



Sylvia Schultz (left) and Gaye Wuchatsch.

Vale Sylvia & Gaye

In April we suffered two sudden very sad losses with the deaths of past President Sylvia Schultz and former Ziebell's Farmhouse caretaker Gaye Wuchatsch.

A direct descendant of Christian and Sophia Ziebell, Sylvia grew up at The Pines, now known as Ziebell's Farmhouse. From the age of eight until she married, she was the constant companion and helper to her grandmother, Dorothea Ziebell. Sylvia's lifelong connection with the farmhouse, outbuilding and garden was continued when Sylvia's mother purchased The Pines after Dorothea's death in 1969. Following her mother's passing in April 1990, Sylvia became a founding member of the Friends of Westgarthtown and a driving force behind the restoration of both the farmhouse and garden. Sylvia's knowledge enabled us to document family life at Ziebell's Farmhouse over four generations. Her contribution to

the history of the Ziebell family, who lived, farmed and tended the garden, will remain in perpetuity.

Gaye, the wife of our Vice President Robert Wuchatsch, was a consistent and enthusiastic contributor to the Friends of Westgarthtown. After meeting Robert in 1999, she quickly became a member and began volunteering regularly in the garden at Ziebell's Farmhouse. Her contribution further escalated when she became the caretaker there in 2001. After moving to Pirron Yallock, Gaye continued to attend our meetings and help at events despite her very busy life in the country.

The tragic loss of both Sylvia and Gaye is something we are still coming to terms with. This issue of the *Friends of Westgarthtown News* is dedicated to them.

Sylvia Dorothea Schultz (1926–2014)

Sylvia Schultz, a Ziebell descendant, foundation member and former president of the Friends of Westgarthtown, died on 26 April 2014 aged 87. Below is the eulogy prepared by her children for Sylvia's funeral service at the Epping Presbyterian Church. She was buried in the Thomastown Lutheran Cemetery at Westgarthtown.

Sylvia was born at Shepparton on 14 June 1926, the eldest child of Joseph Percy Adams and Sylvia Dorothea Adams (née Ziebell). She was baptised at the Church of England Church, Shepparton on 3 December 1926. She had three brothers — Joe, Carl (deceased) and Francis.

The first six years of Sylvia's life were spent on a settlement farm at Goolgowie near Griffith in New South Wales. When she was six and ready to start school, her grandmother Dorothea Ziebell came to visit and when she realised Sylvia would have to ride a pony alone some distance to school, decided to take her home to the family farm at Westgarthtown. Distressed at leaving her parents and being brought into a house full of adults (her aunts Ruth, Verona, Augusta, Bertha and Decima and uncles Alf and Henry were still unmarried), it was decided Sylvia should live at Reservoir with her recently married aunt Linda.

Sylvia attended Reservoir Primary School for about two years, then returned to Ziebell's Farm and completed her primary schooling at Thomastown. When she was ten years old, her father died and her mother returned to Westgarthtown, unable to maintain the farm on her own with three little boys. Sylvia was thus reunited with her mother and brothers.

Sylvia attended Preston Girls School for a year, studying domestic science, learning about the chemistry of food. Every day, rain or sunshine, she rode her uncle's bike from the farm to Cramer Street, Preston and back, praying for a north wind to push her along to school and a south wind to get her home again. At 14, during the Christmas holidays, she started work as a cashier at Ball and Welch, a department store in Melbourne. She had wanted to continue her education and be a nurse, but World War 2 had begun and she did not return to school.

Sylvia worked for Ball and Welch until her marriage to Leslie Ronald (Ron) Schultz at Trinity German Lutheran Church, East Melbourne on 25 February 1950, aged 23. As well as being a wife and working alongside Ron at *Pine Grove*, the Schultz farm at Wollert, Sylvia also cared for her ill mother-in-law, who lived with them.



Sylvia and Ron on their wedding day in 1950.

Five years later she became a mother and eventually had three children — Sylvia, Doretta and Paul.

Much of Sylvia's social time throughout her life was devoted to the Church. As a child she attended Sunday School at the Thomastown Lutheran Church and in her teenage years worshipped at the Thomastown Methodist Church, where she played the organ at services, taught Sunday School, produced a play and found her deeper faith and love for the Lord. Her faith sustained her through tragic and trying times, especially when she was very ill and near death when aged 36. Sylvia was also organist at the Thomastown Lutheran Church from 1945 until her marriage, when she began to attend the Epping Presbyterian Church where Ron worshipped. She

soon joined the committee of the Presbyterian Women's Mission Union (PWMU), played the organ on Sundays and ran fetes for the building of the Sunday School and Manse. She learnt to drive so she could contribute even more and as her children became older, she worked in the city branch of the PWMU on various committees — catering for the Assembly, PWMU Cookbook and at the PWMU head office.

Sylvia also had a strong commitment to the wider community. When her children attended school she served on the Mother's Club committee. With other local ladies, she established, chaired and worked for the Shire and then City of Whittlesea's Benevolent Society for 20 years as a volunteer. She was a founding member of the auxiliary for the Northern Hospital at Epping and its president for many years. She also worked on the auxiliary at the Royal Melbourne Hospital and in pastoral care at the Royal Women's Hospital. In 2009 Sylvia received the City of Whittlesea Australia Day Celebrations Service Award.

Sylvia developed the idea of restoring Ziebell's Farmhouse and along with her brothers, sold it to the City of Whittlesea in 1993, with the provision Ziebell family descendants oversee the restoration. In 1995, she was a foundation member of the Friends of Westgarthtown, served as a committee member for over 15 years and was president from 2008–11. It was her wish that all Ziebell descendants should be able to experience the life of their forebears firsthand and Ziebell's Farmhouse is now an historical icon in the City of Whittlesea. This was typical of Sylvia's influence,

leadership and determination in all she did.

Sylvia always had an opinion and was forthright in putting her thoughts and opinions forward. You always knew where you stood with Sylvia. Most of the time her opinion was right.

Probably because her own education had been compromised, Sylvia believed study was important and she sacrificed much to ensure her children's education. She then encouraged and supported her grandchildren to pursue their studies and achieve their goals. She proudly attended every graduation and her many interests and abilities are now reflected in her grandchildren's skills.

Sylvia was also interested in science; people's wellbeing and the fight for justice for them; travelling (she and Ron visited Europe in 1978); and her exceptional sewing, knitting and needlework skills, her passion for gardening, floral arranging and cooking all displayed her appreciation for, and great skill in, the arts and crafts. Her love of playing the piano and organ and appreciation of music was another of her many extraordinary assets.

Sylvia said she was blessed, as Paul would attend to her every need and Doretta and her daughters were always there when needed. In the last few years she had slowed down a lot in movement but would always attend meetings, family gatherings and Church if she was able.

Sylvia's day was filled with crosswords, reading her bible and watching television. Last Good Friday, she still beat everyone at Scrabble!

Mum had a very full life and we thank and bless the Lord for this.



Sylvia as a child and grown up with her Aunt Bertha (left) outside Melbourne's Trinity Lutheran Church in Parliament Place.

Margaret Gaye Wuchatsch (1943–2014)

Margaret Gaye Wuchatsch, better known to Friends of Westgarthtown members as Gaye, passed away on 23 April 2014 at Geelong, after a brief illness, aged 70. The wife of our former president Robert Wuchatsch, Gaye was caretaker at Ziebell's farmhouse from 2001–03 and also our membership officer for several years. She was buried in the Lutheran Cemetery at Westgarthtown following a service performed by Pastor Tim Stringer at the Thomastown Lutheran Church.

Margaret was born at South Melbourne on 7 August 1943, the first child of Valentine James and Marjorie Lohse (née Muston). The Lohse family lived at Brighton until Margaret was four years old, then Ballarat, where Val was appointed as Ballarat Brewery architect. Margaret's sister Ruth was born soon after. Marj Lohse was a primary school teacher.

Margaret and Ruth attended Dana Street State School and later Clarendon College. Theirs was a happy childhood, enjoying school, sports such as netball and hockey, music and worship at St Andrews Kirk, Ballarat which the Lohse family attended.

In 1961, Margaret (also known as Gaye) commenced studies at Ballarat Teachers College. Shortly before, the family had moved to a new house Val designed in

Wendouree Parade, beside the lake. A defining period in Margaret's life began in 1963 when she was critically injured when a car in which she was a passenger ran off the road near Ballarat while returning from a party near Carisbrook. Thrown from the badly damaged vehicle she was barely alive on arrival at Ballarat Hospital. Her parents were told she would not survive, but she did. She was told she would never walk again, but after a year in hospital and rehabilitation, she walked. The determination so evident in Margaret's recent battles against breast cancer has always been there.

Following her recovery, Margaret resumed teacher training, graduated, then spent the next 46 years teaching, a career she loved. From 1964–1969 she taught at Ballarat, Balwyn North and Devon Meadows. On 20 December 1969, she married architect Bruce Caldwell



Gaye and Paul Schultz setting up a plant stall at the Ziebell's Farmhouse Open Garden in 2012.

at St Andrews Kirk, Ballarat. In 1970–71 she taught at Warrawong, then in 1972 spent a wonderful year touring Europe with Bruce, including travel with her parents.

On her return to Australia, Margaret taught at Blackburn North, Koonung Heights and Park Orchards. She also took time off to have four children — Tim (1975), Matthew (1977), Chris (1978) and Louise (1980).

In 1981 Margaret, Bruce and the children moved from Box Hill North to a new home in Donvale on a one-acre block. When Louise was six months old, Margaret resumed teaching at Park Orchards. She later taught Louise there, where she rose to become Acting then later Deputy Principal. After brief periods at Birralee, Jells Park and Templestowe (Deputy Principal), Margaret taught at Laburnum from 1994–2005. In 1982 she had obtained her Graduate Diploma in Educational Administration and in 1989 commenced studies for a Master's Degree but later deferred.

Margaret had many interests, including yachting with her husband Bruce, gardening, craftwork, historic houses, antiques and local and family history. She was a keen member of the Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society and Port Phillip Pioneers, particularly after her separation from Bruce in 1998. It was through her interest in her German Lohse and Kraemer ancestry she met Robert Wuchatsch in 1999. Love soon blossomed and on 16 August 2003 they were married in the Thomastown Lutheran Church, which they attended each fortnight. From 2001–03 Margaret lived in the caretaker's house at Ziebell's Farmhouse, teaching and caretaking, then from 2003–06 lived with Robert and his mother Muriel at Wuchatsch's Farmhouse. Margaret and Robert made many Victorian, Australian and overseas research trips during their time together. As well as the Friends of Westgarthtown, she was also a member of the Wendish Heritage Society Australia.

In January 2006, Margaret and Robert moved to an 11 acre property they bought in the Stony Rises at Pirron Yallock, between Colac and Camperdown. Here Margaret found her dream home – the Stony Rises Homestead — an 1860s stone house with a rusty roof, open fire place, large garden with lots of roses and enough land for her pets Nike the dog and the chooks. Soon she added Red Poll cattle and a kelpie named Ted. She also threw herself into the local community, joining the Stonyford CFA and Market Committee, Colac VIEW Group and the committees of the Camperdown Historical Society and Camperdown Garden Club.



Gaye as a young woman.

Margaret also loved attending events such as Open Houses and Gardens. She twice opened the garden at Stony Rises Homestead for fund raising purposes — in 2007 for the Alvie School where she taught from 2006–10 and in 2011 towards restoration of the historic Robbie Burns Statue at Camperdown.

Margaret was devoted to her children and her greatest joy was seeing them mature into fine adults, marry and present her with four grandchildren — Lachlan, Joshua, Hamish and Jamison.

Margaret and her family's world was turned upside down in 2008 when she was diagnosed with advanced breast cancer. She undertook chemotherapy and radiation treatment in 2008–09, plus surgery. She also broke her leg in 2009. However, her determination to overcome her illness shone through and from the end of 2009 until January 2014 she led a very active life. She then fell ill and was again diagnosed with breast cancer, this time around the large and small bowel. After many weeks fighting bravely in St John of God Hospital at Geelong, she passed peacefully away on 23 April 2014, with her loved ones at her bedside.

Kreitling family

BY ROBERT WUCHATSCH

Johann Andreas Kreitling (c.1837–1915) arrived in Melbourne from Hamburg aboard the *Alfred* on 23 September 1859 with his sister Dorothea Friedericke Kreitling, (c.1840–1918). Andreas and Friedericke, as they were known, were from Steckelsdorf near Rathenow in Brandenburg, Prussia. Another sister, Dorothea (c.1842–1921), followed in 1863.

Andreas settled at Westgarthtown soon after arrival and worked as a farm labourer. On 19 September 1863, he married Alwina Maria Sophia Karsten (1845–1916), the daughter of Heinrich and Maria (née Ziebell) Karsten.



In 1866, Andreas' name appears in the Epping Roads Board rate book for the first time, as lessee of Johann Maltzahn's 49 acre farm (Lots 17–20, Section 25, Parish of Keelbundora). Later, in the 1880s, he also took over the lease of 770 acres of adjoining land in Section 24, which had previously been leased from the Campbell family by Christian Ziebell. Andreas was a dairy farmer and during the mid 1880s operated another dairy farm at Canning Street, Carlton. He also carried and distributed much of the Westgarthtown's milk. Assisted by his sons and other Westgarthtown residents, including Joshua Hammond, milk was either wholesaled to dairymen or sold direct to householders in Fitzroy and Carlton.

Once while carting milk, Andreas received a serious head injury from a fall. He is said to have allowed the licensee of the Belmont Hotel at Thomastown to stitch up the wound, with no sedative other than a large whisky, then continued on his way. Following another trip in 1881, the *Argus* recorded that 'A dairy farmer named Kreitling...at about 3 a.m...while on his way to Melbourne, observed long vivid streaks of light in the southern sky, which appeared to travel from east to west. The phenomenon lasted for fully five minutes.'

Andreas was naturalized as a Victorian citizen on 8 December 1884, presumably to enable him to purchase the Carlton farm. By this time he and Alwina had nine children – five girls and four boys. A further child, Sophia Maria, had died as an infant in 1874.

In 1895, Alwina Kreitling was declared insolvent, due mainly to 'depreciation in value of property.' She stated that in the year 1884 she purchased four cottages in Rupert Street, Collingwood for £1,000. In 1886 she entered into business at Carlton as a grocer and fruiterer and paid cash for the stock and fixtures. She purchased the premises in which the business operated with a £1,000 mortgage with John Graff. When business became bad she was unable to pay interest on the mortgage so lost the Carlton property. Two of the Rupert Street houses were also sold to repay monies owed to the fruiterer. She then mortgaged the remaining two cottages to keep the business going but finally gave up in June 1894 and returned to the farm at Westgarthtown. The remaining cottages were sold to meet debts.



FIVE GENERATIONS. MRS. PETERSEN (GRANDMOTHER), MRS. KARSTEN (GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER), MRS. SPENCER AND DAUGHTER, MRS. KREITLING (GREAT-GRANDMOTHER).



Above: A photograph of the Kreitling family which appeared in the *Western Mail* on 20 July 1912 and the Kreitling house in Gardenia Road, Lalor.
Opposite page: Johann Andreas and Alwina Maria Kreitling.

The Kreitling family experienced further misfortune in January 1898 when 250 acres of their leased farmland at Westgarthtown was burnt in a grassfire. Even worse was another fire in January 1909 which destroyed a large uninsured stack of hay, estimated at about 40 or 50 tons.

On 22 February 1906 Andreas borrowed £800 and purchased the 49 acre farm at Westgarthtown he had rented from the Maltzahn family for forty years. It is probable he had agreed to purchase the property from the Maltzahn family many years before and it may have been Andreas who built the larger front section of Maltzahn's Farmhouse, to accommodate his growing family.

The following year Andreas retired from dairying and held a clearing sale on 25 February 1907 to dispose of his cattle, horses and farm implements. He and Alwina remained on the farm, then managed by their eldest son William.

On 12 September 1913 Andreas and Alwina celebrated 50 years of marriage. Five generations of the Kreitling family gathered at the family home at Westgarthtown, including son Henry and his wife Marian (née Edwards m. 1892) and daughter Alwina (Mrs Peter Pederson m. 1886) who visited from Western Australia. Other children present were

William and his wife Ada (née Beale m. 1890); Augusta (Mrs Franz Oscar (Charlie) Bargling m. 1891); John Andrew and his wife Mary (née Dellagana m. 1906); Annie (Mrs William Wethling m. 1908); Sophia (Mrs Timothy Lynch m. 1903); and Wilhelmina (Mrs Thomas Coleman m. 1907).

Andreas died on 19 January 1915 aged 77. He was said to have been hay stacking only a few weeks before. The farm was valued for probate at £850. When Alwina died on 31 July 1916, aged 71, the farm's value was given as £1,300. She was buried with Andreas, daughter Sophia Maria and son Adolph (d. 1904) in the Westgarthtown Cemetery.

In 1919 William Kreitling sold the farm to John Johnson. Subsequent owners include the Underwood, Pettit, Hughes and Wennagel families. Following the farm's sale and subdivision for housing in the mid 1960s, Henry and Annie Ziebell purchased the farmhouse and held it for over 20 years until it was sold to the Ministry of Housing in 1989 and eventually restored.

Andreas and Alwina's son John Andrew Kreitling, a blacksmith, moved to Preston in about 1914 and established an engineering business there. At one time he was agent for Ford and assembled T Model cars. Some of his descendants remain in engineering today.

Beatrice Maud Vearing (1915–2014)

Beatrice Vearing of Epping, a Zimmer descendant, died on 22 January 2014 aged 98.99 years. She was a foundation member of the Friends of Westgarthtown. The following obituary is based on information provided by her family and a Westgarthtown oral history interview during 1998. A Celebration Service for the life of Beatrice Maud Vearing was held on 29 January 2014 at the Yan Yean Cemetery Chapel. A private burial preceded the Service.

Beatrice was born at a private maternity hospital in Clifton Grove, Preston on 27 January 1915, the daughter of Albert and Maud (née Coulthard) Zimmer. Albert was the son of Michael and Maria (née Graff) Zimmer of Epping, both of whom were born in Saxony and arrived in Australia aboard the *Pribislaw* in February 1850. Their parents were original landowners at Westgarthtown. Maud Coulthard was the daughter of Isabella Florence (née Dean) and James Coulthard (born 1840 in Asby, Cumberland, England) of Whittlesea.

Beatrice was raised at *Zimmerville*, the family's 160 acre sheep farm at Epping, situated on the Epping Road between O'Herns and Harvest Home Roads. She attended Epping Primary School, was home-schooled for a number of years, then boarded for four years at Lowther Hall, an Anglican school at Essendon, where she was Senior Prefect. In her early years she helped on the farm and slept on the verandah accompanied by Tweed her dog and a pet sheep. She slept there because she wanted to – not because there wasn't room in the house – and it was considered good for her constitution.

In 1933, when she was 18, the Zimmer family visited the United Kingdom and Europe for six months, a six-week voyage each way. Beatrice visited Cumberland in England where she was able to meet many of her Coulthard relatives and also France, Switzerland and Germany. After a cruise down the Rhine to Cologne, the



family went by train to Dresden, Saxony's capital. Albert Zimmer knew his family came from the Kingdom of Saxony and it had always been instilled in his mind he was Saxon, rather than German. Unfortunately, he did not know where in Saxony his family had emigrated from so could not visit the area, which we now know to have been Weissig near Bautzen. Beatrice and her family made another visit to Europe in 1938 and it had been her wish ever since to revisit Switzerland.

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, Beatrice played the organ during services at the Thomastown Lutheran Church. On 15 February 1941, she married Albert George Vearing of Epping at St Pauls Church, Canterbury after which she attended the Methodist Church at Wollert. Albert and Beatrice lived at *Hendon Park*, a 640 acre farm in Vearings

Road, Epping where she remained for all but the last nine years of her life. There, Albert and Beatrice ran sheep, establishing both Dorset Horn and Southdown sheep studs. Later they also established a Poll Hereford Cattle stud.

Beatrice, or Narnie as she was known within the family, raised three sons – George, Frank and Lynn. Besides bringing up the three boys, she also took an active role at *Hendon Park* and was a driving force behind many of the farm decisions made, as well as working in the shearing shed picking up, skirting fleeces or any other jobs which had to be done. In the 1970s, the Vearing family established one of the first

Christian Grosse

BY ROBERT WUCHATSCH

In our *Friends of Westgarthtown News* of April 2008, Vol. 12, No. 1, we included an article about Friedrich and Christian Grosse, who purchased Gottlieb Knobloch's 30 acre farm at Westgarthtown in 1858 with the aim of establishing a vineyard.

Christian Grosse, a gardener, lived and worked at Westgarthtown, whereas Friedrich, an engraver, lived in Melbourne. The Grosse brothers sold the farm at Westgarthtown in 1860, however, finding the heavy soil unsuitable for a vineyard. Friedrich, who remained in Melbourne, purchased a farm in 1864 on the Emu Creek, near Bendigo and established his successful Tooronga Vineyard.

In our 2008 article, I wrote that nothing was known of Christian Grosse after he left Westgarthtown. Through the wonders of digitised newspapers, we now know he lived an impoverished, difficult and eccentric life in the Castlemaine area for the next 45 years.

On 7 September 1876, the *Castlemaine Representative* reported 'A lunatic, named Grosse, arrested yesterday, had a loaded revolver, with which he doubtless meant to take revenge on certain persons he imagines to have injured him.' The *Mount Alexander Mail* added that Grosse lived in a tent on the banks of the Barkers Creek and had complained that someone had poisoned his goat's milk.

Christian was admitted to the Kew Lunatic Asylum on 20 September 1876. He was then described as being 54, single, a gardener, from Germany. His relatives were given as 'brothers William Grosse, Barkers Creek, a digger in poor circumstances, Frederick Grosse, an

engraver employed by the government at Melbourne.'

Christian was discharged from Kew on 29 December 1876 into the care of his brother Friedrich, who sent him to his vineyard at Emu Creek, where he stayed almost a year. In June 1879, however, Christian sued his brother Friedrich for £42/16/-, the balance of wages due for 47 weeks at £1 per week. In his defence, Friedrich stated that when he heard his brother had been committed to Kew he obtained his release and became responsible for his safe custody, agreeing to provide board and clothing but not wages. As Christian's work was said by witnesses to have been 'of no use', the case was dismissed.

Christian appears to have returned to Barkers Creek and remained there until his death on 16 April 1906. The *Argus* reported 'Christian Grosse aged 86, was on Monday evening discovered in a hut at Barkers Creek in a dying condition. The police were informed, and conveyed him to the [Castlemaine] hospital. On arrival there life was extinct.' The *Mount Alexander Mail* added 'The deceased had a most independent spirit and refused offers of assistance from relatives or neighbours, and would not apply for an old age pension.'

Despite the privations of his solitary existence, Christian outlived his brothers – engraver and vigneron Friedrich died in 1894 aged 66 and miner and beekeeper William in 1904 aged 82.

black sheep flocks in Australia. Through the spinners and weavers association and her love of knitting and anything wool related, she ended up sending a bale of black and coloured wool to Japan. She became well-known for her craft abilities and was one of the first to reignite interest in felting in Australia, hand-making felt hats, vests, jackets and flowers – not just felt rugs.

Outside wool, she decorated her own wedding cake and cakes for engagements, anniversaries and birthdays of family members and friends. For someone who suffered severe arthritis from the age of 40, her ability to

produce beautiful and exquisitely decorated cakes and other crafts was inspiring.

In 1970, Albert and Beatrice shifted into a new house at *Hendon Park*, leaving their son Lynn and his wife Pam to occupy the old one. After Albert's death on 6 August 1996, Beatrice remained at *Hendon Park* until 2005, when she moved to the Plenty Valley Retirement Village at Epping. She remained there until just prior to her death at Epping's Northern Hospital. As well as her own children, Beatrice had four grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Ziebell's farmhouse garden

BY GILLIAN BORRACK

After undertaking major works this year, Ziebell's Farmhouse garden is looking better than ever. However, the shock announcement that Open Gardens Australia is winding up in June 2015 has left us looking for new and exciting opportunities to showcase the garden in 2015.



Above: The two new arbours amongst a sea of lilies and ranunculus.

Opposite page: Lillies, the new veggie patch created by Paul Schultz for Bush Kinder and one of the many roses in bloom.

In 2011, Ziebell's Farmhouse garden was selected to be part of Open Gardens Australia (OGA) and the garden was opened in November in both 2012 and 2013. Because major works were taking place in the garden this year we decided not to open, but had planned a September/October opening in 2015.

In September OGA announced it would complete its schedule for the 2014–15 season before ending operations in June next year. OGA, which started in Victoria 27 years ago has been behind the opening of almost 20,000 private gardens across Australia to the public.

Jane Edmanson from the ABC's Gardening Australia who interviewed Sylvia and Gillian for the ABC's gardening segment on Ziebell's Farmhouse garden said she was shocked to hear OGA would no longer be operating beyond next year. The OGA program enabled Millie Ross the senior researcher for Gardening Australia to know that Ziebell's Farmhouse garden existed. Jane Edmanson said OGA inspired a generation of gardeners. "Everyone who came to visit has really gone away with some sort of idea and really put their foot out for the

first time in there and done it themselves," she said. "That's what it was all about, getting out and having a go at gardening."

Like Jane Edmanson we were shocked to hear the news. We remain grateful and feel fortunate that we were able to take part for two of those years. The interest and support OGA generated was amazing, and we realize how lucky we were to be selected in 2011. However, being part of OGA has inspired us to continue with our quest to have interesting things happening in the garden throughout the year. We are now planning other events in which the garden will feature.

Garden activity

This year, two arbours have been replaced and the climbing roses are being given time to re-grow. Mains water pipes were extended along with some irrigation pipes. We planted many more of our traditional spring bulbs to give the garden a different feel to our previous November openings.



The bulbs have been a riot of changing colours throughout late winter and into spring. We have progressed from our traditional daffodils, blue hyacinths, grape hyacinths, lachanalia, to ranunculus, anemone, freesias and now in October the iris are about to put on their full show. Their new position along the eastern fence on Ainwick Crescent has proved to be an ideal spot much enjoyed by people walking past. The wisteria was a mass of blossom in early October. The entire garden

is looking amazingly healthy due to a good season, plus care and attention and with a few more warm days the profusely budding roses will be out in force.

The new vegetable garden Paul Schultz made for the Bush Kinder kids is flourishing and is enjoyed by all.

We are still looking for more volunteers to help in the garden. If you would like to help, please email gillian@westgarhtown.org.au.

Wendish Heritage Society Australia

Do you have Wendish ancestry? The Wends (also known as Sorbs) are a Slavic people who spoke a Slavic language — Wendish or Sorbian. The Wends live in Lusatia, an area in eastern Germany which during the mid-nineteenth century was divided between Saxony and Prussia. Five families at Westgarhtown were Wendish — Graff, Grützner, Rosel, Wuchatsch and Zimmer.

The Wendish Heritage Society Australia researches and promotes Wendish/Sorbian and Germanic heritage and family history in Australia. In April 2014 its meeting room and research centre were relocated from Ivanhoe to St Aidan's Community Centre, 12 Surrey Street, Box Hill South, Victoria and open on the first Sunday each month from February–November between 1.30–5.30 pm. The Wendish Heritage Society Australia's postal address is PO Box 4050, Box Hill South, Victoria 3128. For further details see www.wendishheritage.org.au

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.org.au

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@westgarhtown.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 joukofftatiana@gmail.com

Trinity German Lutheran Church Archives, East Melbourne

If you had German Lutheran ancestors in Victoria, the Trinity Church Archives at East Melbourne may be able to help you.

The most commonly used records held by Trinity Church Archives are the marriage, baptism and confirmation registers, church minutes and correspondence. Information on many early members of the Trinity congregation is also kept.

The Trinity Church Archives are located at 22 Parliament Place, East Melbourne Victoria 3002. Opening hours are Tuesdays from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. For inquiries, please contact Renate Jurgens on 03 9761 1430 or at auntnati@optusnet.com.au

Westgarthtown Descendants' Day 2015

BY SYLVIA VAGG

After a very successful Westgarthtown Descendants' Day this year, a sub-committee has been formed to conduct the 2015 reunion at Ziebell's Farmhouse on the traditional first Sunday in March — 1 March 2015.

At this stage, a similar format to last year is proposed, with the focus on families coming together to share stories, reignite friendships and view the preserved Ziebell's Farmhouse and garden now owned by the City of Whittlesea and managed by the Friends of Westgarthtown.

The Friends are particularly interested in encouraging the younger generation with a view to keeping the collective heritage interest of this unique group of people motivated to share their knowledge with each other and tell their stories.

Again we seek your cooperation with the logistics and suggest that family descendants appoint one or two coordinators to gather the contact details of their family. We will update our mailing list, preferably including email addresses and mobiles, making mass mail outs simpler and cheaper. To register for next year, please visit www.westgarthtown.org.au/descendantsday.

The sub-committee are interested in your ideas for the day, so ideas via email or post are welcome over the next month. One suggestion is where family trees exist, these would be good to build on and use for each family data base. Should there be interest in building a family tree the Friends may be able to provide guidance if needed.

Please direct all enquiries to Sylvia Vagg, sevagg13@gmail.com or 140 Outtrim Road, Leongatha South Vic 3953.



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Westgarthtown is the oldest and most intact German/Wendish settlement in Victoria. Established in March 1850, it will celebrate its 165th Anniversary in 2015.

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.