

Significance Assessment for the

Upper Yarra Museum

March 2012

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Executive Summary

The Upper Yarra Museum was opened in 1972 in the former Yarra Ranges Railway Station when that became the home of the Upper Yarra Valley Historical Society, which was formed in 1965, and is responsible for operating the Museum.

The focus of the collection, which includes buildings, large and small objects, documents, photographs and textiles, is in keeping with the Society's intentions from the beginning, and with the current Collection Policy which states 'The Museum will collect objects ... which relate to, were used in, or are representative of objects used in, the Upper Yarra Valley.'

This has resulted in a large and diverse collection that has developed in an ad hoc manner, with the binding glue in most cases being some sort of association with the Upper Yarra region; either the object itself was related to or representative of the Upper Yarra Valley, or it's donor had an association with the region even if the actual donation may not have done. Ultimately, the Museum's founding components, and visually the most prominent, are those that comprise the railway station precinct in which the Society found a home. This sets the tone for the theme of the Museum and the expectation of visitors.

The object and archival collections at UYM (not including the buildings) are similar in extent, scope and integrity to many local history museums around Victoria that were established during the heyday of local history but that run on a shoestring, and by a dedicated volunteer group. The condition and integrity of the buildings, objects and archive is compromised significantly by these challenges. What sets the UYM apart from most local history museums is its location in a heritage railway precinct that has a history unlike any other railway station in Victoria.

The Museum's collection is historically significant for its representation of the wider story of timber milling in the region and in Victoria, the social and industrial history of the Upper Yarra region, and the evolution of a gold mining settlement into a thriving township, a dormitory suburb of metropolitan Melbourne and a semi-rural area. The collection has research significance to be found within its engineering blueprints and some components of its archival and photographic collection, while the original railway buildings that form the heritage precinct are representative of an important early 20th century railway station.

Recent events (a Conservation Management Study, the successful application of substantial grants towards building restoration and repair work, and an increasing interest in the collection and activities of the Museum by the general public) indicate that the level of interest in the Museum, which dropped consistently and significantly during the 1990s and 2000s, is only likely to increase and generate further involvement from visitors and researchers alike. The Precinct has the potential to become a focus for local and family research as well as community and cultural activities, and fabulous displays and interpretations of the history of the region. The collection held by the Museum has the potential to become an important and integral component of a much wider Yarra Ranges community.

In summary, the heritage railway precinct that is the home of the Upper Yarra Museum, and the substantial collection the Museum holds that supports the history of this railway but that also reflects the general history of the region and beyond, makes it quite special in the Yarra Ranges and almost unique in Victoria at least.

Statement of Purpose

The Upper Yarra Valley Historical Society received a Community Heritage Grant from the Federal Government in 2011. This enabled them to arrange for a Significance Assessment of their collection held at the Upper Yarra Museum.

History@Work was contacted by the Society to undertake the assessment, which took place in February and March 2012. I am grateful for the very willing cooperation, assistance and hospitality provided by the Committee members and volunteers at the Museum.

Significance assessment is a tool for large museums, local history societies, libraries and individual collectors. It enables managers to study the value and meaning in their collection, going beyond a catalogue description to the heart of why it is, or is not, important, and what stories it can tell about our history. Assessments will not cover issues of preservation, conservation and management. Guidance on these is provided by professional conservators and museum management specialists.

Significance assessments contribute to a deeper understanding and broad communication of our heritage. By assisting managers or curators to understand the value and meaning in their collection they can help build informative, stimulating and provocative exhibitions that could lead to empathy, understanding, dialogue and debate. A significance assessment can also:

- Promote awareness and discussion about the value of your collection.
- Help you to identify priorities in acquisitions, deaccessioning and exhibitions.
- Help identify the more significant elements to focus resources and aid grant applications and funding arrangements.
- If you have placed your collection on the CAN (Collections Australia Network) database, significance, rather than catalogue description, enhances its value for researchers.
- Assessment involves recording the history of the collection, details that can be lost forever if the collection is ever moved or broken up for any reason.
- Assessments can help review collection patterns, and consider strengths, weaknesses, scope and omissions, enabling you to be more strategic.
- Significance is useful in disaster planning as it can help identify items requiring greater attention.
- Significance can help guide the design and content of an exhibition, enhancing its meaning and value for the viewer.

Finally, a collection that focuses on using significance as a primary tool in their management strategy will be more likely to fulfil the ideals of a community museum. By readily enabling its community to explore the connections they have with their past, these museums can help provide inspiration, learning and enjoyment for their visitors and so become truly a community asset.

Methodology

This report was compiled by a historian accredited by the Professional Historians' Association (Victoria) and was guided by several methodological tools and guides, listed in the bibliography. The bibliography also lists sources of information on the history of the Upper Yarra region.

The Assessment involved several visits to the Upper Yarra Museum during which most of the objects, all of the buildings, and a substantial proportion of the documents and photographs were viewed. The Assessment also included discussion with members of the Society; research into the history of the Upper Yarra Valley and into the development of the collection, its history and provenance; a consideration of the collection's ability to reflect the history of its local area; comparison with similar collections or items; analysis of the condition, completeness and integrity of the collection; and assessment against a set of criterion. Finally, some recommendations are made towards assisting the collection to become a valuable community resource.

Explanation of Assessment Criteria

In Victoria there are two sets of criteria for assessing objects and collections for significance. Both are valid for all collecting agencies and domains (libraries, museums, galleries and archives), and both focus on the same contributing characteristics.

The first is provided by the Collections Council of Australia and enables analysis of the value and meaning of the collection through a two tiered (primary and comparative) assessment using eight criteria. These are fully described in the publication *Significance 2.0*. This is an excellent reference for community museums embarking on significance assessments and provides a 'common language' easily used and understood by collecting bodies across Australia.

The second set of criteria is provided by Heritage Victoria and adopted by the Heritage Council in 2008. These also elucidate value and meaning and are more descriptive in their language but are not supported by an explanatory document like *Significance 2.0*. The Heritage Council criteria and format for Statements of Significance are required if sites, objects or collections are nominated to the Victorian Heritage Register.

As the Museum's collection is a Victorian one this report uses the *Significance 2.0* criteria (summarised below) for research and information gathering, but the Heritage Council criteria for the Assessment and Statement of Significance.

Significance 2.0 Criteria

Primary Criteria

These evaluate the *type(s) of significance*, which are:

- Historical significance

Where a collection demonstrates connections or associations with people, events, historical processes, places and themes. Collections may be historically significant if they reflect, for example, a particular way of life; important industries; urban, municipal and social development of an area; or the passions and concerns of the people associated with the collection. This is the most common type of significance.

- Aesthetic Significance

Where a collection can demonstrate craftsmanship, a particular style, design or technical excellence, innovation, beauty, workmanship or quality of execution.

- Scientific or Research Significance

This requires a well-documented context and collecting history. Sound documentation or a complete set of records allows researchers to verify or reinvestigate data or develop new research questions.

- Social or Spiritual Significance

This is applicable if the collection is held in community esteem or can demonstrate community affection, structures, beliefs or cohesion. There is no social significance if its bond with the community has not been maintained or cannot be demonstrated. There is no spiritual significance if its importance to a group is not evident or active in the present. In this case collections may still have historical significance.

Comparative Criteria

Used with, and to modify, the primary criteria and evaluate the *degree of significance*:

- Provenance

Requires a documented chain of ownership or a recorded context of use and origin.

- Rarity & Representativeness

This relates to the quality of the collection in relation to similar collections and asks if it is a poor, typical or good collection. Just because a collection is representative it is not necessarily significant. It has to be significant within one of the primary criteria. A collection may be rare if it is unusual or a particularly fine example, if it is particularly well documented, or has other qualities that distinguish it from similar collections.

- Condition, Intactness and Integrity

If a collection is unusually broad, or includes good quality, original or a complete set of primary documents, and is well cared for, this could enhance its significance.

- Interpretive Capacity

This is where a collection can demonstrate historical themes, processes, people or events. It will not have interpretive potential if it has no relationship with its context, or capacity to illuminate aspects of the relevant history. Interpretive potential differs from historical significance as it relates to the value the collection has to the curator or manager to create interpretive or informative displays.

Background

History of the Upper Yarra Region

Following is a good summary of the history of the Upper Yarra written by Jenny Keating for the Encyclopedia of Melbourne:

The former Upper Yarra shire extended either side of the Yarra River from Woori Yallock into the Yarra Ranges. Barak, a leader of the Wurundjeri people, was briefly settled on a reserve here. John Gardiner was probably the first European in the district, overlanding from Sydney in 1836. Surveyor Robert Hoddle led an official expedition into the Upper Yarra valley in 1844. Later explorers included Professor Kernot searching for the source of the Yarra in 1884. When his packhorse kept stumbling up a steep slope, he named the mountain Mount Horsfall.

In the late 1850s gold was found near what is now Warburton and in the following decade miners flocked to the area. They discovered gold along many of the Yarra tributaries including Starvation Creek, McMahon's Creek, and Hoddle's Creek. During the mid-1860s large communities of miners lived at these diggings. In the 1870s these areas were reworked using sluicing methods. Reefton, near the present-day Upper Yarra Reservoir, became a flourishing settlement with 3000 miners and their families, but eventually the workings were exhausted and the camp abandoned. In 1888 the Shire of Upper Yarra was proclaimed, meeting first at Millgrove, then for some years at Warburton and finally at Yarra Junction. The council tried to improve local roads and in the 1890s depression a road was built beyond Warburton as far as the Reefton goldfields using unemployment relief workers.

The Upper Yarra valley's most striking natural resource was its forests. Settlers cleared sites and turned to dairying and later fruit-growing, but timber-milling rapidly became a major industry in its own right. The need for timber across the State for mining, railways, wharves and fencing influenced the decision to build the railway from Lilydale to Warburton, which opened in 1901. Timber-milling was an important industry until the interwar years. The 1929 timber workers' strike caused much hardship locally, with the depression of the early 1930s severely affecting the area. Many men left the district or scratched a living from relief projects, usually on local roads. Floods and bushfires also afflicted the district. In 1926 seven people died at a mill south of Gilderoy, and in 1939 so many bush mills were destroyed and workers killed that the Forests Commission recommended that sawmills be located near towns, improving safety but exacerbating the decline of timber-related employment in rural areas like the Upper Yarra.

Tourism was the other major occupation in the Upper Yarra region. From the 1880s Melbournians were attracted by the wonderful scenery found along the Yarra and in the Yarra Ranges. Walking tracks were cut, guesthouses opened, and by the 1920s the area was a popular destination. In the 1930s Albanian migrants created a flourishing market gardening industry. The construction of the Upper Yarra Dam between 1947 and 1957 also brought new people to the area. A complete township was built to house the workers and their families. The dam's completion trebled the amount of water impounded for Melbourne's use. It also inundated the site of McVeigh's pub, immortalised in a famous 19th-century poster of a former miner, Sam Knott, drinking a schooner of Carlton Ale, saying he 'allus has wan at eleven'. The popular Yarra Falls were now placed in a restricted access catchment area.

By the 1970s parts of the western Upper Yarra were becoming dormitory suburbs of outer Melbourne. Housing estates were built at Woori Yallock and Launching Place, characterised initially by their poor services and lack of accessibility. A decade later suburban subdivisions were viewed less favourably in what remains essentially a rural area.

For thousands of years before the first European wandered through what has come to be known as the Yarra Ranges the dense forests of mountain ash were inhabited by the Woiwurrung people. It is thought

there was unlikely to be more than around 200 living in the region as most of the Woiwurrung preferred to live in the river flats of present day Yarra Glen and Yering, and the foothills around Lilydale and Mooroolbark.¹

By 1888 European local government had reached the area and it became known as the Shire of Upper Yarra. During the last twelve years of the 19th century and early years of the 20th communities sprung up throughout the region with schools and churches and other community institutions. The Seventh Day Adventist community found a home in Warburton around the turn of the century, generating their own power and electric lighting, and building a publishing company, a church, a school and a hospital and health food cooperative.

In the 19th century forest work was mainly splitting palings and cutting shingles. Once the railway line to Warburton opened in 1901 sawmilling became a major industry and employer in the Upper Yarra Valley. Eventually the quantity of milled timber that was being transported from Powelltown to Melbourne, through Yarra Junction Railway station, was said to be second only in the world to Seattle, USA with as many as 52,000 tons passing through the station in 1928.

History of the Collection

The Upper Yarra Valley Historical Society was established in 1965 by approximately forty local residents with the aim of fostering a historical interest in and knowledge of the Yarra Valley firstly, and that of wider Melbourne and Victoria secondly. Their efforts were directed towards collecting historical objects and records of the district, creating affiliations with like-minded and other community organisations, arranging guest speakers and history tours, and raising funds towards these projects. These goals are much the same today, although management of the ten historical buildings on the site is a priority, and today more resources are required to manage this collection than are spent on fostering historical interest and knowledge.

In 1969 the Society found a home in the former Yarra Junction Railway Station, which contained a number of other buildings or constructions on site and, over the years, collected a few more. With a grant from the Federal government in 1972 the platform and station building was restored for use as a museum, which opened the same year. The original historical buildings on site include:

- The Yarra Junction Railway Station building and verandas (HO 48) was originally the Lilydale Station building. Recent research of the Lilydale Express (Nov 21 1888) indicates the building was completed that year, although past research of other records had put the construction date at 1881. It was moved to Yarra Junction in 1914 when Lilydale station became a junction between Healesville and Warburton and required a larger building for the increased activity. It remained in use until Yarra Junction Railway Station was closed in 1965. The Yarra Ranges Heritage Study (Context Pty Ltd 2000) explains 'This building played a major role in the region's development. It was the original Lilydale Station building, and so it played a part in the prosperous development of the Lilydale district which came as a direct result of the opening of the railway. Later, it was moved to its present site where it served as the main Yarra Junction station building. In this role it played a part in transportation for Upper Yarra's prosperous timber and tourist industries.'
- The Gilderoy Tramway (west of the site). The Gilderoy horse drawn tramway was completed in 1907 as a three-foot timber tramway running from Blake's Mill near Powelltown to Yarra Junction. The owner of Blake's Mill began the tramway to solve the problems of transporting timber over impassable muddy roads during winter and spring. Running off the tramway were a large number of wooden branch lines enabling timber to be transported from the many other mills along the route and brought to Yarra Junction railway station. The tramway route and its sidings are

¹ Brian Carroll, p.2

currently hidden under half a metre of soil and run approximately east-west south of the railway station.

- The Yarra Junction-Powelltown railway line (east of the site) was built in 1913 to replace the Gilderoy Tramway and provided a three-foot wide steel gauge line through the Yarra Ranges timber-milling region. The tracks and sidings of this railway are also hidden under soil but this is a particularly significant stretch of railway in Victoria as it was the only private narrow-gauge line that carried passengers as well as goods. The Victorian Hardwood Company (which had bought both the Victorian Powell Wood Process Co. and the Gilderoy Tramway Co.) owned the line and had its own schedule of fares and conductor. The museum collection includes the conductor's bag and a set of tickets. This railway was the normal mode of transport for many of the locals until the last train ran on 31 July 1944, by which time road transport was more efficient.
- A goods shed, originally built prior to 1914 but with at least two additions since then.
- The platform and ramp (not the originals), and the standard gauge railway lines of the Lilydale to Warburton railway line (1901-1966)
- Sections of the timber fence and platform gates that were part of the original Yarra Junction railway station (dating to before the transfer of the Lilydale station building in 1914).
- A Victorian Railways porter's cottage (Circa early 1900s) (HO48)
- A diesel rail tractor, C1938, from the Powelltown railway, and a guard's van that was apparently from the Lilydale-Warburton line

In the years since the UYVHS have lived at the former railway there have been other historical buildings transported to the site. These include:

- The former Yarra Junction police lock-up
- The former Powelltown Police Station. This was established in 1929 in response to the timber workers strike, which was a response to the Lukin Award, passed by Judge Lukin of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, reducing the working conditions for timber workers. The Victorian Hardwood Company asked police to be in attendance for the duration of the strike, which went from 6 February to 10 July 1929, although the police station remained until 1942.
- Two workers huts built for the building of the Upper Yarra dam to house two workers each. This Dam was built between 1949 and 1957 and involved approximately 1200 men, many with their families living at the Upper Yarra Dam purpose built township during the process. The Museum has a cement mixer from the dam construction and a silver shovel used by the Governor of Victoria, General Sir Dallas Brookes, to plant a tree on site at the opening ceremony of the Upper Yarra Reservoir in November 1957, and to mark the centenary of water supply by Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works.
- A mill engine, originally used at Walhalla gold mine further to the east, then relocated to one of the Ada mills near Powelltown.

For the first couple of decades the Shire of Upper Yarra was represented on the Historical Society's committee and provided annual maintenance of \$6000 towards rent and insurance, and project assistance towards their activities. In 1994 the new Yarra Ranges Shire was established. It appears that the active support previously provided by the Shire of Upper Yarra to the Society ceased at that point. In the last couple of years there has been a concerted effort on the part of the UYVHS to build a constructive and

positive relationship with the Shire with regular invitations to visit. This has proved fruitful, and the Shire (now the Yarra Ranges Council) has since commissioned two reports on the lease arrangement for the Society and on making grant applications for maintenance and conservation, and commissioned a Conservation Management Report in early 2011. It was conducted by their Heritage Advisor, Trevor Westmore of Urban Design and Heritage Conservation, and made several recommendations towards conserving the heritage railway precinct.

Later in 2011 a Community Support Grant of \$30,000 from the State Department of Planning and Community Development was met by the local government with a grant of \$10,000. The intention is to create a Yarra Junction Community and Cultural Precinct at the Upper Yarra Museum, which will become a focal point for the town and surrounding areas.

Despite the increased awareness of the Museum and Society by the Shire, there appears to be limited understanding of the relationship between the two bodies and the complexities affecting their work. In the case of the Museum the task is to manage the historic railway precinct, the large collection of additional buildings, and the large and diverse object, textile, paper and photographic collection. In the case of the Society the task is to promote and encourage public interest in the history of Upper Yarra. The two are inextricably connected by virtue of their focus on the region's history and heritage, by the Society's home in the Museum, and by its responsibility to operate the Museum, while their tasks are made harder by the dire need for improved preservation, access and infrastructure, and the almost complete lack of an income to care for their large collection.

The collection as it exists today was largely acquired in the first twenty odd years of the Museum's existence. Most of the items comply with the original intentions of the founders, and with the stipulations of the Collection Policy finalised in July 2010; that is, they 'relate to, were used in, or are representative of objects used in, the Upper Yarra Valley'.

However, almost despite these intentions, it would appear that the particular interests of individual members, and reluctance to say 'no' to donations made in good faith were the guiding force behind the early acquisitions. Some examples of these include a very large collection of bottles ranging from medicine to pickling, alcohol, soft drink, sauces, poisons, perfumes and cleaners; another of gems, rocks, stones and fossils; cameras; historical radios, and so on.

The Society also acquired objects through donations to furnish or display in particular exhibitions. These include the parlour, kitchen and bedroom in the Porter's Cottage, communications equipment to embellish the 'radio room', and a number of different permanent exhibitions in the three open sheds, for example large scale farming equipment; timber tramways and Bob Logan's garage; and a blacksmith, farrier, surveying and gold display.

Many objects or sub-collections were donated for safekeeping or preservation. These include a collection of 1910 records from the Upper Yarra Shire, records from institutions and groups that closed down, book and photograph collections, and a number of military items including a Boer War flag and a United Kingdom flag with a head and shoulders portrait of Sir George White VC in the centre and the names of his battles on scrolls surrounding his portrait. Sir George (1835-1912) was an Irish soldier who achieved distinction in the British Army in Afghanistan, India and Burma, was awarded the Victoria Cross in 1879 and the Order of Merit in 1905, was knighted in 1886 and served as the Governor of Gibraltar.²

In summary this is an ad hoc collection with the binding glue in most cases being some sort of association with the Upper Yarra region, either through the object itself or the donor. Although the collection is related to all aspects of Upper Yarra life, as the Society wished, it's founding components, and visually the most prominent, are those that comprise the railway station precinct in which the Society found a home for itself. This sets the tone for the theme of the museum and the expectations of visitors.

² Sir George Stuart White, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_White_\(British_Army_officer\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_White_(British_Army_officer)), and <http://www.newulsterbiography.co.uk/index.php/home/viewPerson/1697>

Focus and scope of the collection

The area of the Upper Yarra Ranges of concern to the Upper Yarra Museum is that covered by the O'Shannassy ward of the current Shire of Yarra Ranges, as well as any 'sawmills which regularly sent their timber through Yarra Junction'. This includes the localities known as Don Valley, Woori Yallock, Yellingbo, Launching Place, Hoddles Creek, Yarra Junction, Gladysdale, Three Bridges, Gilderoy, Powelltown and bush sawmills, Wesburn, Millgrove, Warburton (incl. East), Big Pats Creek, McMahons Creek, Reefton, Upper Yarra Dam.³

The aim of the collection is to promote the history and stories of the Upper Yarra Valley and to encourage a greater interest in and understanding of the region's history. This aim has been fairly consistent since the founding days of the museum, although in recent years it seems to have been refined somewhat 'to preserve local heritage and historical features ... for local communities and visitors to understand the importance of the region to state and national development.'⁴

A Collection Policy was written in 2010 and states 'The Museum will collect objects ... which relate to, were used in, or are representative of objects used in, the Upper Yarra Valley.' The list of objects in the Policy includes three dimensional objects and relocatable buildings; photographs (prints, negatives and slides); working models; documents; books; maps and technical drawings; oral histories, films and other audiovisual material.

The Museum holds items of all these types but with minimal or no recording of acquisitions over the years, and even less provenance established, it is impossible to estimate the quantity of their holdings, particularly with regard to documents and photographs. Efforts are currently being made to catalogue the collection, but it is a huge task that will take a long time to achieve. A project is also underway to methodically go through the minutes and Newsletters of the Historical Society since they formed in 1965 as many of these are, fortunately, a very thorough record of activities and donations made at the time. Information regarding donors and provenance for many objects is gradually being established through this research.

Contents of the collection

What follows is an indication of the range and type of objects towards assessing the association they have with the history of the Upper Yarra region and the significance they have as a collection, rather than a complete inventory of the Museum's holdings. At the time of this Assessment the contents of three rooms in the original station had been stored or displayed elsewhere since October 2011 to prepare the rooms for restumping, restoration and reroofing. Some of the items below are not located in their permanent position or have not been viewed in the course of this Assessment, but I have seen images and discussed those considered most important by Society members. Documents or objects that are photocopies or replicas may be mentioned below but are not included in this assessment.

o Memorabilia Room

- British Monarchy display – 1953 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth; CHOGM; and the Queen's trip to Warburton during her Australian visit in 1954.
- Dining table and 4 chairs from Paddy McVeigh's Upper Yarra Hotel. This hotel, now submerged by the Upper Yarra Dam, was a major stopover during the gold rush

o Archival collection –

This is a very large collection of photographs and documents that have been compiled or collected by Society members or donated by the Shire, community groups or residents. They cover a wide scope of

³ Upper Yarra Collection Policy July 2010

⁴ Preparatory questions and answers

Upper Yarra life over 150 years and are sorted by subject. The percentage of original documents is hard to determine but is relatively low. Examples of the kinds of items include:

- Powelltown –
 - 4 A3 folders containing digitised engineering drawings 'Steel 3 foot tramway, Yarra Junction to Powelltown' and the 'Victorian Powell Wood Process'
 - Surveys of the tramway from Yarra Junction to Powelltown and beyond
 - Engineering drawings for a 6' and 10' feet span bridge circa early 1900s, and for log culverts, sleeper openings, level crossings, cattle stops, bogie timber trucks, wagons and a passenger carriage and distance posts. Approximately 220 drawings and 12 journals. These had been rescued from the dump and carefully restored by Ron Polkinghorne, before being donated by Ron McGuire. They are currently being used by the Department of Sustainability and Environment in Powelltown for two purposes: firstly as a blueprint to guide their restoration of heritage listed timber bridges around Victoria; and secondly as a guide to recreating the original post and rails which marked culverts and other parts of tramways, which will label heritage sites such as those along the *Walk Into History – Big Pats Creek to Powelltown*
 - Saw mill drawings for timber treatment tanks, iron works, steam log turners
 - Original photograph albums of Powelltown Mill and Tramway (donated by Chris and Keith Ingram)
 - Handwritten recollections of wood milling before electronic milling and sawing.
 - Unpublished recollections, timelines, histories on Powelltown of the early 20th century.
 - Original records (accounts, correspondence, etc) of the Powelltown Mill.
 - Powelltown Mill staff time book 1934-37 contains names of all workers and a record of the days they worked; Wages book; Victorian Hardwood Co purchase book 1963-68;
 - Photos of Powelltown reservoir before 1934 floods; mill workers sawing and transporting logs; etc, donated by R McGuire.
 - Victorian Hardwood Co records – accounts 1919-51; time book 1945-48, 1948-49 & 1952-55 & 1958-60; quantity per saw bench 1942-43; correspondence from CSIRO Division of Forest Products in 1953 to VHC re optimum temperatures and timber stacking positioning; cash payments & receipts ledgers 1919 & 1942-70; collection of photographs of all staff of VHC with their job titles and names presented to General Manager of VHC Chris Ingram; (Most mills were owned independently of the Victorian Hardwood Company but did not last more than a few years, so there were approximately 120 mills between 1900 and 1950 in the Powelltown – Warburton area.)
 - Newspapers, eg *The Herald* Jan 28 1960 'Timber Town dying – logs are running out fast'; *Yarra Valley News* July 15 1969 '25th anniversary of closing of the Little Yarra, the last tramway to run'.
 - Original Deed of Delegation to Upper Yarra Shire to build the Powelltown Tramway 15 July 1913;
 - Invitation from The Powelltown Electricity Extension Committee to attend a Switching on Ceremony and Ball to inaugurate the SEC Extension to Powelltown on 17 May 1961
- Gold
 - Applications for protection of claims over quartz, 1920s – 1950s, usually due to insufficient funds to continue mining or flooding of claim
 - Applications for registration of water rights and race
 - Certificates of registrations of claims
 - These date from the 1920s to 1950s as a very detailed record of the miners, their aspirations and the difficulties they ran into. They are in quite poor condition and held in insecure storage but have fortunately been meticulously recorded and described in 'Miner Details. A History of the mining of Upper Yarra (with surname list)' by Jan Miller and Isabella Buckland 1982
- Local Government
 - History – multiple copies of a typed manuscript, unpublished, entitled 'The Upper Yarra's Early Years' by John Coggin, a founding member of the Society
 - Various compilations of historical information gleaned from newspapers and periodicals and put together in typed notes by members of the Society, especially covering the 19th century history of the region. Includes a 'Place names of interest' sheet with explanations for the names.

- Shire of Upper Yarra – ‘51 folders of correspondence, 1910 and 1911, with engineers report dated 1908’ compiled or transcribed and arranged into subject folders by Society members Jan Miller & Isabella Buckland in 1983. The material includes correspondence, memos, public notices, license applications and renewals, infectious disease reports, directions for water sampling, engineers’ reports, and much else. The files are divided into subjects such as public health, fire prevention, state forest, electoral boundaries, public works, railways, requests from ratepayers, postal information, education, police, cemetery, etc. A list of contents on the front of every file indicates which items are of particular local interest.
- Minute book and correspondence file from the East Warburton Road League in 1938-1940.
- Extracts from Government Gazettes 1917-1924 with any items referring to the Upper Yarra Shire typed and referenced in date order.
- Small collection of rate receipts from 1916-1921 for a property owned by Mr Behrin
- Miscellaneous compilations of historical material from rate books, gazettes, municipal directories, etc, photocopied or typed by Society members.
- Miscellaneous ex businesses in Upper Yarra region – collection of receipts, dockets, etc.
- Water
 - Yarra Junction Water Works Trust – correspondence, statement of receipts, by laws, etc, C1927
 - MMBW – *The Upper Yarra Dam*, booklet, published in 1955; souvenir booklet *A Century of Water Supply. Yan Yean Reservoir 1857, Upper Yarra Reservoir 1957*; information sheet on Upper Yarra water supply, C1957; MMBW Log Book for maintenance of the Dee River Chlorinator 1973 - 1987
 - Woori Yallock Launching Place Waterworks Trust – map showing location of chlorinator building on Dons Road (undated)
- Invitations and Celebrations
 - First Henley on Yarra 1905 – original photographs donated by Mr Halbish of Launching Place
 - Invitation to Mr & Mrs Halbish to attend a Garden Party at Government House in 1970
 - Official printed invitations to celebrations, a conversazione, and the opening of the inaugural Commonwealth of Australia parliament in 1901 to Mr & Mrs W W Bradley and Mr and Mrs Ryan.
- Warburton Advancement League – minutes 1975 – 1984
- Family history – one filing cabinet of folders filed by name and including family certificates, correspondence, photographs, reflections and other writings.

There is also an archive collection held in the back room of the Porters Cottage that is uncatalogued. This includes a miscellaneous library of late 20th century local history books and a collection of early 20th century mathematics, literature, children’s encyclopedias, and other books that may have come from a Powelltown school library. Some of the more interesting, and possibly important, items include:

- Souvenir of *Victoria and its Metropolis*, circa 1920, depicting 62 beautiful black and white images reflecting the cities and country of the times.
- Photo album from the 19th century depicting family and friends of Mrs Price of Woori Yallock ‘from her affectionate friend Mrs Lyons’
- *The Queen’s Empire*, a celebration of the Commonwealth in pictures (poor condition)
- A hand carved wooden weaver’s bobbin dated 1774 with the letters A W carved inside a heart shape carving, and the letters E1 1774 at the bottom. The catalogue information suggests only that E1 indicates (Queen) Elizabeth 1 but her reign was from 1558 to 1603.
- Scrapbooks – one containing newspaper collection of cuttings of ‘Wild nature notes’, another two were for poetry, and a copy of *The Illustrated London News Diamond Jubilee Edition* in 1897. All in serious need of conservation.
- Launching Place Tennis Club (closed) memorabilia and documents (receipts, correspondence, etc)
- Commonwealth Bank Register of Depositors for the Wesburn branch, 1950 to 1974. Shows name, signature, date of opening account and occupation of each depositor.
- Woori Yallock Progress Association minute book, accounts and correspondence.

- A collection of military books (labelled 20 and box numbered 0006) – include *The ANZAC book. Written and illustrated in Gallipoli by the Men of ANZAC, 1915; Active Service with Australia in the middle east; The manual of physical training 193; Soldiering On. The Australian Army at home and overseas; The Education Department's Record of War Service 1914-1919* (there is another copy of this kept in a wood veneer box especially made for it by Jeff Gribble former millworker).
- Collection of family papers from Ferguson family includes school slates and certificates, a children's illustrated song book, a beautiful leather bound, gilt edged, 19th century family photo album, no names or other information.
- An edition of *Victoria Illustrated 1857* that badly needs repair and conservation. A conservation survey report of the Museum's collection conducted in 2004 by Artifact Conservation makes mention of this as 'a sought after book by collectors with an approximate value of \$1600-\$2000.'

○ **Meeting Room**

This contains a number of wall hung display cases and floor cabinets each with a different collection:

- The Marge Wilson Display, 'in memory of a dedicated member of this Society' contains Victorian and Edwardian clothing. Another glass textile cabinet, largely of children's clothing, ladies hats, camisoles, school needlework and other miscellaneous textiles dates from the mid 1800s to the WWII era.
- Crochet and macramé tools and completed items; buttons, threads and embroidery collection.
- A collection of miscellaneous schoolbooks, exam papers and stationary from the early 20th century.
- Gas lamps and bottles
- A ticket for the 'last train to Warburton' dated 1 August 1965
- Cameras, viewers, brownies, film and slide projectors, a folding camera and a Weiss camera.
- Some items from St Marks Church of England in Wesburn including a christening font.
- A miscellaneous collection of awards and trophies, many of them local sporting and community awards.

○ **Kitchen**

- Objects from 19th and early 20th century domestic life – flour sacks, bread bins, sifters, tea caddies, rolling pins, flour shakers, scales and storage tins, several large blackened pots, kettles and boilers, and a large iron stove and fireplace. The only item that clearly has provenance to the area is a large copper jam pot from the Evelyn Jam Factory in Wandin.

○ **Radio Room**

- Norm Golding, a founder and first President of the UYVHS, ran a radio shop and donated many radios to the museum, establishing this collection. They include a couple that have been suggested by a visiting radio collector to be quite significant – 3 are art deco style and a couple of military radios estimated to be over \$5000 each. Over the years other items were donated that more generally fell under a 'communications' category and so have been included in the radio display. These include:
 - An original printing press from Signs Publishing in Warburton
 - Early generation televisions
 - Gramophone players
 - Spare parts for all the above
 - Some telephones, including one from the Mt Beenak Fire Lookout Tower last used C1970.

○ **Annexe**

- This serves as an exit from the railway platform to the grounds and sheds beyond. It has been furnished with a laundry display that includes flat irons, wringers, laundry pegs, wash boards and items such as velvet soap and powder.

○ **Guards Van**

- Early 20th century suitcases; metal station signs ('Spencer St' and 'Beware of trains'); 'Jim Crows' used for bending railway lines; photographs of the 'last train to Warby' in 1944. The display includes a model of the Little Yarra made by Ron Farhall and a description by Mr Farhall of the making of the model.

○ **Machinery Shed West**

- Blacksmiths – bellows of varying sizes, anvils, basket of charcoal, a collection of tools and horse shoes.
 - Farming – various rakes, forks, etc and engines, including one from a WWII lighting plant, and a crude oil engine C1900.
 - Surveying – chains and tripods, the story of Hoddle and Hoddles Creek
 - Gold – cradle for finding alluvial gold, built in Dunolly in 1904 and used by three generations of miners. A Crossley oil engine, a pump and fly wheel used for gem, gold and antimony mining at Hoddles Creek, and a collection of miners tools, personal equipment and claim registrations.
- **Porter’s Cottage**
- This is the original departmental residence No 320 built for the porter of the Yarra Junction Railway Station. It has been arranged and furnished to contain a parlour, kitchen, bedroom and schoolroom displays reflecting 19th century and early 20th century life. Some of the items are worthy of mention and may require an individual significance assessment of their own. These include, but may not be exclusive to:
 - A painted glass screen suggested to have come from the Royal Exhibition Buildings
 - A French music box C1889
 - Several Edwardian era textiles such as dresses, lace crocheted items, children’s clothing, etc
 - Items from the Yarra Valley Bush Nursing Hospital, which closed in 1983.
- **Workman’s Huts**
- These are two simple timber huts built and used by workers during the construction of the Upper Yarra Dam during the 1950s. One of them contains furniture and personal effects and an explanation of the building of the Dam. The other is used for storage and is waiting restoration. In front of them are water pumps and pelton wheels used to generate electricity and machinery during the building of the dam.
- **Machinery Shed East**
- Bob Logan collection - a room housing original items from, or representing, a garage run for many years by local resident and well-known character Bob Logan. It includes his Overland ute and many tools. His family have promised a lot more once the collection and room is made adequate for storage and display. An unpublished manuscript that he wrote of his life in the UY region is in the archives.
 - In the main open part of the shed is a Cuming Smith photographic display. Cuming Smith & Co was Australia’s only commercial wood distillation factory and owned, amongst other businesses, the Britannia Creek Wood Distillation Works, which was an international leader in the extraction of chemicals from timber waste through distillation (the University of Melbourne Chemistry department has a lecture and laboratory named after James Cuming Jnr). Their contribution to chemical distillations from timber became so important that when the British Association for the Advancement of Science met in Australia in 1914 they asked to visit the Britannia factory; a timber display of saws, axe heads, the Powelltown Rail Tractor and other heavy timber industry equipment; a map of the district’s saw mills and tramways helps visitors to understand the extent to which the timber industry dominated this district during the 19th and early 20th century. Outside the shed are 3’ rail tracks with log bogies reproduced using original engineering drawings from the collection, and an assortment of block pullies and timber sledges to transport the timber from the mountain ash forests.
- **Powelltown Police Station & Yarra Junction Lock up**
- Both are the original buildings. The police station was moved to Mr Cox’s farm at Gilderoy in 1943, then relocated to the Museum in 1988. The Lock Up stores a collection of typewriters, kitchen scales, tennis racquets, sewing machines and saddles amongst other objects, many of which have not been catalogued or had their provenance established, so are in temporary storage.
 - The Police Station includes a large display of copied photographs; a collection of gems, rocks and fossils donated by a resident of Wesburn; a large journal recording the daily duties and occurrences at Powelltown Police Station. It is under glass but opened at a date in 1931 for visitors to read. A photo of the Mounted Constable George Wells, 1st Officer in Charge of the station when it opened in 1929; Powelltown Tramway conductors bag and tickets, which are significant as this was the only tramway in Victoria able to transport passengers as well as cargo; miscellaneous timber industry items.

o **Platform -**

a series of wall mounted cases that display collections of:

- Bottles - spreads, jams, sauces, pickles, medicines, alcohol, etc (since removed for temporary storage)
- Door hardware; Carpentry tools; Samples of local timber
- At the east end of the platform is a diorama of the big bridge outside Powelltown Railway made by a Powelltown timber worker, Jeff Gribble, the same man who made the wood veneer cover for the Education book

o **Grounds**

A miscellaneous collection of tractors, engines and other large farming equipment, the provenance of which is largely unknown.

Assessment of Collection

The collection's reflection of the history of area or subject

The purpose of this section is to determine how well the collection supports the history of the local area. The *Victorian Historic Themes Framework* (2010) identifies a comprehensive web of historical processes and themes in this state. Collection managers can use the *Framework* to understand the themes significant to their area, conduct research into their local history, and prepare interpretive panels and descriptions. The table below lists those components of the *Framework* applicable to the Upper Yarra region. Components of the Museum's collection are linked into the appropriate place in this *Framework*, showing where the gaps and strengths of the Museum's collection lie.

Themes from the <i>Victorian Historical Themes Framework</i> relating to the history of the Upper Yarra	Railway Precinct and Upper Yarra Museum's Collection
1. Shaping Victoria's environment	
1.3 understanding scientifically diverse environments (biodiversity of plants and animals)	Timber samples; gem, rock and fossil collection
1.4 creation stories and defining country	
1.5 living with natural processes (fires and droughts)	Photographs; Mt Beenak Fire Lookout Tower telephone; some of the original (primary) reminiscences and memoirs
1.6 appreciating and protecting Victoria's natural wonders (developing the national park, Rail Trail & tourism)	Rail Trail; original photographs; rail posters
2. Peopling Victoria's places and landscapes	
2.1 living as Victoria's original inhabitants (Aboriginal landscape)	Collection of local axe heads including green stone axe heads.
2.2 exploring, surveying and mapping (exploring forest, opening up transport routes)	Surveying collection of chains and tripods; survey of tramway from Yarra Junction to Powelltown; miner's claims
2.3 adapting to diverse environments (creating a thriving economic and social existence in hilly dense woodland)	Original photographs; memoirs and journals;
2.5 migrating and making a home (establishing a rural settlement, temporary homes during gold rush and building of Upper Yarra dam)	Two workmen's huts; early original journals and memoirs; domestic items in display cases and in annexe, parlour, kitchen and bedroom of Porter's cottage
2.7 promoting settlement (bringing workers to the Upper Yarra Dam construction project)	History of Settlement Road, Yarra Junction
3. Connecting Victorians by transport and communications	
3.1 establishing pathways (Aboriginal pathways, building paths and then tramways for timber transport, gold routes)	Gilderoy and Powelltown tramway maps and blue prints; Gilderoy and Powelltown tramlines; tramway records
3.3 linking Victorians by rail (Powelltown Railway, Lilydale-Warburton Railway, servicing timber industry, tourism rail trail)	Powelltown tramway blue prints; Little Yarra model; diorama; 'last train to Warby' ticket; tram conductor's bag and ticket collection; 1890 map and records of land purchases to construct the Lilydale to

	Warburton Railway
3.4 linking Victorians by road in the 20 th century (opening up the forest, superseding the Powelltown Railway and timber tramways)	Road Construction Trust documents
3.5 travelling by tram (early transport of felled timber)	Gilderoy and Powelltown tramlines; tramways records
3.7 establishing and maintaining communications (fire lookouts, local newspaper and publishing company)	Signs Publishing printing machine; Fire Lookout telephone; radio collection, bound copies of Upper Yarra Mail.
4. Transforming the land	
4.1 living off the land (Aboriginal occupation)	Stone axe heads and boomerang.
4.4 farming (fruit farms, vineyards)	Farming and blacksmiths collections, large scale farming machinery;
4.5 gold mining	Gold claim registrations; personal equipment and tools; alluvial gold cradle; memoirs; photographs
4.6 exploiting other mineral, forest and water resources (gold, antimony, timber, creating dam & diverting water to reservoirs)	Tramways (hidden); tramways records; Cuming Smith collection; miners claim registrations;
4.7 transforming the land and waterways (clearing forest, building towns, creating dam)	Two workmen's huts; photographs; railway and mill blueprints; saws and other timber industry tools; invitation from The Powelltown Electricity Extension Committee to attend a Switching on Ceremony and Ball to inaugurate the SEC Extension to Powelltown on 17 May 1961
5. Building Victoria's industries and workforce	
5.1 processing raw materials (timber mills, distillation)	Cuming Smith collection; timber products including sleepers, shingles, palings, barrel making, timber for construction
5.2 developing a manufacturing capacity (making chemicals through timber distillation)	Cuming Smith collection, timber milling
5.6 entertaining and socialising (hotels, pubs)	Dining table and chairs from Paddy McVeigh's Upper Yarra Hotel
5.7 catering for tourists (rail trail, Puffing Billy, establishing museums)	Little Yarra collection; early minutes and of UYVHS;
5.8 working (timber industry, dam construction, farming, working on the railway)	Photographs; original memoirs & journals; porter's cottage; gold, survey, blacksmith & farming displays; MMBW Log Book for Dee River Chlorinator 1973 – 1987; blueprints; unpublished memoirs and journals; staff records for Powelltown Mill and Victorian Hardwood Co
6. Building towns, cities and the garden state	
6.3 shaping the suburbs (building urban infrastructure, development along rail line, development of semi-rural	The Powelltown Electricity Extension Committee invitation to Switching on

identity)	Ceremony and Ball to celebrate SEC Extension to Powelltown on 17 May 1961; 1910 & '11 records from Shire of Upper Yarra; records and artefacts from construction of Upper Yarra Dam
6.5 living in country towns (late connections to town amenities such as electricity and phone, rapid evolution of gold towns and timber towns,	Original photographs, journals & memoirs; Records from the East Warburton Road League in 1938-1940; Woori Yallock Progress Association; and Warburton Advancement League
6.6 marking significant phases in development of Victoria's settlements, towns and cities (demise of timber industry, growth from tram to train to road network, construction of dam to service Melbourne's growing water needs)	Two worker's huts; 'last train to Warby' memorabilia; The Powelltown Electricity Extension Committee invitation to Switching on Ceremony and Ball to celebrate the SEC Extension to Powelltown on 17 May 1961;
6.7 making homes for Victorians (building huts for dam construction workers)	Porter's cottage; dam huts; Shire of Upper Yarra 1910-11 records;
7. Governing Victorians	
7.1 developing institutions of self-government and democracy (local government authorities, political associations)	Records of the Woori Yallock Progress Association; Warburton Advancement League; Shire of Upper Yarra 1910-11
7.3 maintaining law and order	Powelltown Police Station & Yarra Junction Lock Up; Police duties & occurrences journal
8. Building community life	
8.1 maintaining spiritual life (Seventh Day Adventists in Warburton and establishment of Sanatorium Health Food Company and Signs Publishing)	St Marks Church of England, Wesburn, memorabilia and christening font; lace christening outfits
8.2 educating people	School books (texts and exercise books, exam papers and stationary); Ferguson family papers
8.3 providing health and welfare services	Yarra Valley Bush Nursing Hospital photographs & records
8.4 forming community organisations	Woori Yallock Progress Association records; Warburton Advancement League records; Gilderoy progress association, Launching Place Tennis Club records; collection of local sporting and community awards; Upper Yarra Valley Historical Society meeting minutes, newsletters, correspondence
8.5 preserving traditions and commemorating	Monarchy display - 1953 Coronation; CHOGM; Queen's trip to Warburton in 1954; First Henley on Yarra 1905 -original photographs donated by Mr Halbish of Launching Place; invitation to Mr & Mrs Halbish to attend a Garden Party at Government House in 1970; official

	printed invitations to celebrations, a conversazione, and the opening of the inaugural Commonwealth of Australia parliament in 1901 to Mr & Mrs W W Bradley and Mr and Mrs Ryan; 1320 photographs and oral recordings collected in 1983 to mark the centenary of the Shire 1888 - 1988.
8.6 marking the phases of life	St Marks Church christening font;
9. Shaping cultural and creative life	
9.1 participating in sport and recreation (development of and use of rail trail by cyclists, walkers and horse riders)	collection of local sporting and community awards; Launching Place tennis club records; camera collection; sewing items
9.5 advancing knowledge in science and technology (developing distillation techniques, Powelltown railway)	Cuming Smith collection; blueprints for sawmills and tramway

The Collection in the Community

The Museum is open on Wednesdays and Sundays from 11am to 4pm, and on several public holidays. The railway precinct and museum is located on the Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail and has signs at both ends to encourage walkers and riders to stop off and visit year round. The Historical Society offer group tours by arrangement and have a week-long opening as part of History Week in October and an annual 'Crank Up' at the end of March. This is its 34th Crank Up and over the years has included exhibits of old cars and engines, crafts and activities, and competitions in up to 60 different events at one point. A news article about the 1990 Crank Up wrote of 80 exhibitors and a working sawmill that year, but the event witnessed some decline between the late 1990s and 2009. The 2012 Crank-up confirmed its resurgence as a very well-patronised and significant community event that has reinstated a popular wood chop and cross cut saw competition.

The current visitors book, which dates back to May 1985, shows a steady decline in the number of visitors over the years. The twenty-six pages of signatures in 1985 are reduced to one page in 2010, although the nature of the comments remains the same: beautiful, very interesting, fascinating, loved it, thank you, etc. This is quite a typical pattern for community museums and is often the result of waning energy in an increasingly aging and smaller management committee, many of which were formed during the wave of interest in local history in the 1960s and 1970s.

For many years a high wire security fence has surrounded the site, described in the 2004 Conservation Survey of the Museum's collection as 'a 2.4 metre high cyclone wire fence. This surrounds the ground perimeter. In addition to the fence we see 3 strands of barbed wire at the top. A similar style fence is on the platform ... again with lockable gates, and used around the 1925 Overland car display'. The platform fence is the original one, with the ground perimeter fence added when the Museum was granted the extra land to include the railway precinct in 1980. These uninviting surrounds would have contributed to the reduction in visitors. The fence surrounding the platform has now been completely removed (the last part during the course of this assessment) and the museum is a lot more open to the public now and more readily identifiable as a heritage railway precinct.

The archives of the Society have been utilised, along with records from the Council, local newspaper, the library and local residents, by Brian Carroll, the author of the Council's centenary publication in 1988, *The Upper Yarra, An Illustrated History*. In the last year or so the Committee are being increasingly contacted by local and far flung residents with research queries or with offers of donations. Over the years Historical Society members and other researchers have produced several publications based on the archival material held by the Museum.

In the last couple of years the Museum has received a boost in energy that has generated some positive interest from further afield from authorities as well as residents and visitors (see History of the Collection p.8). In February 2012 the Museum was designated a Place of Deposit by the State Government and so is responsible for the archiving and management of all public records from the area that would not otherwise be kept by the Public Record Office.

These recent events indicate that the level of interest in the Museum, once so high in the years following its establishment, is only likely to increase and generate further involvement from visitors and researchers alike. The Precinct has the potential to become a focus for local and family research as well as community and cultural activities, and fabulous displays and interpretations of the history of the region. The collection held by the Museum is likely to become a more important and integral component of the wider community.

Comparative Analysis

This section will compare the collection of the Upper Yarra Museum with two similar ones visited by myself, three described on the Collections Australia Network, and those held within the Shire of Yarra Ranges.

The Man From Snowy River Museum, Corryong, Victoria – this collection covers the social and working history of life in the north-east of Victoria, includes a number of original and transplanted buildings (including a police lock up), and has several items that were considered to have potential significance of a high level. In other words it is very similar to the UYM's collection, including the timing of its establishment and location in an original institutional building.

Ambleside Park Museum, Knox – this also has a similar chronology (Society established in mid 1960s to preserve the heritage of the area and found a home for their collection during the 1970s in a local heritage building, with interest declining during the late 1990s and 2000s). As with the UYM, there are several items of significance, buildings that belong to the site or have been transplanted, and a collection that covers many aspects of 19th and early 20th century life in the Knox region.

The following museums are all situated in a railway station, or dedicated to the history of rail and timber, rather than their general local history. I have not visited any of these and the information is all from the Collections Australia Network or Culture Victoria.

Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum – this museum has a focus on the timber industry of the Rubicon Forest during the first half of the 19th century, and the tramway and railway that supported it. Their collection includes a number of steam and non-steam locomotives; logging equipment such as tractors, winches, models, tools and rigging; passenger cars; rolling stock such as passenger cars and bogies; machinery such as engines, pumps and generators; original buildings including the Alexandra railway station, the goods shed and a railway crane; and locomotive and goods sheds from the closed Mansfield railway and the Alexandra sawmill. This is an active railway museum with a bimonthly magazine, training for volunteers to maintain the stock, a website with a members' section, and accreditation with Transport Safety Victoria as a Tourist Railway.

Australian Railway Historical Society Railway Museum in North Williamstown is dedicated to the history of rail in Victoria and has a wide ranging collection of locomotives. They also have a focus on recording the history of rail transport and so have a research archive, collect sound recordings where possible, and produce a newsletter.

Bright and District Historical Society – as with the UYM, this museum covers the history of gold and timber and the social history of its region, including a reconstructed Chinese Joss House. The railway station is heritage listed and the old, now redundant, railway line is part of a Rail Trail, just as the railway precinct at Yarra Junction is. The museum also has a family history and photographic collection.

Across the Shire today the UYM has always been one of only two museums, the other being a privately run museum at Wandin. They were the only two serving the entire region until 2011 when the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum was opened in Lilydale with a large budget, a staff and a purpose built building. This museum includes amongst its responsibilities the role of 'a focal point for more than 17 historical societies and heritage groups across the Shire', however there does not appear to be any significant relationship between the Regional Museum and the locally based collections.

These community collections, managed by local historical societies and heritage groups, number seventeen in the Yarra Ranges Shire and are mostly archival or photographic collections. The descriptions of each on the Shire's Community Directory show that most are archival or photographic collections enabling local history research. Many of them conduct research themselves and appear to produce publications about their area. One, the Upper Yarra Living History Group, conducts oral history interviews.

The object and archival collections at UYM (not including the buildings) are similar in extent, scope and integrity to many local history museums around Victoria that were established during the heyday of local history but that run on a shoestring, and by a dedicated volunteer group. What sets the UYM apart from most local history museums (except maybe the one at Bright, which I haven't visited) is its location in a heritage railway precinct that has a history unlike any other railway station in Victoria.

In summary, the heritage railway precinct that is the home of the UYM, and the substantial collection the Museum holds that supports the history of this railway as well as reflecting the general history of the region, makes it quite special in the Yarra Ranges and almost unique in Victoria at least.

Discussion of Significance

This section makes use of the research and inquiries, and the criteria described in *Significance 2.0*, to elucidate the types and degrees of significance held in this collection.

- Historic – the Upper Yarra Museum's collection, particularly those elements that reflect the history embedded in the story of the heritage railway precinct, has a high level of regional significance. These include artefacts and archival material relating to the timber industry; the exploration, survey, and development of the tram and rail lines; the efforts by early communities to adapt to or overcome, and make a social and economic life within the hilly and dense environment; and the scientific and technical advancements made with the Cuming Smith distillation techniques and the engineering of the tramways, amongst other stories. There is also historic significance to be found in the development and close location of the former line and sidings of the Lilydale-Warburton railway (1901-1966), the Yarra Junction-Powelltown railway (1913-1944), and the Gilderoy Tramway (1907-1913).
- Artistic or aesthetic – there are many items, including some of the 19th and early 20th century textiles, and embroidery or lace items in the Marj Wilson collection, a painted glass screen suggested to have come from the Royal Exhibition Buildings, and a French music box c1889 whose provenance is unclear. Until further research uncovers their stories and ascertains they are related to the Upper Yarra region they are beautiful objects but unable to contribute aesthetic significance to the collection.
- Scientific or research – the Powelltown Mill blueprints for the timber mills and tramways are already proving to be of research significance to the Department of Sustainability and Environment in their restoration of heritage timber bridges. There is potential for the archival collection to enable research into local and family history.
- Social or spiritual – this collection has no social or spiritual significance.
- Provenance – the degree of provenance recorded for the items in the collection is very low, which does the objects themselves and the collection as a whole a disservice. It is evident that there are many stories to be told from this collection, but without the information that comes with good provenance

records the interpretation is minimal, the displays are static, and the research potential of the archive and photograph collection is greatly reduced.

- Rarity or representativeness – much of the collection is representative of 19th and early 20th century domestic and working lives, but the engineering drawings for the Powelltown Mill and tramway must be considered rare and maybe unique as a complete working set of timber tramway blueprints.
- Interpretive capacity – there is a great deal of potential for interpreting the lives of early 20th timber workers, the purpose built Upper Yarra Dam township, the development from gold mining to timber township to urban sprawl and a semi-rural outskirts of metropolitan Melbourne, and local social and working lives during the 19th and first half of the 20th century, however this is marred by the lack of provenance.
- Condition or integrity – the condition of the collection as a whole is sadly lacking due to poor storage for objects and for archival records. The report provided by Artefact Conservation in 2004 provides a thorough assessment of this aspect of the collection and should be referred to when considering the condition of various items or sub-collections.

Assessment Against Criteria

Heritage Council of Victoria Criteria for the Assessment of Cultural Heritage Significance held by Victorian collections

Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history

Some elements of the Upper Yarra Museum's collection, such as the railway precinct and the Powelltown Mill blueprints, because of their relationship to the wider story of timber milling in Victoria, may be of state level significance. The collection as a whole certainly has a high level of historical significance at a local and regional level.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history

The interpretive and research capacity of the collection, particularly the photographic and archival collection, has the potential to contribute to an understanding of the early 20th century vastly successful timber milling industry, and to the history of a rural region that develops to become part of the outer reaches of a major metropolitan area but essentially retains its rural characteristics.

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or objects.

The buildings and platform that together comprise the heritage railway precinct, and are in Heritage Overlay 48 as part of the Yarra Ranges Shire Planning Scheme, are representative of an early 20th century substantially important metropolitan railway station.

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The collection held by the Upper Yarra Museum and the components of the heritage railway precinct in which it has found a home. This includes the railway station and platform, the porter's cottage, the guard's van, and the former line and sidings of the Lilydale-Warburton railway (1901-1966), the Yarra Junction-Powelltown railway (1913-1944), and the Gilderoy Tramway (1907-1913). It also includes the non-railway buildings such as the two workers huts built for the Upper Yarra Dam construction, the Powelltown Police Station and the Yarra Junction Lock Up. It also includes all of the artefacts (indoor and outdoor), original photographs (prints, negatives, slides), original documents, original maps and technical drawings, working models, books, oral histories, films and other audiovisual material that have provenance to the region covered by the Upper Yarra Museum.

How is it Significant?

The collection of the Upper Yarra Museum has historical and research significance at a regional level and possibly contains some items that may be considered rare or even unique at a state level.

Why is it Significant?

The collection of the Upper Yarra Museum is historically significant for its representation of the wider story of timber milling in the region and in Victoria, the social and industrial history of the Upper Yarra region, and the evolution of a gold mining settlement into a thriving township, a dormitory suburb or outer region of metropolitan Melbourne and a semi-rural area.

The collection has research significance to be found within its engineering blueprints and in its archival and photographic collection.

Recommendations

General recommendations

- Promote a sense of community:
 - Publicise the collection in local newspapers with regular articles, stories or 'history bites'.
 - Engage with local schools and encourage donations of school projects focused on local history.
 - Pursue the efforts to publicise and make good community use of the photograph and film collection.
- Collect contemporary as well as historical material:
 - Encourage local businesses and institutions to deposit copies of their records, ephemera, posters etc in the collection.
 - Request copies of house plans and sales guides from the local real estate agents to build a resource aimed at helping people research the history of local residential and other buildings.
- Assist the research & visitor experience of your users:
 - Develop a guide to your collection and the stories behind some of the items or sub-collections. This will also help volunteers not familiar with it to respond to queries and could be available for visitors to walk around with. A simple, photocopied sheet of stories and facts may be something they can take home with them as a keepsake or to promote the Museum to friends.
- Manage the guardianship of important local resources:
 - Ensure that provenance details of all donated items are recorded.

Specific recommendations

The Museum collection is numerous, diverse, largely unprovenanced, and in need of better storage and display facilities, but hampered by a lack of money and people power to do all the jobs that need doing. The following recommendations are made in the hope of tackling some of these problems in a manageable way; that is, by requiring as little money as can be got away with, making the most of previous work (for example the Collection Policy, 2010 and the Conservation Survey, 2004), and by encouraging assistance from the wider community. I have deliberately not put them in any order of priority to avoid misconceptions that some things should not be done until others have been completed. Rather, if an opportunity arises to carry out any one of these tasks it should be taken up at the time.

- Museum management:
 - A Preservation Needs Assessment is highly recommended as the first step towards securing conservation and appropriate storage for the textiles, original photographs and film, and original archive documents.
 - Make use of the Conservation Survey conducted by Artifact Conservation in 2004 by focusing on the manageable tasks (in terms of time and money required) to apply for funds required. Although not a very encouraging report it does make clear where the conservation priorities lie.
 - The Collection Policy provides a solid framework with which to make sound acquisitions and refuse unrelated donations, and to guide the development of permanent and temporary exhibitions. It is recommended that this be distributed to the Committee and made visible in the Museum's office so that its conditions become familiar in the minds of all those doing any work in the Museum.
- Interpretation:
 - The following book may be of assistance; Georgia Rouette, *Exhibitions: A practical guide for small museums and galleries*, Museums Australia (Vic), 2007.
 - Engage with community groups and/or history teachers at local secondary schools to develop a group of ready volunteers able to talk to donors or their families about the provenance of objects in

the museum. This may develop into an assessment project for students, which could in turn become a donated assignment for the Museum's archives.

- The centenary of World War One in 2014 is a much-anticipated event amongst history and heritage professionals. Consider preparing a special exhibition making good use of the military related components of the collection. Such a project may be of interest to the Veteran's Unit in the State Department of Planning and Community Development, and/or to the Exhibitions & Collections unit at the Shrine of Remembrance, both of whom are considering ways to engage with communities and families during the centenary.

- Storage:

- In relation to the archival material, the recommendation made by Artifact Conservation to store the archives in a separate place that will also allow for research should be strongly considered. This is particularly important since the State Government designated the Museum as a Place of Deposit in February 2012.
- It is suggested that the Porter's Cottage would make an excellent Museum office with library and archive for all original and copied photographs and document, and a superb research area.

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