



# WHYLD COMMUNITY PLAN





## **WHYLD (Woori Yallock, Hoddles Creek, Yellingbo, Launching Place and Don Valley) community visioning project**

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WYDCOM Financial Services Ltd, franchisee of the Woori & District **Community Bank**<sup>®</sup>

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# OUR WHYLD PLACE

This community plan covers the five towns or localities of **W**oori Yallock, **H**oddles Creek, **Y**ellingbo, **L**aunching Pace and **D**on Valley, collectively known as the **WHYLD** district.

The WHYLD district is located in the Yarra Valley, in a rural and bush environment on the eastern edge of Melbourne and has a total population of 6,985 people (2011 census).

Locality	Number
Woori Yallock	2,806
Hoddles Creek	609
Yellingbo	515
Don Valley	563
Launching Place	2,492
TOTAL	6,985

The largest town centre is at Woori Yallock with a range of shops, a bank, and a post office. There is also a small group of shops at Launching Place and one shop at Yellingbo. Hoddles Creek and Don Valley do not have any shops.

All five localities have a primary school. There is a CFA in Hoddles Creek and Yellingbo and a shared CFA facility for Woori Yallock, Launching Place, and Don Valley at Hillcrest.

This is an area of quality agricultural land with a mix of small and large holdings undertaking a range of enterprises including some of Australia's largest berry growing farms.



# WHYLD – SNIPPETS OF HISTORY

Adapted from “The Upper Yarra: An Illustrated History” by Brian Carroll 1988

Once the white settlers had begun to take an interest in the Yarra Valley, the Aboriginals were forced away from their preferred lands and had to go further upstream. By 1861, when John Green became Guardian of the Aboriginals, one group had settled at what had become known as The Upper Yarra Group Camp at Woori Yallock.

This seemed like a good place to stay and on 17 January 1862 it was gazetted as an Aboriginal Reserve, with almost 500 hectares near the junction of Hoddles Creek and the Yarra River and between the river and Woori Yallock Creek. Simon Wonga was the chief of this group, with his cousin Barak to share the decision making and planning.

Within less than a year of its gazetting, the reserve was cancelled due to the Aboriginal population being surrounded by an energetic group of settlers who were pushing their explorations into the least known and wildest tracks of the country, in search of gold.

William Barak, last leader and last member of the Wurundjeri, or Yarra Yarra tribe, was well known in the Upper Yarra, but his tribe slowly dwindled away, Barak lost faith in the white people and in 1863 went back to live with his own people at Coranderk. He died at Coranderk on 15 August 1903, aged well over 80, and was buried at Coranderk Cemetery, Healesville.

The earliest settlers came to the Upper Yarra to run stock and to farm, before the areas wealth in gold was known. Others came later to mine but stayed to farm.

When the Shire of Upper Yarra was formed in 1888, the recorded population of 160 consisted mainly of miners and small farmers producing dairy products and some fruits, with some sawmilling.

In more recent times, as areas closer to Melbourne such as Doncaster, were given over to housing, farming in the Upper Yarra became more attractive. Crops came to include apples, peaches, cherries, passionfruit, strawberries and other berry fruits, potatoes, tomatoes, beans, cut flowers and zucchinis. Stud farms of quality cattle, horses and dogs developed in areas that were previously scrub and bush.

The original route between Melbourne and Gippsland was via the Upper Yarra. This avoided the vast Koo-Wee-Rup swamp, an impassable barrier that extended from Westernport Bay to the Great Dividing Range. The route passed through Yellingbo and Beenak.

Parliament authorized the building of the Lilydale to Warburton railway line on the 19 December 1898. The first regular railway service to Warburton began on 13 November 1901. The Warburton line became popular with Melbourne people, who used it to take a cool respite in the hills.

Although the Upper Yarra forests were well known from the mid 1800s they were too far from transport to be of economic value. This began to change once the railway reached Lilydale. Most of those who settled in the Upper Yarra in the late 1800s were farmers and to them tall timber was a pest. However demand for timber increased with the gold rush and the need for timber wharves, jetties, fencing and railway construction.

Fires have always been a problem for people in the timber industry. By far the worst in terms of lives lost were those of Black Friday, 13 January 1939. However 1926 and 1932 were also bad and in more recent times, there was Ash Wednesday, 16 February 1983.

In the early days of the Upper Yarra, changing population patterns often led to schools being opened, only to be closed again within a fairly short period.

Warburton was the first Upper Yarra centre to be supplied by the S.E.C. Supply was taken back down the valley in stages, with other Upper Yarra centres being progressively connected until the end of the 1960s: 1951 – Launching Place; 1952 – Woori Yallock; 1954 – Hoddles Creek; 1959 – Yellingbo.

By the early 1970s Melbourne people in search of cheaper land and/or rural atmosphere were attracted to estates at Woori Yallock (Woori Yallock Township Estate of 136 blocks, Yarraview Estate of 450 blocks) and Launching Place (Grand Panorama of 60 blocks

# OUR WHYLD PLAN

## What is a community plan?

A community plan sets out the community's vision for their town and proposes a roadmap (or set of projects) to achieve this vision. While it may be possible to seek some funding from a range of sources to support the projects, this plan will only be implemented if local community members get involved.

## Why this plan has been developed?

A WHYLD Committee<sup>1</sup> was established in May 2011 for the purpose of developing a community plan following two community meetings convened by the local Bendigo Bank Board (WYDCOM Financial Services Ltd). The two community meetings in 2011 were held to look for ideas for community projects that the Bank might fund as part of its role in financially supporting local groups and organisations. While the meetings produced a long list of ideas, it was felt that there was no overall vision or direction. Hence, the WHYLD Committee was convened and it decided to start a community visioning project with a Community Plan (this document) being the outcome.

The Committee sought funding for developing the plan from the Bank and the Department of Planning and Community Development – this process taking up much of the remainder of 2011 and into early 2012. The Community Planning project kicked off in April 2012 with the appointment of Kimbra White and her associate Gillian Jones to work with the committee and the community to develop the plan.

## The WHYLD Committee

Peter Cownley, WHYLD Committee Chair

Angelo Campione

Lynette Collier

Adam Dobson

Vicky Dobson

Danny Hyndman

Bronwyn Saffron

Brittany Singh



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<sup>1</sup> This Committee is sometimes known as the WHYLD2 committee as there had been an earlier group operating in 2004 that published a WHYLD Community Business Directory.

# OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

## How we developed the plan?

A full report on the method for developing this plan is provided in the Background Report and can be found on the website. Also on the website is a record of all the meetings listed below. WHYLD website: [www.whyld.wordpress.com](http://www.whyld.wordpress.com).

In summary we undertook the following steps:

### **1. Learning from the community**

Interviews were held with 66 people across the five localities, in the shopping areas of Woori and Launching Place and outside all the primary schools. We used this information to design the process for engaging the community. We also made a short video (available on the website) on what we learnt from the community that was shown at each of the town meetings.

### **2. Town meetings**

A series of five meetings were held in each of the local towns/localities in late July and early August 2012, all hosted by the local primary schools. In total thirty (30) people, plus committee members, attended these meetings.

### **3. Additional meetings**

In addition, to the above meetings the following activities were undertaken to gain additional information from young people:

- a. Discussion with seven (7) young people at a youth leadership group convened by the Shire of Yarra Ranges
- b. Discussion with about ten (10) young adults and two (2) children at a Woori Football Club training night. Discussions also included about four (4) adult members.

### **4. District meeting**

The five local meetings were followed by a district meeting known as the WHYLD Winter Warming Community Barbecue and Conversation on August 17, 2012 at Launching Place Primary School at which forty (40) people from all the localities came together to agree on a district vision and projects to meet the vision.

## The number of people involved

Thirty (30) people came to the local meetings and forty (40) people to the district meeting (fourteen (14) attended both a local and the district meeting). Seventy (70) were interviewed (including those at the football club) and another nineteen (19) in discussions with younger people in the youth and football groups. This Community Plan has been written drawing on all the material gathered during the project. In total one hundred and forty five (145) people have made some input into the plan. However, particular emphasis is given in the plan to the work at the district meeting where groups of people nominated the projects that they were willing to work on.



# OUR COMMUNITY AT WORK



# OUR PROCESS FOR MANAGING PROJECTS

## **Co-ordinating the projects**

The WHYLD Committee will act as the central coordination point for all projects undertaken under the WHYLD banner. It is expected that one person from each project will attend meetings with the WHYLD Committee.

## **Developing new projects**

This plan contains many projects and not all of them will be implemented in the short term. As people become interested in a new project these can be added to the portfolio of projects under active implementation. All projects under the WHYLD banner are expected to meet the vision set out in this document, to be of benefit to the community and not to be for personal profit.

## **Getting involved**

There is an open invitation for anyone who lives, works or plays in the WHYLD district to become involved with an existing project or start a new project. Please contact the WHYLD committee via email [whyld2012@gmail.com](mailto:whyld2012@gmail.com) to find out how to become part of the WHYLD project.

## **Review**

The community plan will be reviewed annually at a community meeting.

# OUR SKILLS & ASSETS

This plan has been prepared using an asset-based approach as we believe that we will only be able to implement the projects in this plan by using the skills and assets of our people and our community.

At each of the town meetings, we interviewed people about their individual skills and we identified all the assets in our local towns.

Skills ranged from being able to drive a grader to being an artist, knowing how to fundraise, organising events, and helping to make stuff happen.

Our assets were numerous and included our primary schools, the CFA, the sporting clubs, the rivers, Warburton and Aqueduct Trails. Less well-known assets are Parslows Bridge area and Haining Farm. The full list of skills and assets are contained in the reports from each of the meetings (see website).

# OUR VISION

- We live in an area of great natural beauty and rural landscapes that we wish to protect and enhance.
- We wish to know our neighbours and seek to care for everyone in our community, of all ages. Every town and the district will have a place that represents the heart of the community and where people can be involved in community activities.
- We wish to improve social, recreational, and economic benefits for our local people by building a world class trail system.
- We wish to make it safe for people to walk, bike and horse-ride around and between our towns and localities including improved safety along the highway.
- We wish to have better public transport.
- We wish to support local business activity and upgrade our town environments and have a sense of identity.
- We wish to support healthy and sustainable living.
- We wish to be emergency ready.

# OUR CURRENT PROJECTS

At each of the local meetings people identified projects that they felt would meet their vision for their locality. These projects were taken forward to the district meeting and the large group at the district meeting refined the project proposals and nominated the project on which they wished to work. These final six projects are in essence the current priorities as these are the issues people wish to place their energy. They are as follows:

1. WHYLD Events
2. WHYLD Caring & Connected Community
3. WHYLD Healthy Living
4. WHYLD Trails and Parks
5. WHYLD Vibrant Heart, Halls and Hubs
6. WHYLD Identity

While these are referred to as projects, they are more accurately themes for investigation. Under these themes there may be many specific projects; some small and easy to implement and others that are larger and will require considerable resources and co-ordination with a range of people and agencies. It is expected that the themes will develop into more specific projects over the next few months.

More detail is provided about each of these projects (or themes) on the following pages.



## PROJECT 1: WHYLD Events

### Background

- A draught horse festival was organised for a number of years by the Hoddles Creek CFA. This was a well-loved festival and is no longer held for a number of reasons including the sale of the land where it was located.

### Objective

- A festival, farmers market, or some other event is considered highly valuable to create a sense of identity for the district based on our agricultural strengths, to provide a focus for people to come together and to create economic value.

### Options and opportunities

- A berry festival
- A focus on alternative lifestyles and sustainability
- A place to barter excess supplies of home grown produce
- Bush dance
- Music festival
- Video project like 'American Pie' Grand Rapids [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPjjZCO67WI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPjjZCO67WI)
- Art project like 'Inside Out' <http://www.insideoutproject.net/#@section=home>
- Work with the WHYLD Caring Team on events to link all ages and abilities and with the WHYLD Trails Team on an event linked to the Trail
- Work with WHYLD Identity Team on a WHYLD Games Festival



## PROJECT 2: WHYLD Caring & Connected Community

### Background

- It is felt that there is a lack of connection between people. We need to find ways to link people, engage all groups in the community and, if needed, care for and support people. We need to find information and structures on how to link and support people.

### Objectives

- To build connections between people in the community
- To appreciate each group in the community, to recognise their skills and strengths
- To give respect, dignity, and recognition of value to all age and ability groups

### Options or opportunities

- Map and link existing resources
- Note gaps and needs within caring area
- Investigate needs of individual groups – their ideas, strengths, skills etc
- Provide opportunities for training – computer training for seniors, leadership training for youth, life skills training for disabled
- Investigate the need for transport for different groups
- Create an intergenerational drop-in centre
- Train mentors for the carers and create opportunities to provide support
- Work with the WHYLD Events team on an event that could involve all ages and abilities
- Check out success stories e.g. CFA working with challenged youth to train them to do fire prevention work with the elderly (buddy program to link up on hot days etc).

## PROJECT 3: WHYLD Healthy Living

### Background

- There is considerable interest in a range of initiatives under a healthy living banner

### Objectives

- To promote healthy diet and lifestyle through the establishment of school/community gardens in each of the five towns
- To encourage healthy choices in diet through education (in schools) and health promotion activities
- To establish networks of sporting groups such as walking, cycling etc, where residents of all ages can participate in regular exercise

### Options and opportunities

- Exercise – walking groups, bike groups
- Utilisation of sports grounds and trails Don Valley, Aqueduct/Warby, Hoddles Creek, Yellingbo trail
- Set up a community garden in each community
- School gardens – herb gardens, cooking for kids and elderly and sell some of the natural produce from school garden in canteen
- Encourage people to grow food at home

- Education about basic foods and health for adults and children
- Work with the WHYLD Events Team on a Farmers' market – fruit growers, apples, berries
- Provide free seedlings and fertilizer
- Encourage cross generational activities

## PROJECT 4: WHYLD Trails and Parks

### Background

- The existing Warburton and Aqueduct Trails used for walking, cycling and horse riding are key features and assets of the district

### Objectives

- To improve the recreational, economic and social benefits of the district's trail system
- To have an integrated system of trails by linking the major trails – Aqueduct and Warburton Trails and smaller trails to each locality

### Options and opportunities

- Link the trails so that the Aqueduct Trail and Warburton Trail are extended to link all towns for pedestrians, bike riders, and horse riders thereby creating a great sense of linked community
- Safer crossing points across the highways and if needed rerouting of trails
- Better facilities on the trails including amenity blocks at periodic intervals along the trail
- Trail side cafes and/or access/exits to town cafes including better signs
- Better marketing of the trails, possibly a marketing officer
- Pedestrian boardwalk on Don Rod
- Add a launch/fishing platform opposite Home Hotel
- Information board about the history of Launching Place and its name
- Trail sales –local produce sold at some point along the trail
- Make a feature of the former railway stations on the trail
- Create a central feature relating to the trails within the district
- Work with the WHYLD Events Team regarding a festival relating to the trail
- Better accommodation to support visitors

### We will work with:

- Yarra Ranges Council (management of the trail)
- DSE (owner of the trail)
- Parks Victoria
- Friends of the Trail



## PROJECT 5: WHYLD Vibrant Heart, Halls & Hubs

### Background

- At every local meeting people spoke about the lack of care and use of their local halls. There were several examples of charges for halls being too high or the halls not being cared for and so groups now go out of their own area for meetings.
- Local halls are unavailable to community groups (due to cost) and are underutilised and this leaves the towns with no central heart.
- In Don Valley a local person/group has recently negotiated with the council to take over management of the hall. It is currently being used for a playgroup and this person/group hopes to make the hall available for other uses.
- There was very much a sense that these are local community assets that we should be managing as community centres.
- It was also considered that local schools and some CFA have great facilities that can be made available for use by the community

### Objective:

- Revitalise the existing community halls to facilitate greater usage by the local community

### Options and opportunities

- Community notice boards on the front of halls
- Caretaker who is paid a small amount to oversee
- Exemption of shire fees for community and charity groups
- Refurbishment: kitchen equipment, heating, painting, toilets
- Negotiate with shire to give power back to communities as custodians of the halls

### We will work with:

- Yarra Ranges Council (as owner of the halls)
- People in WHYLD towns with existing halls



## PROJECT 6: WHYLD Identity & Brand

### Background

- While we live in a great location, many people feel that there is no common sense of identity for the WHYLD localities.

### Objectives

- Bring individual towns together as a community
- Highlight local assets to locals and beyond

### Options and opportunities

- Road signs in and out, i.e. Don Valley a WHYLD town.
- Go WHYLD in the Yarra Valley as potential branding
- WHYLD walks – work with WHYLD Trails Team on interpretive trails that turn walks, horse rides and cycle rides into an experience.
- WHYLD event calendar – work with WHYLD Events Team so that events in WHYLD towns complement each other and festivals, markets, and other events will be known to locals and promoted beyond.
- Work with WHYLD Events Team on WHYLD games as a landmark event held once every four years with the Olympics with both serious and quirky games for all ages and abilities.
- Reveal WHYLD landmarks such as Haining Farm
- Promote and utilise WHYLD talent such as artisans, performers, and entertainers



# LOCAL IDEAS

The following ideas were identified at the local meetings though not taken up at the district meeting. In large part these projects are in line with the vision – they simply need people to turn them into reality. More details on all these projects are in the Town Meeting Reports (on the website).

1. Don Road, Safer Bike & Pedestrian Trails (Don Valley meeting)
2. Don River – Access, river health, amenities (Don Valley meeting)
3. Protecting the Environment (Don Valley meeting)
4. Connecting the five towns, communication. How to get greater connections and communication between community groups (Hoddles Creek meeting)
5. Being Emergency Ready (Hoddles Creek meeting)
6. How do we get more community groups using school assets (Hoddles Creek meeting)
7. Beautification – Launch and Beyond and a WHYLD common landscape- may be taken up by the WHYLD Identity Team (Launching Place meeting)
8. Safety – highway crossing points– may be taken up by Trails Team (Launching Place meeting)
9. Community Hub for district on vacant land or at school (Woori Yallock meeting)
10. Promote growth & development to provide more infrastructure (Woori Yallock meeting).  
What is the sustainable size of townships? Need planning study.
11. Parslow's Bridge Area Beautification (Yellingbo meeting)
12. Yellingbo 'Civic' Centre – upgrade the area in front of the CFA that contains the toilet block and hall and build a playground (Yellingbo meeting)

# OTHER IDEAS

The following ideas were mentioned in interviews and other meetings held during the community engagement (consultation) phase of this project. Some of these ideas may get taken up as part of an existing project or at a later date.

Many people mentioned the following

1. Better public transport
2. Warburton Highway upgrade and made more safe
3. Better taxi services – it costs \$80 to get a taxi home from a Ringwood nightclub
4. Activities for young people, whether skate parks, theatre programs, youth activities, fitness programs, roller skating, basketball court or ten pin bowling
5. Young people having an opportunity to contribute and be connected
6. Better shopping
7. Local festivals and markets
8. Upgrading parks, playgrounds, picnic areas , toilets and sporting facilities
9. Public toilets in all towns
10. A market that has items of interest to young people and young adults – interesting clothes and music – like the Kallista Indi Market

A few people mentioned the following

1. Better essential services – medical, pharmacy, police, telecommunications
2. More street lights
3. Classy café
4. McDonalds
5. Swimming pool
6. Road improvements
7. Family friendly events and fun nights
8. School vegie gardens
11. Upgrade the small arcade in the Woori shops with better lighting and an arts project
12. Arts projects to connect people
13. Upgrade all toilet blocks with an arts project
14. Upgrade toilet facilities at the Woori Sportsground for the netball groups

15. Cheaper services and products for older people
16. Support for single parent families
17. Financial literacy assistance including the struggle with the emotion of money
18. Helping with mental health, drug abuse, domestic violence and unemployment
19. Tourism be encouraged and promoted
20. Statues or art works at entrances to towns
21. Youth enterprise shed like Mt Evelyn

## ORIGINS OF NAMES

**WOORI YALLOCK** is an Aboriginal name meaning “running creek” or “plenty of water”. When in flood the Yarra overflowed into billabongs there. At first the name was spelt Wori Yalock and later Worri Yalloak before it settled down to Woori Yallock. Such variations of spelling were not unusual as the new arrivals tried to fit Aboriginal sounds to their own ideas of phonetics.  
- “The Upper Yarra- An Illustrated History” by Brian Carroll (Page 4)

**LAUNCHING PLACE** was derived from the place where supply boats were launched to service the Woods Point gold fields.  
- Community Profile at [www.profileid.com.au/yarra\\_ranges/about?WebID=180](http://www.profileid.com.au/yarra_ranges/about?WebID=180)

**YELLINGBO** was named after the last Aboriginal to have frequented there.  
It means “today” or “this day”.  
- [www.cclc.vic.gov.au](http://www.cclc.vic.gov.au)

**DON VALLEY** took its name from the Don River that was named after the Don River that flows to the sea at Aberdeen in Scotland.  
- “Place Names of Victoria” by Les Blake (courtesy of Alma Mitchell, Healesville Historical Society)

**HODDLES CREEK** In 1844-45 Robert Hoddle, Senior Surveyor for what was then N.S.W. and responsible for the plan of Melbourne City Streets, carried out a survey of the Yarra River from its lower reaches to its source. In December of 1844 he camped on the creek named after him and not far from this camp he built a bridge to take his dray across the Hoddles Creek. In 1865, Hoddles Creek was known as Hoddles Creek Falls.

**WURUNDJERI** derived from the Aboriginal word “wurun” for Manna Gum and “djeri” for white wood grub people.



# HISTORY OF WHYLD TOWNS

Adapted from "The Upper Yarra: An Illustrated History" by Brian Carroll 1988

## Woori Yallock

In 1880, when he was 18, Robert Price selected land at Hazeldene, his brother taking the adjoining block. There were no roads or trains nearer than Hawthorn at that stage and when the railway did reach Lilydale in 1882 it was still a long way away. They used packhorses to carry everything, including the supplies they got from Woori Yallock.

John and Mary Allsop selected land on the Woori Yallock flats just as the squatting age was ending. To make some money, John carted supplies by bullock wagon to the early miners in the area, cutting tracks as he went. Despite his efforts, he lost the contract and his beloved selection, this time on a hillside. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday he carted mail to Beenak for £30 a year. The Allsops' first child created great interest among the aborigines.

In 1885, Clara Crosbie, a Melbourne girl aged 12, survived for 21 days alone in the bush near Woori Yallock, without food and with no more shelter than a hollow log big enough to lie in. She had gone to stay with a local family who lived along the bullock track between Woori Yallock and Macclesfield. On May 12 she went for a walk and lost her way, then struggled through thick bush until she came to the Cockatoo Creek. Edward Greaves Smith and a colleague, out looking for cattle, came upon her as she limped towards them.

In the days before trucks and tractors, heavy haulage was done by bullocks. Bullockies did forest work in the area as late as the 1960s.

In 1964, Bill Robbins who was aged 61, worked with a fellow bullocky Wally Legg, who was 72, and a team of ten bullocks near Woori Yallock, cutting telephone poles. Each day they felled about twenty logs and had the bullocks haul them to a clearing where they were loaded.

Early settlers were keen to have schools for their children and looked to the government to provide them. Woori Yallock parents formed a committee in 1872 and raised £14 to buy a large tent and fit it out with a chimney, stools and desks. They arranged for Anne Atterby to be teacher, with a wage of £26 a year. The school's history from then on was one of struggle, with unsatisfactory premises, teachers not arriving or teachers being shared, and it wasn't until 21 October 1914 that a new weatherboard school was officially opened.

Presbyterian Church services were held in the small school house in Woori Yallock. Ministers came by horse and jinker and the frequency of their visits depended on the state of their roads. A church was built in 1908.

A regular Cobb and Co coaching stop between Lilydale and Warburton was the Woori Yallock Hotel.

## Hoddles Creek

In 1844-45 Robert Hoddle, Senior Surveyor for what was then N.S.W. and responsible for the plan of Melbourne City Streets, carried out a survey of the Yarra River from its lower reaches to its source. In December of 1844 he camped on the creek named after him and not far from this camp he built a bridge to take his dray across the Hoddles Creek. In 1865, Hoddles Creek was known as Hoddles Creek Falls. It was then a postal village in the Upper Yarra for the alluvial gold mining industry. The surrounding country was mountainous and scrubby, and covered with heavy timber. The flatlands were particularly swampy in the winter. The only communication with Lilydale and Warburton was by pack and saddle horse, or dray passing along the Hoddles Creek (Gembrook) Road.

In 1875 The Australian Handbook notes of Hoddles Creek that... "The township is an improving one and the mining and pastoral interest in particular, one reef is known to exist and it is believed by residents that enterprising capitalists would be well rewarded."

In 1862, at about the time the gold rush was in full swing, a Post Office opened at Hoddles Creek. It was closed three years later and then reopened and closed on numerous occasions and on various sites over the next one hundred years until it was officially and finally closed in 1967.

Not everyone (if anyone) found their fortune in mining and an alternative source of income was found in the timber industry. Numerous mills operated in the Hoddles Creek area and large stands of eucalypts were felled and milled. The aftermath of the 1926 and then 1939 bushfires brought about a major change to the timber industry with the destruction of the rail lines that were used to move the logs and the burnt undergrowth taken over by vigorous regrowth of wattles.

With the clearing of the landscape as a result of felling the trees it was inevitable that farming became a prospective and profitable source of income. The rich soil and gentle sloping hills gave way to agricultural crops with orchards, vineyards, berries, vegetables and cut flowers and this industry has continued until the present day.

As the early population of Hoddles Creek expanded, the need for a school became evident. In 1872 the local mining population erected a small school with slab walls and a bark roof. In 1875 an official school (S.S. Hoddles Creek Warburton) opened and operated on a part-time share basis with separate buildings in Hoddles Creek and Warburton. In 1880 a wooden portable building was erected in Hoddles Creek on a new site with five acres of Crown Land. In 1886 Hoddles Creek School was renumbered S.S. 2541 and the association with Warburton (S.S. 1485) gave way to a similar half-time arrangement with S.S. 2599 Launching Place. In 1892, due to declining population the school was closed and the portable building was removed. In 1910 the school reopened using the Church of England hall opposite the current school site as a building. After much lobbying from residents a new school building was constructed and officially opened at the end of 1915. This building remains to this current day serving as the office and staff rooms of the present day school.

The old hall, built by a working bee around 1909 served numerous purposes over the years, including schooling, meetings, functions and even a wedding in 1956. In 1962 electricity came to Hoddles Creek with the official switch-on ceremony held at the hall. But even by this time the old weatherboard building had seen better days and the community rallied to raise funds for a new hall.

In the 1970's following the demolition of the old hall and sale of the land sufficient funds had been raised and a new hall on the site of the recreation reserve was constructed.

Many names of pioneer families are honoured in the district, some by street names such as Willis, Staves, Grover, Thonemann, Eacott, Teese, Parkinson and Worley and others by creeks like McCraes and Hansens although perhaps Hoddles Creek's most famous resident was Sir Harold Massey who attended the school from 1913 and went on to become an acclaimed scientist in England. On a return visit to the school in 1937 he planted a pine tree that stands tall and proud today in his honour.

## **Yellingbo**

The Parslows first came to Yellingbo when Elizabeth Parslow married James Claxton, a selector whose title to the land on the outskirts of the future town of Yellingbo became permanent in 1883.

Claxton was the first recorded mail contractor in the area. He also built the wine hall that became the local supply depot, post office and overnight stop, as well as the centre of the locals' sporting and recreation activities. Made of pit sawn timber it stood overlooking Woori Yallock Creek, clearly visible to travelers approaching either from Gembrook or Woori Yallock.

Miners came to have their gold weighed, and to enjoy a home cooked meal and some conversation. Claxton decided to go to Melbourne to live and by 1888 all his interests had passed to Elizabeth's brother Henry Parslow.

The area soon became known as Parslow's, just as Launching Place was known as Ewart's. Parslow added a store to his wine hall, improving the service available to the locals who had come to rely on a weekly drop of their goods from the Hand Brothers store at Seville. Next came a butcher's shop with slaughtering yards not far away.

The Post Office known as Parslow's was operated for many years by members of the Parslow family. For some time the wine hall was also the Post Office, but by 1918 it had been moved to Mrs. Ellen Parslow's property. A telegraph and telephone office was opened there on 3 February 1921. Christopher John Parslow took over on 14 November 1925 and continued until March 1952, when Christopher Ian Parslow replaced him. The name was changed to Yellingbo on 12 August 1946.

Yellingbo people negotiated with the Education Department for 35 years before their efforts led to the opening of a local school on 23 January 1954.

## **Launching Place**

John and Catherine Ewart arrived in Launching Place in the 1840s, where they set up a store, hotel and post office. The Home Hotel, known first as Ewart's, began as a large slab and bark building.

The first wheeled traffic into the area, mostly bullock drays, came only as far as Launching Place.

For some time, goods headed further up the river from Launching Place were loaded into flat-bottomed punts made from timber pit-sawn on the spot. These were then launched upstream, their crews straining against the current as they poled or hauled them along.

Where rocks, rapids or snags blocked their way, the punt had to be unloaded and both punt and cargo hauled along the bank, a task that could involve a passage through dense scrub or over steep hills. When this transport by punt had gone as far as it could, supplies were taken further on by pack-horse.

Parents in Launching Place first asked for a school in the early 1880s. Local people organized a working bee to build a school on the west of the Don River. It opened on 1 July 1884, with Head Teacher working on a half time basis at Woori Yallock. When Woori Yallock was restored to a full time basis, Launching Place was attached on a half time basis to Hoddles Creek.

A new school opened on 14 July 1891, still on a part time basis with Hoddles Creek. By 1892 it was a full time school, but on 6 August 1894 it was closed and it was over 30 years before Launching Place got another school. This was opened in August 1927.

Records mention St. Johns Anglican Church at Launching Place for the first time in 1901-1902.

Once World War One was over, the Launching Place Returned Soldiers' Welcome Club was proud that it had been able to continue giving a gold watch to each of its guests of honour.

In the early 1930s a steady stream of Albanian Migrants came to the Yarra Valley and settled as market gardeners, farming the fertile flood plains of the Yarra and Little Yarra. A group of Albanians, including the Ismail brothers, farmed at Launching Place. At the market gardening peak in the late 1940s the volume of produce from the Ismail brothers was 700 bags a week.

John Johnstone Dedman, twice President of the Shire of Upper Yarra, became one of the best known ministers in the Curtin – Chifley Labour Governments in the 1940s. In 1922 he started a small dairy farm at Launching Place with forty cows and a few potatoes. He felt the tight squeeze of the depression and he was determined to enter parliament "to try to right things". In Curtin's Government he became Minister of War Organisation of Industry and became known as Mr. Austerity.

## **Don Valley**

John and Catherine Ewart's son David and his wife Annie, selected land at the foot of Mt. Toole-Be-Wong, on the east side of the Yarra, and became the first white settlers in the Don Valley. They named their property Glenewart.

The Crown Land surveyors report noted the country as "steep and rangy", the soil "rich and chocolate" and the vegetation "mountain ash, messmate, blackwood, hazel and musk, apple tree scrub and fern trees." Remains of the garden, rockery borders and some of the original sheds still stand on the property now owned by the Victorian Conservation Trust.

In 1923 the Dalry Road and Don Valley schools, which were about 8km apart, operated jointly as part time schools. In 1924 Don Valley closed and Dalry Road worked full time. In 1948 numbers at Launching Place School were reduced, when a new school opened in Don Valley.

Early Presbyterian services were held at Glenewart, the Ewart family home on the Don Valley Road.





