shire Hall was built at Cranbourne.³

The first meeting in the new courthouse, post office and shire office building was held in September 1875.⁴

In 1971 the Melbourne and Metropolitan Planning Scheme proposed taking in Cranbourne, Langwarrin and Clyde, an extension approved between 1975 and 1982. Consultants Ashton and Wilson drew up a planning scheme for the west section of Cranbourne Shire outside the metropolitan planning scheme (which included some parts of the study area). The aim was to protect valuable farming

resources, high quality landscape and conservation significance, as well as historic buildings.⁵

Churches

The prominent public buildings of most towns generally flank churches and Frankston is no exception although as many locals complained, churches in Frankston were built without halls or meeting rooms so they became less often community centres.

The first Church of England building was opened for worship in Frankston in 1885. Another St Paul's rose above the beach and the commercial heart of Frankston and was a focal point from its construction, in 1933, until the 1950s. In 1957 St Paul's was gutted by fire.⁶ Part of the chapel survived and the parish decided to rebuild the church approving Louis Williams and J Smith as architects in 1958.⁷ The builders were S W and J Gardener. In February 1959 the building once again suffered fire damage but in November 1959, St Paul's "a blending of old and new" was opened. The building was even more of a local landmark than before with its seventy foot tower and Napier Waller stained glass.⁸ Other churches of the period also made a feature of stained glass, St Francis Xavier Catholic church on the Hastings Road for example; however none had the imposing siting of St Paul's.⁹

St Paul's won an important place in local life through its pre-school

1 Gunson, p. 215, Hooper, p. 12, 24.

2 Gunson, p. 86-87.

3 Ibid, p. 87, 91.

4 Ibid, p. 91.

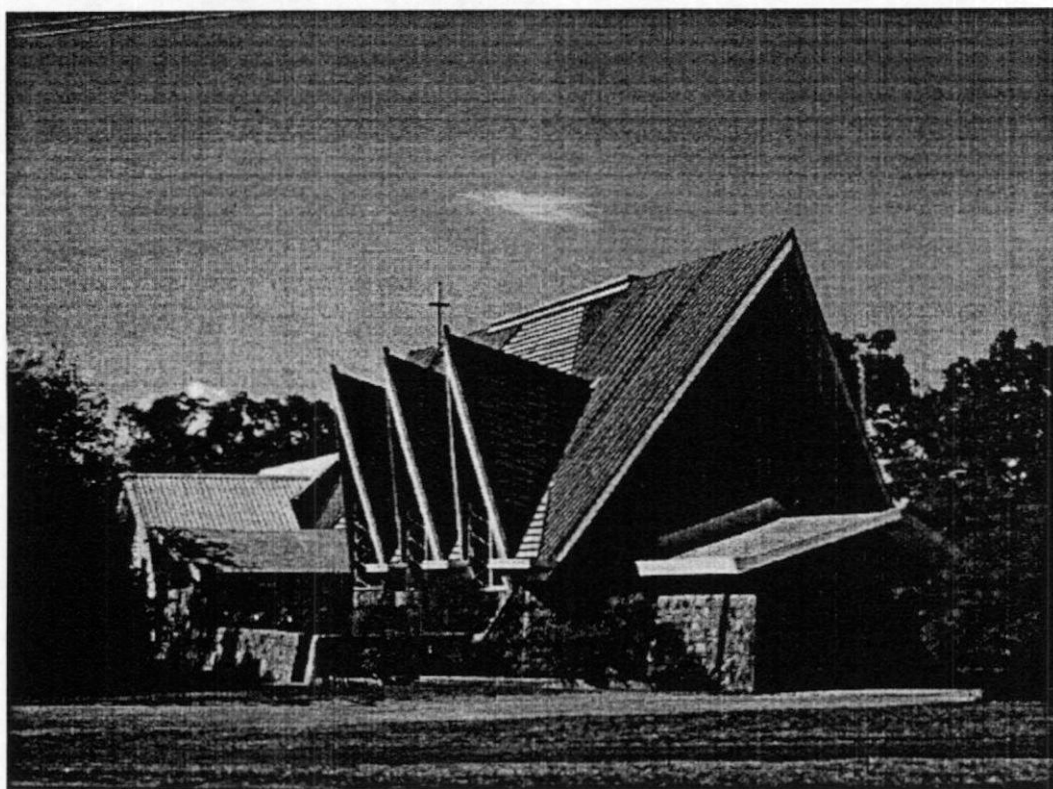
5 Hooper 5, 6.

6 Frankston Standard 30 October, 1957

7 Frankston Standard 14 March, 1958

8 25 November, 1959

9 Frankston Standard 7 October, 1959



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Modernist church at Langwarrin, following the architectural trends of the holiday houses

centre. Mrs Earl Morer began a Children's Craft Centre at St Paul's in 1946 which soon had more than 500 children enrolled. The classes expanded to include puppet theatre, clay modelling and basket weaving in the church hall and a library of 1400 books (so popular was the library that many children told visitor that they wanted to become librarians when they grew up). These classes later expanded to the pavilion at the Frankston Park.

Amongst other local churches, St Francis Xavier stands out for its architectural qualities rather than for any long-term role in local life. The first Frankston Catholic Church was blessed by Archbishop Carr in 1889 and was enlarged in

1928. Although Frankston had few Catholics in the nineteenth century, summer holiday makers went to mass at St Francis Xavier and regular summer picnics were held for Melbourne's Catholic community at Frankston [indeed Archbishop Daniel Mannix chose the annual Frankston picnic to deliver one of his most stinging anti-government attacks after the First World War]. As the suburb expanded after the Second World War, Frankston Catholics raised money for a new church which was completed in 1954. Other local religious groups were involved in the church-building of the 1950s, the Presbyterians for example. They chose Louis Williams [the man who designed

St. Paul's, Frankston] as their architect. The foundation stone of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church was laid on 22 March 1958.

Churches and schools at Langwarrin, Carrum Downs and Baxter.

Churches have played an important role in the history of these areas, particularly during the present century. As early as 1895, the Langwarrin Methodist Church purchased a wooden building, reputedly built in Beaumaris in 1857. This was used as the Langwarrin State School 3531 from 1907 and 1911, and then as a church until 1920. After it was demolished, material was used for stables and sheds for a new church opened in that year.¹

The Anglican Church also had associations with this building and with the Langwarrin Military Camp. In 1915 Anglican services at the new township of Langwarrin near the railway station were held in the Langwarrin State School. In that year five acres of land was purchased on the north-east corner of Warrandyte and North Roads (the site of the present St. Thomas' Church). In 1918, it was proposed to move a building, the Church Hall at the Military Reserve, on to the Warrandyte Road site. Anglican services had been conducted at the camp in this League of Soldiers Friends Church Hall since 1915. A Langwarrin parishioner in 1959, Dr Neville Shute Norway, the well-known novelist, was particularly interested in the Camp and the Anglican Church's associations with it. In April 1919,

the Church Hall was taken down and sections of it stored on the Warrandyte Road site. This small hall (27 x17 feet) was re-erected and dedicated on 21 November 1920 as the Church of St. Thomas. It became the Sunday School when a new church, designed by the architect, W. Widdows, was dedicated on 29 August 1964.² Another district Anglican church, St. Lukes, is associated with the Brotherhood of St. Laurence Settlement at Carrum Downs. The Anglican Church is associated, too, with Woodleigh, the senior school of St. Paul's Co-Ed School at Frankston, located on Golf Course Road at Baxter. Woodleigh stands to the east of the Mulberry Hill property. It is considered to have great heritage value for its "semi-rural surrounds" as part of a landscape of "small pastures and wooded areas" where trees "shelter well-established residences".³ The first school was opened at Langwarrin following a petition by the Education Department on 2 December 1889 from concerned residents living in the vicinity of the Military Reserve. The petition was signed mainly by farmers with a couple of railway workers and E. Sullivan, caretaker at the "Camp Ground Langwarrin", who had eight children of school age. A site was chosen on the Langwarrin Defence Ground and a school was opened there on 27 May 1890. It was known as SS3023, or the Langwarrin Railway Station School. The school was burned out in 1905.⁴ Meanwhile, in 1902, a new school named the Mornington Junction

¹ Valda Cole, 'Western Port Pioneers & Preachers', 1975, p.229.

² Ibid, p. 229-235.

³ Calder, p. 4, 12.

⁴ Parkin, p. 2.



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Carrum Downs public hall, the centre of the old Carrum Downs community.

School, was established on the corner of McClelland Drive and Golf Links Road, next door to the present Mulberry Hill property. In 1919 Mornington Junction changed its name to Baxter. Known as SS3203 Baxter, the school was moved in 1954 to its present site on the six cross-roads at Baxter, a more central location in the growing township. More classrooms were added in the late 1950s and early 1960s, until it had six classrooms in 1964.¹

Another school was established within the district on 1 January 1907 in a leased Methodist Church, known at first as Langwarrin North

S.S. 3531. In 1910 a two-acre site was purchased in Warrandyte Road and a building costing 328 pounds was erected there in 1913. There were a number of additions to the Langwarrin School made from the 1930s to the 1960s.² A new brick veneer primary school was opened at Langwarrin on 6 July 1970. The site of the old school is now an arboretum and bird sanctuary.³

Town Hall and Civic Centre

The failure of the Mechanic's Institute to accommodate the larger public meetings in Frankston prompted stronger moves to create

¹ 'Vision and Realisation', Vol. 2, p.399.

² Ibid, p. 1295.

³ Parkin, p. 4.

a new Town Hall.¹ By 1950 Architects Leith & Bartlett had outlined plans for their new Civic Centre.² The rebuilt Mechanic's Institute deflected interest but in 1961 plans for the Civic Centre were revived.³ In part the problems of a public hall in the shire were because of its dispersed character. The outlying areas often had their own halls, the East Frankston hall for example. However the Public Works Department refused to fund more than one public hall in any municipality. So long as money was spent on the Mechanic's Institute or creating a new Civic Centre the Public Works Department refused to support additions or extensions to the East Frankston Hall.⁴ ⁵

Street memorial

Along with a new Civic Centre Frankston residents were constantly looking for ways to give a civic style to their streets. In 1948 the Housewives Association suggested a memorial clock.⁶ The clock was to be a memorial to one of Frankston's most prominent citizens, General Grimwade; the architect was J.H. Butler appointed in May 1956 and after tortuous negotiations about traffic routing and the shape of the clock surrounds it was completed in July 1956 at an estimated cost of £2161.

Hospital

Practical moves for a hospital had begun in the 1930s with a meeting at the Mechanics Institute where discussion ranged over the need for a new hospital or a motorised ambulance service. A Bush Nursing Hospital Committee was formed with voices from further down the peninsular (Mrs Gavan Duffy for example) calling for ambulances. Local interests won out and a hospital building of reinforced concrete was begun.⁷

A new public ward block was commenced by Clements Langford P/L in 1962 to the design of local architects, Chancellor & Patrick⁸

Frankston has also become the site for a range of health centres and homes. No doubt the supposed benefits of sea air have played a part in this choice. The Children's Hospital in Carlton found difficulty in housing children suffering from poliomyelitis in the 1920s. In searching for a new site, the hospital managers chose a Frankston property, Beachleigh for the Orthopaedic Section of the Royal Children's Hospital. A new building was completed in 1929 off Jacksons Road. In 1971, when the children were transferred back to a new centre at Carlton, the hospital became the Mt. Eliza geriatric centre.⁹

The Frankston State School occupies a prominent site in Davey St. In 1874 the first school here was a wooden building and could

1 Frankston Standard 14 March, 1958
 2 Minutes 24 February, 1950
 3 Frankston Standard 3 May, 1961
 4 Minutes 13 July, 1956
 5 halls
 6 Frankston Standard 29 July, 1948
 7 Minutes 8 May, 1936
 8 F.St. laid by H H Smith 25.8.1962
 9 Frankston Site Survey, Graeme Butler, 1991

hold sixty pupils.¹ Brick classrooms and a teacher's residence were added to the site during the 1880s. The school was added to with a new building in the 1930s and in 1941 and new wings in 1945. Frankston was also at the centre of a long-running dispute about provision of secondary education. Residents worked hard for a local high school, sometimes facing opposition from local councillors and those who thought a secondary school could wait until after the shire acquired facilities like a hospital and better roads. Eventually a building was constructed in Frankston and became a significant focal point for community life. The school and the work of its students were a major source of news for the local press and provided a good avenue for local children to move on from the limited work opportunities provided within Frankston itself.

Parks

The government reserve on the heights above Frankston's commercial heart was also a site for parks and schemes to beautify the suburb. Not all of these were successful. A site for a public park was first reserved in 1881. Some of this land was used by the local primary school for horticultural education after 1906 and then in 1927 a dispute erupted over a road plan which would have divided the park.² Residents tried to protect the open space of Frankston Park as it was then known. After the road dispute [the road was completed in 1929]

residents sought to have a new and better park constructed on the remaining public space. This was to be known as Beauty Park and was created by unemployment relief works. The park was beautified with a lake and "a little island in the middle of the park and a little footbridge across."³

The park was also developed with a miniature zoo, which soon drew the ire of local animal lovers. One of the prize displays was the caged eagle and to many residents it was kept in an inhumane condition. In 1934 animals were trapped by a flood in their cages and then the eagle was the subject of letters to the local paper, including that by "Rationalist" complaining that

the inexcusable cruelty of this bird's imprisonment must stand as a monument to the callous cruelty or carelessness of those responsible and also to those who allow such defilement of the beauty of our park to continue.⁴

The zoo was eventually broken up but some years later nearby residents complained about the plague of rats in the park. Eventually even the island was described as "merely a rat-infested hole and a grave menace to children."⁵ The park continued to attract controversy when building plans from community groups were rejected. Later improvements concentrated on built structures with a children's pre-school centre and a Sound Shell.⁶ Other parks and gardens throughout the Shire were the subject of attempts at improvement

1 Vision and Realisation, Melbourne, 1973, vol.3, p.340
2 reserve file data from Graeme Butler Site Survey, 1991

3 Fishing, Sand and Village Days, p.20

4 Minutes 14 December, 1934 and Frankston Standard 6 November, 1936

5 1 December, 1944 and 17 March, 1949

6 Minutes 27 November, 1953

and management. Frankston chose a site for a municipal golf links in 1938 and a golf clubhouse was built near Nolan Street in 1958. In subsequent years the links were reduced in size by extensions to the Frankston Community Hospital. The golf links were eventually closed and the remaining public land set aside as a botanical reserve. This was named after a former Town Clerk, George Pentland. Baxter Reserve was a popular spot for outings in the early twentieth century. After the Second World War Baxter Reserve was used for motor racing, especially motor cycles and local residents took complaints about noise to council. The Motor Cycle Association contributed to local charities to make up for the disruption.¹ At other times nearby farmers complained about foxes and rabbits infesting the reserve.² (Victoria Park, another local reserve, was also a wild area, described in 1953 as a haven for snakes and covered in uncontrollable blackberry bushes).³ Baxter Cricket Club made their own improvements to the reserve, flattening 80 to 100 weeping willows. Many of these parks have changed in character over the years. They suffered pressure from road works and sometimes from hastily-engineered local schemes for improvements. In recent years the City has taken a greater interest in the native flora of the peninsula. Probably the most

innovative local park created after the Second World War was the Native Flora Reserve off Cranbourne Road, an early indication of a rising community concern for the conservation of native species.⁴

Other parks were designed as temporary sites. The Scout Jamboree site for example filled a natural amphitheatre off Kars Road and Overport Road near the banks of the Sweetwater Creek.⁵ After the Jamboree the memorial gates and entrances, a Malaysian Arch and Indian Gateway were re-erected in Beauty Park.⁶ Later Scout Corroborees were also held in Frankston.⁷ A different sort of public recreation site was the Old Dutch Mill a landmark leased for a time as a youth hostel and then handed over to a local progress association who attempted to turn it into a lookout and kiosk.⁸

The best known public space was sited near to the Mechanic's Institute and St. Paul's:- Frankston Park [distinguished from Beauty Park by the 1929 roadway]. A rough area surrounded by a hedge at the end of the nineteenth century it was reordered and turned essentially into a sports ground over the twentieth century.⁹ A small pavilion (dating from the 1880s) was removed in 1935.¹⁰ In 1937 a new pavilion was introduced into the park. This was the one time grandstand at the Boy Scouts Jamboree.¹¹ The size of the grandstand and

1 Minutes 21 February, 1947
 2 Minutes 8 December, 1950
 3 Minutes 11 December, 1953
 4 Minutes 12 September, 1958
 5 Minutes 25 November, 1933
 6 Minutes 18 January, 1935
 7 16 August, 1936
 8 Minutes 27 November, 1953
 9 Minutes 20 August, 1897
 10 Frankston Standard 23 January, 1935

the siting of the park attracted many recreational groups; even though the Frankston cricket and football clubs used the park consistently. The new Jamboree grandstand hosted jazz concerts, athletic meetings and works picnics. Its introduction had been awaited with some eagerness and the Standard announced the new centre with some sense of its historical importance:

soon the spot where it [the old pavilion stood] will be occupied by one of the large grandstands from the Jamboree grounds . . . perhaps sixty years hence some other scribe will write of the removal of the grandstand from Frankston Park and will recall the fact that it was placed there after the great jamboree which made the name of Frankston known even to the four corners of the world.¹

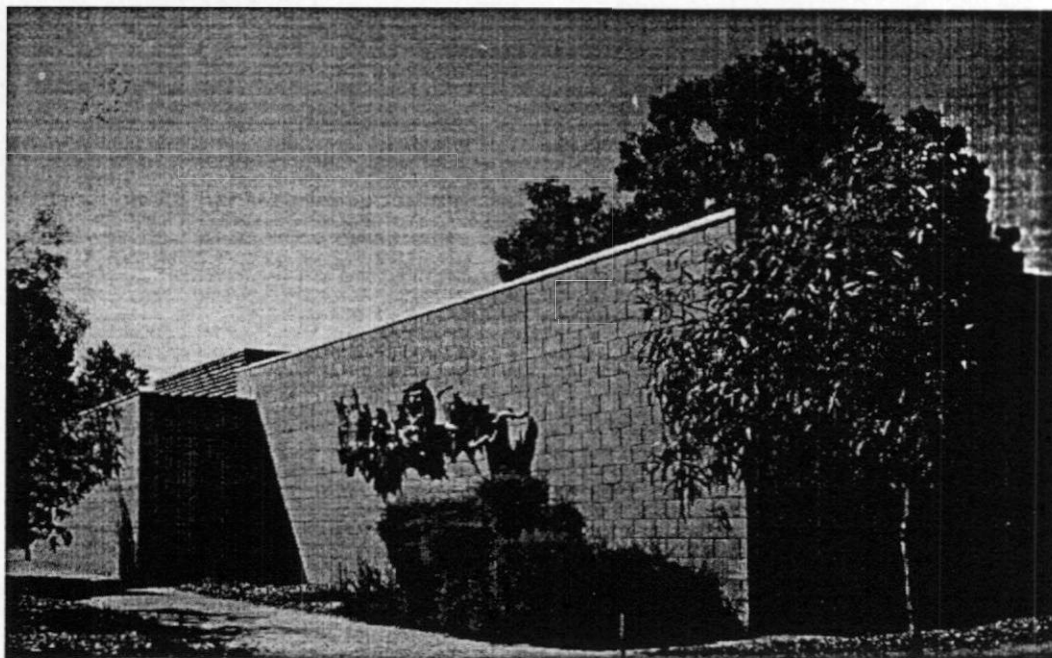
When the pre-school centre and small pavilion was destroyed by

fire in 1953 the grandstand assumed a new importance.²

Art Galleries.

The artistic heritage of the region is illustrated by the McClelland Art Gallery in McClelland Drive, Langwarrin, which was opened on 3 May 1971 by the Premier of Victoria, Sir Henry Bolte. It is located on the site of an art camp, where artists gathered at the turn of the century. This art gallery and "Studio Park" were gifts of Miss A.M. McClelland in memory of her brother, Harry McClelland. The foundation stone was laid on 12 October 1969 by Sir Daryl Lindsay. The gallery is funded by State and Council grants, bequests and donations.

As well as rotating displays, practical classes in the various art forms have been held in adjacent annexes.³



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McClelland Gallery, Langwarrin, opened 1971

11 Minutes 9 April, 1937
1 Frankston Standard 23 January, 1935
2 Minutes 19 June, 1953
3 Hooper, p. 37-38.

Conclusion

Frankston City shares with many other suburban areas a range of public buildings and several public parks. As in other municipalities the principal public buildings are grouped in a central reserve. In Frankston these buildings may not be as grand as those in inner Melbourne or in some parts of provincial Victoria. Nonetheless many of the more recent structures (St. Francis Xavier's for example) are significant for their use of modern principals in church building. Some of the more regularly used buildings (the Mechanic's Institute) have a strong social significance to the suburb. And in the grandstand at the Frankston Park there is a unique building; one which has served an important community function for more than half a century and which as well is a relic of one of Frankston's important international roles, as the host of the World Scouting Jamboree.

Commercial Frankston

Today Frankston is one of the most important suburban retailing centres in Melbourne.¹ Yet this commercial centre is a recent creation. For much of its history the shopping precinct of Frankston was small and localised; only over the last thirty years have the concentration of outlets changed the character of central Frankston. While at first glance many of these new retail centres seem little different from standard commercial buildings anywhere in the Western world, within the history of Victoria

several important innovations in the retail trade were launched in Frankston. These required new forms of building and novel arrangements of the space given over to sales.

The nineteenth century traders In 1865 Bailliere's Guide made no mention of Frankston's commercial importance and Victorian Post Office Directories listed few commercial activities beyond fishing and the several hotels in Frankston.² The Pier Hotel (see Sec. 1) was an early hub and small shops stood nearby from mid-century. Gradually the main commercial activity moved away from this waterfront location towards the new focus of the railway station.

By the turn of the century this small commercial district was concentrated around the railway station with Young Street emerging as the principal shopping strip. Some specialised outlets remained near the water and the Pier Hotel now had to compete with new residential and liquor retailers in different parts of Frankston. Several traders remained along the course of the Melbourne Road where they sought to tap passing trade.³

Frankston trading 1900-1945

The increased tourist trade after the turn of the century brought more businesses to the district and between the wars some of the food outlets sought to acquire a fashionable style. Principal amongst these was the cosmopolitan Frankston hamburger store "Hamburger Phil's Cafe"

¹ No recognised in MMBW planning schemes for District Centres

² Bailliere's Guide to Victoria, 1865

³ Fishing Village

where Phil informed customers in 1937 that:

the largest hot-plate and griller-toaster obtainable has just been installed at Hamburger Phil's. This rendezvous is very popular with the theatrical folk who often motor down to Frankston after the show to enjoy the coffee and other delicacies dispensed by him.¹

More stylish and no doubt more sophisticated in its own right was another innovation, the coffee shop, which reached Frankston about the same time

"It has come at last! A coffee lounge in Frankston. Now all we need is a Town Hall and a parking attendant with chalk in hand to become a city". So the Standard gleefully welcomed the opening of Gibby's coffee lounge in Frankston; "a good cup of coffee among friends in the soft -shaded atmosphere for which Gibby's have become famous". The other cafe most often mentioned by older residents was the Continental Cafe. With its red carpets, its soda fountain and its plush seats booths it was even classy enough to attract local wedding receptions.² By the 1950s coffee lounges and hamburger joints became identified with a suburban danger, that of bodgies and widgeys and the Standard rued the baneful influence of the hamburger joint on the suburb's youth.³ Church groups began to hold jazz evenings to attract the young away from the new diseases of American pop music. Council in the 1960s allowed a promoter to put on "mod" dances at the Mechanic's Institute.

However having misjudged the changing fashions in teenage taste he asked council to terminate his lease. The youth of Frankston were once again turned loose on the hamburger joints. Some cafes appealed to a more sedate suburban clientele, the Pink Lady for example, hardly a bodgie hangout, but home for the lady shopper's morning tea :-"any time is coffee time at the Pink Lady."⁴

Hotels

The other principal local meeting places were hotels the first amongst these the Pier Hotel has survived with many additions to the present. After the Second World War Frankston's hotels held special attractions to Melbourne drinkers as they lay outside the limit beyond which visitors could claim bona fide traveller status and so drink out of hours.

As the behaviour of weekend drinkers disturbed the calm routine of seaside life, local police and residents tried to take the most objectionable drunks to court. They were slower to complain about the local publicans, and one local magistrate thought that Frankston publicans deserved sympathy since they had to deal with "undesirables" directed to Frankston by the recent closure of inner city hotels.⁵ Local residents and the Frankston police had less sympathy for the drinkers referring to: "Disgusting scenes created by these boozy blackguards" The local paper went on to report that the police were amazed by the antics of this Sunday drinking crowd. One

1 Frankston Standard 23 November, 1937

2 S. Chaplin, Fishing, sand and village days - an oral history of Frankston

3 Frankston Standard 3 May, 1961

4 Frankston Standard 11 July, 1956

5 Frankston Standard 26 August, 1948

senior officer claimed there was not a "decent Sunday drinker" in the whole suburb. The last Melbourne bound train from Frankston on a Sunday was nicknamed "the drunks' express" and several station staff were assaulted by late night drunks boarding the train.¹ Councillors and senior police made representations to the State Government to make changes to the Sunday drinking laws but this and similar disputes around hotels bedevilled Frankston for many years. And it was not only drinkers who headed off to Frankston. On days when Melbourne bakeries were closed, crowds of housewives arrived in Frankston to buy fresh bread before taking the train back to inner suburbs.

American-style shopping

The issue of open hotels was one symptom of the strains placed on Frankston commerce by the changing character of the post-war suburb. From 1945 onwards council, shopkeepers and residents welcomed an expanding commercial centre. This was attuned to a mass market and familiar faces behind the shop counter disappeared gradually. This new trading heart eventually erased most remnants of the older Frankston commercial township. Even public land in the centre of the town was converted to shops despite local objections. An open space near the corner of Well's Road and Thompson's Road was purchased for a park land in 1945. This area Lawrey's Paddock was to become Central Park (purchased

for £5000).² Lawrey's Paddock "where rows of derelict shanties and wrecked wire fences disfigure the whole landscape" was soon coveted by traders for new shop sites and a car park. Lawrey's Paddock was also claimed by the Returned Soldiers League who insisted that council had originally intended it to become a Memorial Park. By 1950 when council was reserving new shopping centre sites in the shire some citizens wanted the Park to become a parking site. One resident wrote to council demanding that it adopt a "futuristic outlook" and turn the open space into a site for car parks; others insisted that it become a green lung in the centre of the town.³

These arguments went back and forth for more than a decade with several attempts to overturn council decisions until finally, with the recommendation of the MMBW, Central Park disappeared to make way for shops and car parking. By then Frankston was well on the way to becoming a centre of supermarket shopping.

In response to new demands the local branch of the Housewives Association of Victoria had wanted a traditional market in Frankston, following the closure of street stalls by by-law. In June 1954 the new Frankston Market was opened by the President of the Victorian Housewives. This initially had fifty outlets facing Station St. In September it was expanded to include an outdoor selling section.⁴ Yet by then old-style market shopping was being challenged. In

1 Frankston Standard 16 September, 1948

2 Minutes 8 February, 1945

3 Minutes 22 March, 1950

4 Minutes 11 June, 1954, 26 June, 1954, 17 September, 1954. Some years later the Market was extended through to Wells Street and the frontage was updated with new glass windows in 1959; Minutes 25 May, 1959 and 13 February, 1956

1949 Cole's Stores leased A.V. Carter's Billiards Saloon for a food store in Bay St.¹ In 1952 Coles identified their store as a SUPERMARKET and extended the shopping floor and added fluorescent lighting.² Some years later the most modern and largest food store in the state, RTS, opened in Frankston in Thompson Street (Coles eventually took over RTS).³

But the real thrust for a modern Frankston shopping centre came from J Pratt a former Shire president and owner of a small grocery near the railway station before the war. When his son went into the RAAF Pratt left his business only to return with his son (recently demobbed) after the war and ready to create a new modern store. In October 1956 local resident and media star Graham Kennedy opened Pratt's new store "one of the most modern around the bayside."⁴

The new Pratt's had three thousand square feet of floor space, forty feet of deep freeze and a 24 foot Frigidaire unit and 36 feet of biscuits on display. More fascinating for local shoppers was the new self-service system regulated by an "ingenious and modern" checkout system.⁵ Pratt's had adopted the sophisticated American system of listing all the products for sale on a cartographic display board on the rear wall. The store's technical modernity was set off by an up to date colour system. Pratt's chose tangerine for the rear

wall, royal blue and white for side walls and mustard for the ceiling. along with Graham Kennedy, Ted Whitten, Brian Naylor and a host of media luminaries graced Frankston for the opening of Victoria's most American sales centre.

Pratt's "Americanised Supermarket" was soon outshone by the owner's new scheme. Pratt proposed a plan for a "Heart of Frankston" shopping centre the prototype shopping mall in Victoria. This was to have an expanded supermarket as a core, attached speciality shops and car-parking; ingeniously here the cars were to park on the roof of the heart. Council approved plans for the Heart on June 20 1960.⁶ Designed by Chancellor and Patrick it once again drew a raft of media stars to the suburb. It also launched a series of schemes for new mall style shopping emporia in Frankston, all of them taking their appearance and functional configuration from standard American retailing designs. Whitner's Shoes opened a new store on the Central Park site in 1961, to a design by Grounds, Romberg and Boyd and incorporating offices alongside a modern shopping floor.⁷ The National and State Savings Banks opened new modernist branches soon after.⁸ And in 1968 Ball and Welch opened their emporium in Frankston, the largest store in the city and built on the old Plaza site.⁹ All the while Frankston was constantly imitating what was

1 Minutes 8 September, 1949

2 Frankston Standard 17 July, 1952

3 Frankston Standard 28 March, 1956

4 Frankston Standard 10 October, 1956

5 ibid.

6 Minutes 20 June, 1960

7 Frankston Standard 12 July, 1961

8 Frankston Standard 29 September, 1959, 11 January, 1961, 18 June, 1956

9 Frankston Standard 18 January, 1968

known of American suburban style. Executives of these stores constantly impressed on council the need to provide car parking and used the example of the American downtown where all shopping was done by car (ironically as Frankston councillors came to terms with their plans, the car was destroying the American downtown in favour of even grander suburban shopping malls). G.J. Coles, Ball and Welch and all other major local retailers turned to the car as the saviour of Frankston commerce. The old Frankston shopping centre with its flies and smells had vanished in a short space of time ¹. When *On the Beach* began filming in Frankston they brought with them a pump action fly spray. So that Peter Finch, Gregory Peck and Ava Gardner would not have to spend the entire shoot waving away Australian flies, they were fumigated with this backpacked spraygun as they prepared for each scene. So inspiring was this modern American device that Frankston traders and councillors decided that staff would use a similar antily device to fumigate shops once the film crew left! Frankston's fascination with modern America was redoubled by the visit of the stars of Hollywood screen stars. When this film about the end of the world was made in Frankston shopkeepers and councillors had already embarked on plans to modernise and Americanise their town centre. One of the most marked changes was the disappearance of the old post-supported verandahs. In 1956 civic leaders decided that these

were lowering the standard of the suburb.² More than just the verandahs lowered local tone. Residents used them to hang out washing. Council wrote to one offender who displayed washing on a Bay Street shop verandah reminding her that in "Council's opinion the hanging of washing in the main street of the town does not add any attraction to it and appealed to...civic pride in the matter."³ Over the following decade the verandahs disappeared to make way for modern Americanised Frankston, a commercial precinct in which the very few remnants of an older Frankston merit protection along with the most innovative modern elements of supermarket shopping.

Langwarrin Village Shopping Centre.

It is said that Langwarrin, responding to the effects of nearby Frankston's development in recent years, "has changed character probably to a greater extent than any other part of the (Cranbourne) Shire". Despite its "rural beginnings", firms like Costain (Australia) and A.V. Jennings (Australia) Ltd., envisaged its suitability for development in the form of a combined residential and shopping complex. This would include about 450 homes, shops, walkways, schools and pre-schools, and extensive shopping areas. Originally known as the Enamby Holdings Shopping Centre Development and now, ironically, as the Langwarrin Village Shopping Centre, the complex was opened on 9 February 1987. It was

¹ Frankston Standard 16 August 1952
² Minutes 21 January, 1956
³ Minutes 10 September, 1954



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Gregory Peck and Ava Gardner, as they appeared in 'On The Beach', shot in part at Frankston.

hoped that this development would encourage people to shop locally rather than in Frankston.¹

The move to big shopping centres within the Cranbourne Shire had commenced even earlier with the opening on 13 November 1978 of the Cranbourne Park Shopping Centre.

Carrum Downs Regional Shopping Centre.

A parallel development occurred at Carrum Downs. An earlier 1977 residential development known as "Botany Park" involved the construction of brick veneer units in Paddington Avenue. In 1987 a combined town centre with two neighbourhood centres and shopping, entertainment, cultural and neighbourhood facilities was planned. Described as a complex that would "create residential environments, with good environment, with good amenity," it is the site today of the Carrum Downs Regional Shopping Centre.²

Frankston and the outside world

Railway

For much of its nineteenth -century history Frankston remained relatively isolated from Melbourne. Occasional steamers called in at the pier but for the most part the only direct contact with Melbourne was along the sandy track which followed the curve of Port Phillip Bay to Brighton and the city's road network. The arrival of the railway in 1882 brought Frankston into the orbit of the city. However as with other townships at a similar distance from the city, Frankston was always treated as a country rather than suburban location and the rail service remained minimal. During the 1880s there were attempts to improve the number of trains to allow for holiday traffic. But even these seemed to attract few passengers. In 1888 a survey over six months counted only two and a half thousand tickets purchased to Frankston from other stations on a Sunday. Frankston

¹ Hooper, p. 33-35.

² Hooper, p. 35-36.

station itself sold only 500 Sunday tickets.¹ The real impact on the railway came much later once the line was electrified between the wars and then when Frankston was included in the suburban system after the Second World War. The railway, despite the few travellers of the later 1880s, did become a major force in turning Frankston into a tourist destination for ordinary city-dwellers. It became a major focal point for the Frankston shopping centre orienting commerce away from the waterfront. Frankston was an important transfer point for many buses leading south and west into the Mornington Peninsula towns and towards Western Port. And after the Second World War it played a part in attracting suburban development. By then however it had to compete with motor transport.

The rail network to the east.

The extension in the 1880s of the railway system to the Frankston and Cranbourne districts, previously regarded as remote and isolated places, had a great impact on the local farming communities to the east. The rail service was a great boon to orchardists and others trying to get their produce to market, although it was later challenged by road transport services.

As well as the major railway stations at Frankston and Cranbourne, stations were opened at Langwarrin (on the west side of the military reserve) and at Mornington Junction (later known as Baxter Junction and then

Baxter). The opening of these stations had an effect on the development of nearby townships. They were used as mail centres, and were influential in securing improved roads in the vicinity. Both stations were of significance to farmers but today, Langwarrin Station is closed.

The first roads

The main Melbourne Road was a simple bush track in the nineteenth century. Along it the Frankston Fish Company took wagons to the Melbourne Market, leaving in the middle of the night to reach the early morning market. Within town centres roads were graded in the 1880s and Frankston's main footpaths were asphalted in the 1890s.² Street trees were acquired from Macedon Nursery and planted in streets during the 1880s.³ Along the back roads the worst quagmires and the roughest intersections were paved with strips of wattle bark, although the Shire Council battled to stop the many illegal strippings of trees by do-it-yourself road improvers.⁴

The road network to the east.

The major roads linking Cranbourne with Frankston and Melbourne were formed at an early date, although it was some time before they were more than rough bush tracks. By the 1880s and early 1890s, however, a district road network had been established in which the major roads from Frankston to Melbourne, Frankston to Cranbourne, Frankston to Langwarrin, and Frankston to Hastings, were shown on district

¹ Sunday Traffic on Railways; Return to Order, 188 VPP, vol.1
² Minutes 23 November, 1890
³ Minutes 5 February, 1887
⁴ 15 June, 1894

maps. Such a road system was the life-blood of farming communities needing to get their produce to markets. Also, by 1890, a number of smaller east-west and north-south roads had been formed. An 1891 map of the Mornington Peninsula included Robinsons Road; Camp Road (now McClelland Drive) running along the west side of the Langwarrin Military Reserve (now Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve); and Warrandyte Road on the east side of the Reserve. However, North Road along the Reserve's northern boundary, was indicated as merely a track.¹ Another early 1890s map showed that the road from the Frankston-Dandenong Road to Skye was also still only a track.² The district roads, particularly the major ones, were improved during the first decades of this century, especially after the formation of the Country Roads Board in 1912 and the advent of the motor car, and motorised transport. A 1925 Army Ordnance map confirmed that, by this time, the Frankston-Dandenong, Frankston-Cranbourne and Frankston-Hastings Roads had all been metalled. A section of the Frankston-Hastings Road to Baxter Junction Station (now Baxter Station) had also been metalled. Lesser roads were described as "formed" and "unformed", suggesting degrees of roughness down to the most basic bush track. The "formed" roads were linked to the most important local destinations. Thus, a portion of Robinsons Road on the east side of the Reserve was "formed", and

there were "formed" sections linking the Lyndhurst South (Skye) and Carrum Downs townships to the major roads. There were "formed" roads also in a section of Camp Road (McClelland Drive) to Langwarrin Station and of the Warrandyte Road down to the Langwarrin township. However, North Road, a "track" in the 1890s,³ was still only an "unformed" road.³

Passing cars

Frankston was like many other rural settlements; a few street trees and asphalted paths around the centre of town and rough tracks leading out to the isolated settlements strung through the Shire. In Frankston the sandy or sometimes marshy land made roads more difficult than in other towns around the fringe of Melbourne.

More than most other places Frankston had to deal with rapid increases in traffic and the new demands of the motor car after the First World War. In Frankston the problem of the car and its impact on the environment derived initially from passing tourist traffic.

When tourist traffic revived after the First World War it became clear that Frankston was going to have to deal with the motor car. At first the drivers who braved the route from Melbourne to the Peninsular were intent on passing through Frankston heading for Mornington or Sorrento. In 1925 Frankston attempted to have the Pt. Nepean Road declared a National Highway because of the number of cars using the still-rough route over summer.⁴

1 M/Def. 58, 1891, CPOV.

2 'Cemetery-Langwarrin, Frankston,' 1890, CPOV.

3 "Cranbourne", 1925.

4 Minutes 5 June, 1925

Complaints about speeding motorists and damage to trees and roadways continued. But in the 1930s the more terrible consequences of motor traffic became clear when each summer rush was accompanied by deaths on the Nepean Rd. Motorists seemed to speed with no sense of the threat they posed nor any concern about breaking laws. Typical of this indifference to road laws was the response of Terry McQuiggan when pulled over by the police when driving at seventy miles per hour in a fifty mile per hour zone at Seaford. McQuiggan had no time to argue the case with police answering their charge about his speed with "well you have the guts of it- don't detain me I'm running late."¹ To slow the traffic Frankston shire workmen began placing SLOW signs at the most dangerous spots but with little obvious impact.² A more fundamental control over traffic, a by-pass around the Frankston shopping centre was rejected by the shire.³ Frankston traders and their spokesmen on the Shire Council argued that a traffic diversion would take holiday trade further round the bay. While the Country Roads Board still insisted that this by-pass was essential if Frankston was to be spared more road deaths, Council (aided by the local Arboreal Club) went ahead with street planting around the main shopping area but left Beach, Davey, Young and Bay Streets bare, more for commercial than safety reasons,⁴ (elsewhere in the

shire street trees were pollarded by the 1930s increasing visibility for drivers.⁵ During 1937 when the CRB recommended rounding the corner of High Street and the Esplanade Council refused because of the loss of land.⁶ More tragedies on local roads, a head-on collision and then the death of a Seaford boy while riding his bike along the Pt. Nepean Road, both in November 1937, resulted in more concern about road traffic but no real solutions to the problem.⁷ For most of the inter-war period, safety only concerned residents and their municipal representatives after a road death or when holidays began and ended and traffic blocked local roads or outrageous speedsters appeared in court. Council was often more concerned about the scenic quality of local roads and joined with the RACV in 1936 to condemn state authorities carelessly hacking at roadside trees.

one of the great pleasures of motoring is derived from driving along roadways fringed with trees" these protests cannot be couched in terms too strong apart from the aesthetic aspect of tree-lined roadways touring means the circulation of money and no bureaucratic action should be allowed to discourage it.⁸

Buses and parking

These concerns were directed at outsiders speeding through Frankston or the holiday-makers coming to the area and wanting a scenic drive. By the time of the Second World War local traffic

1 Frankston Standard 20 November, 1936
2 Frankston Standard 20 November, 1936
3 Minutes 18 June, 1937
4 Minutes 11 May, 1928
5 Minutes 15 May, 1936
6 Minutes 14 January, 1937
7 Frankston Standard 26 November, 1937
8 Frankston Standard 12 June, 1936

generated as many problems, especially in demands for better local bus services and better parking. In 1938 for example, because of the popularity of Mt. Eliza, Mr Dyson of Peninsular Motors was granted a license to link Frankston, Seaford and Cranbourne with a new bus service.¹

Other services followed immediately after the war (one of the longest the Peninsular Bus Service Route linking Frankston-Balnarring- Merricks Nth Red Hill-Higgins Corner-Flinders).² At the same time demands grew for an early- morning "workers" buses to take new residents to the Frankston train station.³ The Shire Council began to tackle the problem of parking and attempted to enforce a local traffic code, raising the ire of one local entrepreneur who wrote that in trying to park legally in Frankston

by the time a local businessman has measured all the distances.. it is time to go home and walk or use Mr Clapp's train-which is probably what the government wants. The result is he does not use petrol nor wear out the tyres of his car [and so] workers lose their jobs."⁴

Frankston became increasingly wedded to the motor car in the later-1930s. Whereas in the 1920s the major problem appeared to be managing through traffic, after the war the problem was how to control cars around Frankston, particularly in the commercial centre. The railways were still a major form of transport after the war, but it

seemed to many that the real interest of the Railway Commissioners lay in places closer to the centre of the city. In 1946 Council was informed that there were no funds to rebuild the Frankston Railway Station (dubbed a "Noah's Ark" by one councillor).⁵ The Railway Standing Committee on Electrification looked at extensions through Frankston. But much on the interest in the local railway went into schemes for a "scenic" railway through Frankston around Mt. Eliza and following the coast to Mornington and Stony Point.⁶ While those further down the Peninsular thought the railway a valuable improvement, in Frankston several residents preferred the money spent on a new hospital and better roads and residents of Mt. Eliza were up in arms about the loss of the waterfront to a railway.

The problem of the town centre

The central roads proved a more enduring problem for Frankston. The Nepean Highway from Seaford to the Kananook Creek had been dubbed the "mad mile" and from the creek into Frankston speeding motorists had their view of pedestrians and cyclists blocked by overhanging trees and "heaps of bushes". While some councillors wanted to retain the ti-tree, others demanded that "they should set to work in Frankston and not worry about whistling birds in the ti-trees but should think of the public safety" ; a charge resulting in rival accusations that one councillor was

1 4 November, 1938

2 Frankston Standard 14 November, 1946

3 Minutes 29 April, 1948, letter from Carrum Progress Association

4 23 September, 1938

5 Minutes 7 November, 1946

6 Frankston Standard 13 February, 1947, (for Standing Committee see Frankston Standard 7 February, 1947)

"evidently a man who was born with an axe in one hand and a box of matches in the other."¹ Little had improved by the following year when the Frankston Standard called the traffic from Melbourne so dangerous that "elderly, semi-crippled persons or small children" could not cross Nepean Highway without risking their lives.² In 1949 one overseas visitor told the newspaper that Frankston's traffic was the worst he had seen anywhere in the world.³ In July the highway up Oliver's Hill collapsed and other roads were reported to be in an "appalling state."⁴ Council failed to tackle the increasing chaos of parking and out off discussing a parking report for six months.⁵ While these problems were mainly to do with the central areas of the town, the council also battled with new residents and developers over the standards of roads on new housing estates (see above) and urged these new home-owners to take pride in their suburb by planting nature strips.⁶ The car brought other changes as well. Plans were presented for a Drive-In Movie Auditorium in Frankston in 1955 but were rejected by the MMBW (the Starlite Drive-In was eventually located in Skye Road).⁷ New road works were completed by the Country Roads Board with the realignment of Nepean Highway not only smoothing traffic flow but also presenting a threat to the War Memorial and the Avenue of

Honour (eventually relocated and replanted).⁸ By 1960 the old kerbside petrol pumps were removed at the request of the Traffic Commission.⁹

At the end of the decade planning began for a new by-pass road to Mornington with a more direct and safer route than the old Mornington Rd. Council took steps to control heavy traffic, banning it from several streets. Councillors approached the railways to attempt to have the new Boom Crossing Gates installed; yet still they could do little to answer parking problems and a new Parking Subcommittee, once formed, resolved to put off making any decision for six months.¹⁰ At the end of the decade council took steps to improve parking and in 1961 had compulsorily acquired land near the station for a public car park.¹¹ Over the later years of the 1950s, the stress on American up to date parking, the quality of drive in shops (dealt with in Section 3.2) all meant that parking became a key issue for the centre of Frankston. In 1956 Frankston had banned all day parking in Young Street. But the Standard looked forward to a scene within a decade when "thanks to a go-ahead council", Frankston would have "ten years hence better parking facilities than any other town of comparable size in Australia."¹²

Outside the central area a new problem emerged in the later 1960s with increased traffic on the

1 Frankston Standard 23 January, 1947

2 22 April, 1948

3 Frankston Standard 20 January, 1949

4 Frankston Standard 14 July, 1949

5 17 March, 1949

6 1 September, 1949

7 9 September, 1955

8 Minutes 8 July, 1955

9 Minutes 25 July, 1960

10 Minutes 23 November, 1956, 14 December, 1956

11 Frankston Standard 22 March, 1961

12 Frankston Standard September, 1961

formerly quiet bush roads of Frankston. Once by-passed, the Old Mornington Road for example took less traffic but was the route chosen by many speeding motorists. Frankston sought to control this with a lower speed limit which drew in turn a response from the Traffic Commission, who insisted that a 40 MPH speed limit was more practical and more likely to be accepted by motorists.¹ The Traffic Commissioners informed Frankston that:

the commissioners experience has been that the changing of a speed limit from an unreasonably low value to a higher value more nearly appropriate to the circumstances of development has made little change to the actual speeds at which drivers travel but has the effect of developing better observance of existing speed limits which if too low bring the law into disrepute.

Ignoring the Traffic Commission, Frankston stuck to the 35 MPH limit.² Other changes associated with a motorised suburb were the beginnings of motel accommodation in Frankston with the first Motel block at the rear of Frankston House in 1963.³

Air travel

Not content with the manner in which cars had been permitted to reshape much of the suburban landscape, Frankston residents, councillors and businessmen actively promoted the need for better air transport. R.M. Ansett informed council in 1959 that land should be set aside for a heliport.⁴ Others insisted that not only would helicopters be familiar, within ten

years they would become the basic form of transport in Melbourne's suburbs; a go-ahead council needed to provide heliports.⁵ In 1963 J.W. Rogers applied for permission to take joy rides over the bay from Frankston and an air strip and heliport did operate for a time.⁶

These dreams of airborne commuting of course never eventuated. Frankston went ahead with a by-pass around the shopping centre (immediately criticised by local police as a danger to children from nearby schools and to traffic at its exit intersection). Melbourne's massive freeway schemes of the 1960s brought major new roadworks. Still, in the 1970s, long after the first fears of holiday traffic, Frankston had to join with the Road Safety Council in publicity campaigns in an attempt to reduce the massive death and injury on local roads, not only on holidays, but throughout the year.

Where most suburban areas around Melbourne owe their basic form to the railway, this was not the case with Frankston. The annual holiday traffic crush and the suburban expansion away from the railhead during the 1960s made motor transport a more influential factor in the shire. The activities of council in providing parking around the commercial core augmented the motor car influence. Frankston is today a suburb largely shaped by motor traffic and its streets, shops and houses reflect that all-pervasive influence.

1 Minutes 16 January, 1967

2 *ibid.*

3 Minutes 18 March, 1963

4 Minutes 23 January, 1959

5 *ibid.*, 3 June, 1959

6 Minutes 2 March, 1963, 18 March, 1963

Conclusion

The motor car drew Frankston more completely into the orbit of Melbourne. House builders, retailing developers and civic planners could all rely on the car to bring new people to Frankston. Moving traffic became a central principal of much town planning during the 1950s and 1960s and since then plans for new freeways, new shopping malls and for additional housing estates all took their starting point in the centrality of the motor car.

Before 1945 only the wealthier residents of Frankston used cars to get to and from the city. Most visitors and residents travelled out of Frankston by train. The demands of the car has reshaped the commercial centre of Frankston and in doing so given the City some unusual buildings and landforms, principal amongst them the prototype supermarkets of Frankston. The demands for more roadspace cut into Frankston's parks and gardens. Nonetheless the high land along Davey Street with its civic buildings, churches and parks is still an important landscape, registering many of the changes which have been central to Frankston.

To the north, east and south of this civic centre spread the houses of Frankston. Like much of the rest of post-war suburbia Frankston has its share of repetitive building. At the same time it has estates which, for their era, were imaginatively planned, the Pines and Karingal Estates for example. On the heights of Oliver's Hill are many exciting works of the modern school of architecture. Along the streets of Long Island and

elsewhere near the waterfront are houses which register the new forms of holiday homes from the 1920s onwards. Further to the south at Mt. Eliza stand the holiday homes of Melbourne's select few. Some of these buildings are quite recent, a few date from the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when Mt. Eliza first became a convenient ex-urban retreat for Melbourne's most influential men and women. Inland from the coast stand another group of houses. Amongst them, Westerfield is important as a home to another family of prominent residents and leaders in Melbourne's inter-war establishment. Furthermore this and nearby homes are significant for their combination of house and plantings, reflecting the agricultural and industrial as much as the social character of Frankston. Bounding the present city on the west is the coastline of Port Phillip Bay. A natural rather than a human dividing line, the bay beaches, Kananook Creek and the heights of Mt. Eliza and Oliver's Hill have always been central to the lives of Frankston people. The bay distinguished Frankston from other suburbs and if the future buildings of the suburb become more like those in the rest of Melbourne and less innovative in their design, the shoreline will always distinguish Frankston. As a human environment, the coastline reflects generations of recreational users as well as the work of a few who tried to make a living from fishing or shipping. The piers, yacht clubs and the water management works along the Kananook Creek are central to Frankston's heritage. The new townships to the east - Skye, Carrum Downs, Langwarrin,

and part of Baxter (but not Baxter township) now added to Frankston City Council, have brought new heritage areas into the municipality. They were linked closely with Frankston last century. However, the development patterns of these areas have been somewhat different. In these townships to the east, farming communities flourished over a longer period, so that elements of picturesque rural landscape and remnant farm buildings remain. Some of these buildings and plantings relate to the dairying and orcharding heritage of the district.

These eastern areas were not drawn into the seaside development of Frankston or the elite recreational character that distinguishes Mt. Eliza. However, two notable properties, Mulberry Hill at Baxter and Cruden Farm at Langwarrin, have links with the group of distinctive architect-designed homes of prominent residents and leaders in Melbourne's inter-war establishment, found elsewhere in the municipality.

A couple of large-scale sites on the east side of Frankston contribute unique qualities to the heritage of the municipality. The Langwarrin Military Reserve (now the Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve) is of historical importance as one of the military establishments opened on the Mornington Peninsula last century. The Brotherhood of St. Laurence Settlement at Carrum Downs illustrates the attraction of such country areas, with strong transport links with the city, to welfare groups in the 1940s for the recreational and healthful environment they were thought to provide.

Not all the historical themes identified in this environmental history are reflected in individual sites. Some have left little in the way of physical structures. At the same time many of the apparently mundane elements of the suburban landscape come to have greater importance when interpreted in the light of the broad historical themes summarised here. This history is presented as an aid to the identification, interpretation and protection of such sites.