

The collective achievements of the many volunteers working on various projects related to the **Ziebell Farmhouse** this year, has been outstanding. **Léon Borrack** provides an update on a very busy year.



From left: Sylvia Schultz, Paul Schultz, Darren Knight and Prue McColl review the Ziebell Garden layout plans

PRESERVING OUR HISTORY

Our vision to preserve the legacy of German settlers in Westgarthtown includes a goal for Ziebell Farmhouse to become officially accredited as a Community Museum. 2009 has seen a large amount of activity there, much of it focussed around achieving this ultimate goal. Some of

the highlights of the many activities that occurred this year include:

- receiving a grant from Museums Australia
- completing the Museum Cataloguing project
- commissioning an eHive museum catalogue system
- commencing a Heritage Garden Record project
- initiating oral recordings of Westgarthtown elders

MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA GRANT

Earlier this year we were invited by Museums Australia's Building Better Museums (BBM) program to make an application for equipment to help facilitate our Heritagecare projects. We are delighted to record that this application was successful and we received \$2,828.00 to purchase a scanner, digital recorder, digital camera and a five years subscription to an online museum catalogue

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ZIEBELL FARMHOUSE

system called eHive.

The BBM grant application was coordinated by Gillian Borrack to whom we are indebted for the many hours of work she invested in seeing it through to completion. We would also like to record our appreciation to Heritagecare, Building Better Museums and the City of Whittlesea for their support with this project.

EHIVE MUSEUM CATALOGUE SYSTEM

The new eHive collection management system funded through the BBM grant was commissioned late in 2009. It will play a vital role in preserving the history of Westgarthtown and making it accessible to many more people. All items in the Ziebell Farmhouse museum collection have now been recorded in eHive. Through the various ongoing projects we plan to add records and images of garden plants, historical photographs and archival documents. Accessible via the internet, the information is already being added to and updated by authorised project volunteers. In the future, it may also be possible to make much of the information and associated photographs accessible to anyone who visits our website.

ZIEBELL FARMHOUSE GARDEN RECORD PROJECT

Earlier this year Gillian Borrack spearheaded a Friends of Westgarthtown application to Heritagecare for a second Community Stewardship project — the Ziebell Farmhouse Heritage Garden Record — to catalogue the garden onto a scaled digital garden plan. This application was approved in August.

The Friends have now reached a point where the garden is fairly stable in the pattern of changing seasons, and while not wishing to lock this pattern in absolutely, the garden plan currently in preparation will be the major document to guide the garden into the future so that no matter who is responsible, they will have certainty throughout the four seasons, and the essence or feel of the garden will remain into the future.

Visitors who are fascinated by the garden and often want to know what this and that plant are, will also benefit. The new plan will be able to tell them.

To produce the new plan, the garden has been measured up and the basic plan drawn electronically. Additional overlays have been added for major permanent trees and plants as well as the watering system. Each overlay is created on a separate “layer” of the file and used in much the same way as traditional acetate overlays. Layers can be turned on or off electronically prior to committing it to print allowing great flexibility to use the plan for material such as a new garden guide, large-scale printed plans,

electronic PDF documents, and the web

Our aim is to add four new overlays (one for each season). With the help of Sylvia Schultz, the Heritagecare volunteers and John Hawker, the Horticulturalist from Heritage Victoria, we will mark on the relevant information for each overlay. After this, the additional overlays can be created from the marked up prints.

ORAL RECORDINGS

The Friends of Westgarthtown believe that extended oral tapes of Sylvia Schultz discussing her connection and personal knowledge of the garden over 77 years are crucial to the accuracy of the history and heritage of this site. Her recollections of both her Ziebell grandparents, particularly her grandmother (a granddaughter of the original settlers Christian & Sophia Ziebell) who was born in 1873 and died in 1969 aged 96, as well as her eight aunts (all of whom lived into their 90's) and two uncles over those 77 years are also important. FoW are very conscious of the huge amount of knowledge that Sylvia carries in her memory — she and her two surviving brothers are the last direct link to the Ziebell family who actually lived and grew up at the Farmhouse and were directly involved in farm life. In Sylvia's case, she has been involved with the garden all her life, her mother being the last owner before Ziebell's farmhouse was sold to the City of Whittlesea after her death.

HISTORICAL IMAGES

Sylvia has always been a keen photographer, as was Augusta Borrack and the Friends plan to scan suitable prints and convert them to digital format as part of the historical collection of images. The Friends also want to record all the plants and flowers over the four seasons for our digital collection of images.

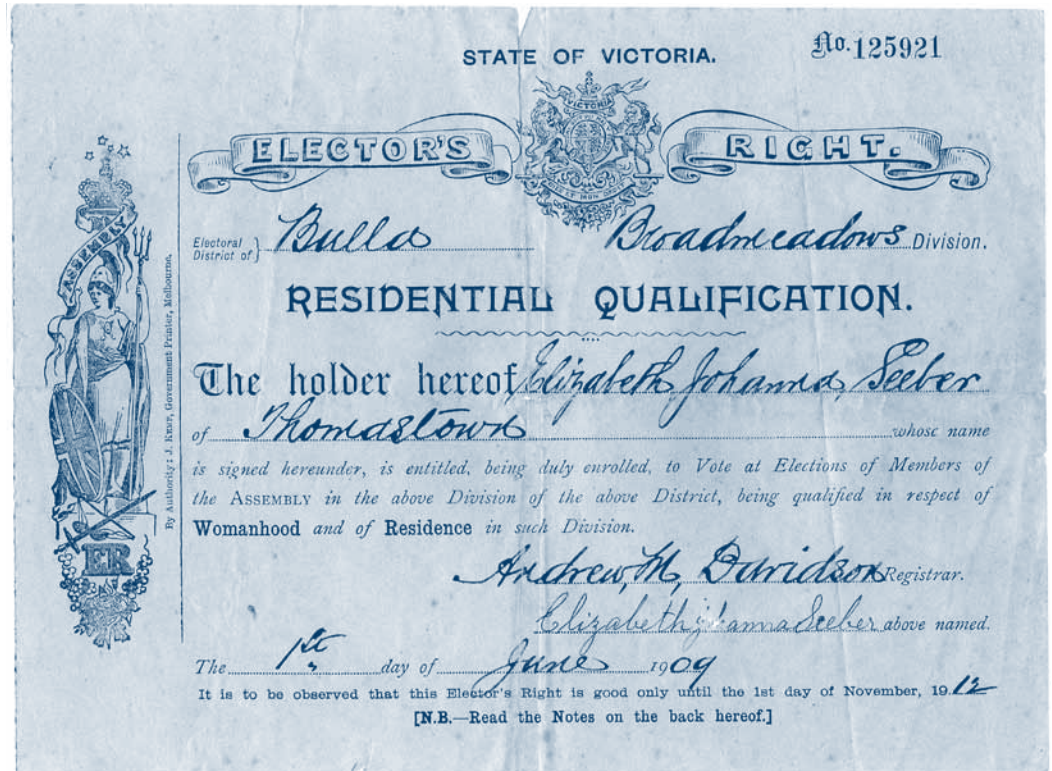
GARDEN GUIDE

Ultimately the Friends of Westgarthtown want to create a Garden Guide — an A5 booklet that would fold out to a two-sided A2 sheet. It would be similar to the folding used for a map — from A5 it would unfold concertina style and then fold out once upwards to full A2. This format would make the guide relatively compact with pages and sections for different pieces of content whilst also providing the flexibility to have a large plan of the garden when the guide is fully open. Accordingly we have applied to Heritage Victoria for the State's Victoria's Heritage Grants — Strengthening our Communities Program. At this point we do not know whether this application, also steered by Gillian Borrack, has been approved.

Elizabeth Johanna Seeber's 1909 Elector's Right

BY ROBERT WUCHATSCH

Regular readers of *Friends of Westgarthtown News* will recall the article in our April 2008 edition (Vol. 12, No. 1) about Johanna Wuchatsch being a signatory to the historic 1891 petition seeking women's suffrage in Victoria. Women were finally granted the right to vote in Victoria in November 1908. To be able to vote, however, women required an Elector's Right. At right is a copy of Elizabeth Johanna Seeber's Elector's Right, issued to her on 1 June 1909. Lizzie, as she was invariably known, was Johanna Wuchatsch's niece.



ABOUT LIZZIE SEEBER

Lizzie Seeber was born at Westgarthtown on 4 September 1867, the second child of Johann and Johanna (née Wuchatsch) Seeber (see *Friends of Westgarthtown News* September 2004, Vol. 8. No. 2). Lizzie's father worked as a shoemaker in the family home, which stood in High Street, opposite today's Lalor Railway Station. She attended the Westgarthtown Lutheran School until its closure in the mid 1870's, then transferred to the Thomastown State School. After leaving school, she stayed home to help her parents.

On her mother's early death in 1886, Lizzie took over management of the household and helped her father raise his large family of young children. She never married and remained on the family property with her younger brother Ben until her sudden death from a stroke on 18 November 1928, aged 61. She is buried in the Westgarthtown Cemetery.

Photograph of Lizzie Seeber and her Elector's Right provided by Robert Wuchatsch

Friedrich Heinrich Johann Timm

Friedrich Timm arrived in Melbourne aboard the *Alfred* in February 1850, with his wife Marie and two children, Friedrich Wilhelm and Elisabeth Marie Louise. The Timm family, from Mecklenburg, were original settlers and landholders at Westgarthtown.

Friedrich (or Frederick as he came to be known) was naturalised on

20 March 1851, aged 38. On 7 May 1851, he purchased a 10 acre plot (Lot 14, Section 25, Parish of Keelbundora) at Westgarthtown, for £10. This land is now covered by houses in the Edgars Road and Dion and Alfa Courts area of Lalor. Soon after, he purchased a further 5 acres from a neighbour, Wilhelm Gustavus Franke.

The Timm family did not remain

long at Westgarthtown, however, purchasing 258 acres of land in Bindts Road, Wollert on 12 August 1854 from William Hedding for £1,219 (part Section 16, Parish of Morang). They are believed to have moved there shortly after, although Frederick retained his land at Westgarthtown, leasing it to Isaac Moor for five years in 1860. This land was later let to other tenants, including Louis Seeber and Joshua Hammond, the latter of whom worked as a driver for Westgarthtown's milk carter, Andrew Kreitling.

The Timm property at Wollert was located in the northern half of Section 16, beside the farm of Christian Bindt, a fellow *Alfred* passenger. Like most of their neighbours, the Timm family were dairy farmers. In 1863, both Timm children were married – Frederick Jr to Amelia Louisa Hanuschke and Eliza to Edward Loudon. In 1864, Frederick Sr leased 240 acres of the Wollert farm to his son-in-law, before his death there on 20 August 1866, aged 58. The 12-man inquest jury, which concluded Frederick



The graves of Frederick & Maria Timm in Epping Cemetery (Photo: Robert Wuchatsch)

Wilhelm Gustavus Franke

Gustavus Franke, who arrived in Melbourne with his wife Henrietta (née Rumler) aboard the *Pribislaw* in February 1850, was an original landholder at Westgarthtown, but stayed only a short time before dying on the Victorian goldfields in 1853.

Franke, a shoemaker from Pfaffendorf, Prussia was naturalised on 28 April 1851, aged 33. On 7 May 1851, he purchased a five-acre

plot (Lot 13, Section 25, Parish of Keelbundora) at Westgarthtown, for £5. It is not clear whether Franke actually lived at Westgarthtown, or for how long if he did, as soon after his purchase he sold his small plot to a neighbour, Friedrich Timm. Today, most of Franke's former land is covered by houses in Lalor's Kalara Close, near Mount View Road and Kingsway Drive.

Nothing more is known about Franke until 11 February 1853,

when he died at Fryers Creek, on the Mount Alexander goldfields. His death was the result of a 'severe accident'. In his will, written and signed only a few hours before he died, he left all his real and personal estate to his wife Henriette.

Franke's real estate consisted of a wooden two-roomed house on a quarter of an acre (presumably his residence at Fryers Creek) and 'five acres of land at Richmond Punt', suggesting he may also have lived there for a short time. If the land at the Richmond Punt was near today's Punt Road bridge, imagine

Sr died from 'water on the chest', included seven other German neighbours — Johann Froebel, Carl Ewert, Friedrich Gunther, Henry Ludeman, Christian Hehr, Johann Rosel Sr and Johann Rosel Jr.

In 1868, Maria re-let most of the farm to Johann Froebel and held a clearing sale to dispose of all her farm stock, implements, dairy utensils and produce. By 1872, the farm was occupied by Frederick Jr; in 1884 by August Ollson; and in 1891 by Thomas Baker. By that stage, Friedrich Jr had moved to a farm near Corowa in New South Wales and Eliza to the Mansfield district.

Maria Timm died on 18 December 1890 aged 83 and was buried in the Epping Cemetery with her husband. The Wollert farm, on which there were two dwellings, passed to her daughter Eliza, who sold it to John Sharp in 1893 for £2,257.10.0. The property was later purchased by the McKie family which owned it for many years. The land at Westgarthtown passed to Frederick Jr, who in 1893 sold it to Charles Wuchatsch in for £325.

what it would be worth today? Back then his total real estate for probate purposes was said to be worth less than £150.

Franke was probably buried at Fryers Creek. Henriette remarried at the Melbourne suburb of Hawthorn later in 1853 and she and her second husband, Henry Thiele, were farming nearby at Hartwell in 1878. Henry died in 1886 and at Ballarat in 1889 she married for the third time, to John Reeves, a farmer of Boort.

Henrietta, who had no children, died at Ballarat on 21 September 1916, aged 87.

Naturalisation problems 1851 style

Soon after their arrival in Australia in 1849 and 1850, most of Westgarthtown's adult male Germans applied to be naturalised, in order to become British Subjects and thereby qualify to own land at Port Phillip (then part of New South Wales). Most of the Westgarthtown's original landowners had settled there in March 1850, but had to wait until all intending purchasers were naturalised before they could legally take possession of their plots. One of the requirements of naturalisation was that applicants had to swear an oath of allegiance to the British Crown within 60 days of their naturalisation certificate being granted.

Friedrich Kawerau was naturalised on 15 May 1850; Julius Groening and Christian Ziebell on 21 May 1850; Moritz Waehner on 15 October 1850; Ernst Heyne on 28 October 1850; Gottlob Wanke, Friedrich Winter, Johann Wuchatsch and Johann Zimmer on 16 December 1850; Johann Graff, Johann Maltzahn; Friedrich Timm and Johann Gottlob Siebel on 20 March 1851; Gustavus Franke on 28 April 1851; and Friedrich Gruenberg on 3 May 1851. For some unaccountable reason, however, Gottlieb Knobloch was not naturalized until 1853.

The letter at right, from the *Argus* of 19 February 1851, relates a tale of delay and frustration experienced by several Westgarthtown Germans required to take the oath of allegiance before a Supreme Court judge in Melbourne. The problem arose from the inability of the Germans to understand English and the judge's resultant indecision as to whether he could legally take oaths of allegiance via a translator. After four fruitless trips by the Germans from Dry Creek (Westgarthtown) to Melbourne as a result of the Judge's confusion, the matter was referred to the New South Wales Government in Sydney, causing further delays. Fortunately, the matter was soon resolved, but not without considerable inconvenience to the Germans involved.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.
A GREAT LOSS OF TIME.
<i>To the Editor of the Argus.</i>
<p>Sir,—On Monday last, I was requested by three German settlers from the Dry Creek wishing to take the oath of allegiance in Melbourne to act as interpreter, these gentlemen acquainted me with their having been in town for the same purpose already on Saturday last, when they were remanded for Monday, the 10th February, but owing to their inability to understand the English language, the said object had remained the very day as unsettled as before.</p> <p>According to new orders they went again to town on Tuesday morning, and I, desirous to prepare all what might be required, proceeded to the residence of his Honor the Resident Judge anxious to get the necessary informations.</p> <p>Being engaged at nine o'clock a.m. I called a little before ten and got no admittance.</p> <p>At eleven o'clock I went there again with three of my countrymen, whose number had increased to five, but we could not see his Honor he being, as we were told busily engaged. We were then apprized to be at the Supreme Court House on Thursday, the 13th instant, at eleven o'clock. Resigned to our fate we patiently waited till that day, punctually appearing at the appointed time. A clerk begged us to wait a few minutes, but judge about our astonishment, when as we were called into the room these few proved to be sixty. We hoped that now at last the act of taking the oath would begin, but we were again disappointed, only one of the five acquainted with the English language being admitted, the other four unable to understand the wording of the oath were for the moment excluded.</p> <p>His Honor declining for this case, the services of an interpreter, added that he had written on the subject to Sydney for further instructions.</p> <p>Now, Mr Editor, I will not inquire why the said fact has not been communicated to my countrymen at their first application, (it would have saved them much trouble and nearly three days labour, their land being at a distance of about eleven miles from town.) I merely come to point out the necessity of nominating a legal German Interpreter, (perhaps Mr Brahe, the Secretary to the German Immigration Committee) in order to avoid future losses of time and money.</p> <p>Should the Sydney answer be also in the negative, the Germans now residing in this colony, unacquainted with the English language, and wishing to become naturalized, (and there are still many) would be placed in a very awkward position.</p>
<p>I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient servant, J. A. MARKERT. North-east of Stephen-street, Melbourne, 14th February, 1851.</p>

Letter published in the *Argus* of 19 February 1851 (courtesy National Library of Australia website)

City of Whittlesea's Cultural Heritage Program

BY GILLIAN BORRACK

2009 celebrates the 10th Anniversary of the program and the Friends of Westgarthtown have presented a least one event for each year of the program. The Friends of Westgarthtown have also been represented on the City of Whittlesea's Cultural Heritage Program Committee since it commenced. Sylvia Schultz and Gillian Borrack have been our representatives for the past 6 years.

MUSIC IN WARM PLACES

On Sunday 19 July, the Friends of Westgarthtown, supported by the City of Whittlesea presented our first event, Music in Warm Places as part of the 2009 Cultural Heritage Program.

We have presented Music in Warm Places in winter twice before, albeit each time a little differently, and this year was no exception. For those of you who were not there, Sylvia welcomed the musicians, who performed at the north end of the living room while the fire blazed warmly in the southern corner. Igor Pelka on guitar and Carol Appelt on the flute began the recital with arrangements of German pieces including Bach, Beethoven and Schubert. This was interspersed with a group of three singers singing the music of medieval and renaissance composers in a cappella style (unaccompanied), which included a few



A cosy fire at Ziebell Farmhouse during Music in Warm Places

German songs. The resulting contrast made for a varied and most enjoyable afternoon of music, with a break of 30 minutes for a beautiful afternoon tea, prepared by the Friends of Westgarthtown, coordinated by Marita Anders.

All present agreed that it was a delightful way to spend a winter's afternoon.

GUIDED TOURS OF THE WESTGARTH TOWN HERITAGE TRAIL



Ziebell Farmhouse garden, the starting point for the Guided Tours of Westgarthtown Heritage Trail

On Sunday 1 November, The Friends of Westgarthtown presented our second event Guided Tours of the Westgarthtown Heritage Trail as part of the 2009 Cultural Heritage Program.

This is the second year we have presented this event. This year the weather was mild and very pleasant contrasting with the cold and blustery one in 2008. The garden was looking particularly abundant after our recent rains and sunny days in October and was much appreciated by the participants. We had three tours running on the hour starting at the Ziebell farmhouse at 1pm, 2pm and 3pm. Tatiana Joukoff, our

Tour Co-ordinator and Guide ran the 1pm and 3 pm tours, while Robert Wuchatsch our Historian, and Newsletter Editor ran the 2 pm tour. Their professional knowledge and delightful presentation was much appreciated by the many participants.

At the end of each tour the participants enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea with their tour guide and prepared and served by the Friends of Westgarthtown and co-ordinated once again by Marita Anders.

We would like to record our appreciation to the City of Whittlesea for their support in presenting these two events in 2009; and our thanks in particular to Helen Sartinas, the Cultural Heritage officer from the City of Whittlesea who helped the Friends of Westgarthtown co-ordinate and organize not only our events, but all the others presented within the entire program.

Sylvia and I would also like to thank the Friends of Westgarthtown members who volunteered to assist with the preparation before and during the day, as well as those members who supported us by traveling considerable distances to join in this Guided Tour.

Old tree removed at Maltzahn's Farmhouse

Lalor resident and historian John Waghorn has advised that the old cypress tree at Maltzahn's Farmhouse was 'declared dangerous and chopped off at the socks' in late August 2009. This followed damage to one of the adjacent units caused by a large falling branch.

This tree, while probably 100 years old, had been relatively healthy until the yard around it was concreted in 2001. This action largely eliminated the trees natural water supply and it died in about 2006. John says the remaining stump, which has now also been removed, was about one metre high but it was not possible to count the growth rings, so the tree's age could not be accurately established.

Bendigo German Heritage Society

If you had German ancestors in the Bendigo district, the German Heritage Society, Bendigo may be able to help you. In 2008 this society celebrated its 20th Anniversary, having been established in 1988 to promote research into and recognition of the German presence in Bendigo.

A notable advance in the awareness of Bendigo's German heritage was the publication in 1998 of the book *Bendigo the German Chapter* by Frank Cusack, author and historian and foundation member of the German Heritage Society, Bendigo.

The German Heritage Society, Bendigo can be contacted via the Secretary at 154 Barnard Street, Bendigo Vic. 3550. Tel: 5441 5955

Visiting Ziebell's Farmhouse

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

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

Thomastown Lutheran Church Services

Services are held on the second and fourth Sunday of the month at 2.30 pm at the Thomastown Lutheran Church, German Lane, Lalor. For further details, contact Irma Hatty on 03 9338 9064 or see the Calvary Lutheran Church website at www.calvarychurch.com.au

Friends of Lutheran Archives

Do you have Lutheran ancestors? Have you checked with the Lutheran Archives in Adelaide to see whether they hold information about your relatives? Would you like to join the Friends of Lutheran Archives and help support the collection and preservation of important Australian and New Zealand Lutheran archival material.

For further details, contact Lutheran Archives
27 Fourth Street, Bowden South Australia 5007.
Tel/Fax: 08 8340 4009.
Email: lutheran.archives@lca.org.au

New caretakers at Ziebell Farmhouse

BY GILLIAN BORRACK

In May this year we said farewell to Nanette Jelleff our caretaker for the past four years, and more recently her partner Duncan Steele, when they made the decision to move to country Victoria. Nanette spent only one week away from the farmhouse in all that time!

Nanette proved to be very versatile and approached her many and varied tasks with great cheerfulness. For the greater part of that time she also held down a full time job. As well as her contribution to the management of the garden at the farmhouse, she supported the general well-being and smooth running of many of the Friends of Westgarthtown's activities and events. We would like to record our gratitude and thanks to Nanette as well as our best wishes to both Nanette and Duncan for a very happy future.

In June 2009, we were delighted to welcome as our new caretakers Adam Ziebell, the grandson of Henry Ziebell, the last descendant to farm the Ziebell farm, and Aaron Swanson. Adam and Aaron have both now settled into the many responsibilities and pleasures of their new home and gardens. The farmhouse garden looks very healthy as we move through spring and the spring garden is filled with an array of colourful flowers.

Epping North street names



Several new streets in Epping North have recently been named after the City of Whittlesea's early German settlers etc. More about this interesting new development in our next newsletter.

FRIENDS OF WESTGARTHTOWN INC.

ABN 74 674 258 165 Inc. Reg No. A0032721Y

Enquiries (03) 9464 5062

PO Box 95 Thomastown VIC 3074

enquiries@westgarthtown.org.au

www.westgarthtown.org.au

President **Sylvia Schultz**
 Vice-President **Geoff Borrack**
 Secretary **Gillian Borrack**
 Treasurer **Léon Borrack**
 Committee **Rob Wuchatsch**
Pauline Atkins

Historian **Rob Wuchatsch**
 Heritage Architect **Geoff Borrack**
 Tours Coordinator **Tatiana Joukoff**
 Memberships **Gaye Wuchatsch**
 Caretakers **Adam Ziebell**

Editor **Rob Wuchatsch**
 Design **Léon Borrack**

Westgarthtown is the oldest and most intact German/ Wendish settlement in Victoria. Established in March 1850, it will celebrate its 160th Anniversary in the year 2010.

The Thomastown Lutheran Church at Westgarthtown is the second oldest surviving Lutheran Church building in Australia and the oldest still used as the principal worship centre of a Lutheran congregation.

Heritage Victoria has included the Lutheran Church, Cemetery and Reserve; and Graff's, Siebel's, Wuchatsch's and Ziebell's houses on its Heritage Register, recognising their outstanding heritage value and providing legislative protection for the future.

Ziebell's Farmhouse is Victoria's oldest German immigrant building.

Siebel's Farmhouse, erected in 1860, is the birthplace of Albert Siebel, who in 1934 established the Pura Dairy at Preston, to retail Westgarthtown's milk. Pura has now developed into a leading national Australian brandname.

Wuchatsch's Farmhouse is believed to be the oldest house in Melbourne to have been constructed, owned and continually occupied by the same family.