



The mark of Ziebell:

from the Rhine to the Roos

This story by AFL staff reporter **Ben Collins** first appeared in the August 7-9, 2015 edition of the *AFL Record* and on the AFL website (afl.com.au) to mark the AFL's Multicultural Round. We are grateful to the AFL for their permission to reproduce both the story and images.

Jack Ziebell isn't easily fazed — on or off the field. But the North Melbourne vice-captain shook his head, raised his eyebrows and broke into a grin. "This has been a pretty extraordinary experience," Ziebell said.

"I'm quite shocked by it all, actually.

"We only ever had a very rough idea of where our family came from, but now we finally know the truth — and it isn't anything like what we thought it was."

This is the *AFL Record's* version of *Who Do You Think You Are* — the SBS program that traces the family history of prominent people.

It's a story that came about by pure chance.

It all started when my neighbor Cedric Young told me he was distantly related to Jack Ziebell, via their German ancestry.

Just to confuse footy commentators, Cedric favoured what he said was the traditional German pronunciation, "Za-bell", rather than "Zeeble".

In fact, he warned that if I were to call a particular descendant and use the "Zeeble" delivery, he would immediately hang up.

Cedric handed me a book titled *The House That Christian Built* — self-published in 2006 by another

DESCENDANTS



Above (from left to right): Jack Ziebell with grandfather Ian, sister Elle and father Gary next to Christian Ziebell's grave; inside the Thomastown German Lutheran church at Westgarthtown with distant relative Cedric Young; at Ziebell's Farmhouse.

distant relation, Janet Hubbard — which told the story of Christian and Sophia Ziebell's migration to Australia with their nine children in 1850, and their important role in establishing the first German settlement in Victoria.

They were 73-year-old Cedric's great-great-grandparents.

I asked Cedric where Jack Ziebell fit in to the equation. He didn't know, but said it was my challenge to find out.

Hubbard's well-researched book didn't provide an immediate answer, as there was no mention of Jack in the lines of the family tree that had been presented (nothing unusual there, though — it's a tree with many branches).

Cedric also mentioned that the Ziebell's 160-year-old house in Thomastown (16kms north of Melbourne) was open to the public every second Sunday.

An internet search quickly found that 'Ziebell's Farmhouse' is actually a landmark on Google Maps.

And little wonder, given the heritage-listed house is the oldest German immigrant building in Victoria, and the farm on which it stood was the biggest in the community once known as Westgarthtown (and the more colloquial 'Germantown').

The original Ziebell farm — named 'The Pines' — took up 102 of the settlement's 640-acre expanse, the vast majority of which has been swallowed up by suburbia.

It's quite something to behold the satellite image — and even more so the reality in person, as we'd later

discover — of this patch of old village green that sprouts from the residential sprawl.

The farmhouse (and adjoining garden and outbuildings) is just one element of this pleasantly surprising spot.

It backs onto a historical reserve — the centre of the Westgarthtown Pioneer Precinct — that features an old German Lutheran church and cemetery which were also established in the 1850s and have strong Ziebell links.

But how exactly was *Jack* Ziebell connected to it all? It warranted some detective work.

The first port of call was Jack's father, Gary.

Gary Ziebell is as Aussie as they come. A 400-game country football star, he's a blacksmith by trade who fashions and sells ornamental Ned Kelly armour in his spare time; and for more than a decade made best-and-fairest trophies for TAC Cup club Murray Bushrangers using the iconic helmet.

When I called Gary, he was in France on a European holiday (Germany wasn't on the itinerary).

Unfortunately, Gary wasn't able to solve the mystery. His understanding was that he (and Jack) were connected to Christian Ziebell, but he had no proof of the exact link.

However, Gary had always been keen to find out more about his heritage, and he was able to share some tidbits he'd gleaned over the years — information that would prove crucial to confirming his bloodline.

Gary could go back only as far as his grandfather



(Jack's great-grandfather), Otto Ernst Ziebell, who Gary said had taken a young bride late in life and had died in his 60s in the mid-1940s.

Gary's father Ian (Jack's grandfather) was just 16 when Otto died, and knew little about him.

The family didn't have Otto's birth certificate, so they didn't know the name of his father — a key detail in establishing their place in the broader Ziebell clan.

As the story goes, Otto Ziebell's forebears at some point moved to the Euroa area to open a butchery, before settling in the Albury/Wodonga region where Ian, Gary and Jack were later raised.

Gary had been told his family had Danish origins, but suspected this might have been part of a myth perpetuated to avoid persecution during the first and second world wars, when Germany was an Allied enemy.

Alas, there appeared nothing concrete for Gary Ziebell to build his family history upon. In fact, he had almost resigned himself to the idea that he would never know.

"Even Dad's brother's wife tried to chase it up but that came to nothing, so that was the end of it," Gary Ziebell said.

Otto Ernst Ziebell didn't appear in Hubbard's book either. There were Ottos and Ernsts, but no Otto Ernsts.

However, Otto does make an appearance on Trove, the online newspaper archive.

Under the headline, 'Disgraceful Scene', the *Wodonga and Toowong Sentinel* noted that in a wild Wodonga/Federals grand final in 1906, a "despicable blackguard"

in the Federals team directed a "filthy remark" at Wodonga player Otto Ziebell.

Otto was "a rare example of the extremely quiet and good-tempered footballer", but was so incensed that he chased his "cowardly insulter" into the crowd.

The *Sentinel* observed that "had Ziebell reached him then, no one present envied the Federal player the experience he would have". Spectators "wisely" overpowered Otto to enable his quarry to escape.

But the elusive Otto Ziebell wasn't about to escape our historical clutches.

'The Friends of Westgarthtown' — which manages Ziebell's Farmhouse for the City of Whittlesea — provided the breakthrough.

In-house historian Robert Wuchatsch — a descendant of German settlers himself and the author of a book about Westgarthtown — immediately had a hunch that Otto had descended from Ernst Ziebell, a nephew of Christian Ziebell.

And it didn't take Wuchatsch long to prove it, producing a transcript of Otto Ziebell's marriage certificate, which noted the groom's long-deceased father (Jack's great-great-grandfather) was indeed Ernst Ziebell. (Ernst had been anglicised to 'Ernest'.)

Incidentally, on Otto's wedding day in Albury in April 1929, he was a 51-year-old farmer and his bride, Irene Matthews, was just 20.

Gary Ziebell's response was worth the effort.

"I'm so rapt that we've finally solved it," he enthused.

DESCENDANTS

The path of the Ziebell name

- (David) Johann Friederich David Ziebell (1767–1818)
- (Henry) Johann Heinrich Ziebell (1807–?)
- Ernst Carl Hendrik Ziebell (1839–1910)
- Otto Ernst Ziebell (1877–1946)
- Ian Ziebell (1930–)
- Gary Ziebell (1962–)
- Jack Ziebell (1991–)

But there was much more.

Now we could trace Jack Ziebell's ancestry — with a degree of certainty — back to the 1700s.

Hubbard's book once again became the go-to source.

Family patriarch Christian Ziebell returned to Germany on several occasions and in early 1856 he came back with one of his four brothers and probable nephew Ernst, who was then a 16-year-old butcher.

In 1869 Ernst married Irish woman Rosanna Brady, and their marriage certificate (as presented by Hubbard) reveals further evidence of Jack Ziebell's pedigree.

The document shows that Ernst was born in Helsingør, Denmark, thus proving the Danish connection Gary had been told about.

Ernst's father (Jack's great-great-great grandfather) was named as 'Henry' Ziebell, whom Hubbard and Wuchatsch agree was almost certainly Christian's younger brother Johann Heinrich Ziebell (born in 1807).

With the Ziebells hailing from the little town of Brühl in northern Germany, it is believed that Henry Ziebell might have followed employment north of the border into Denmark.

Henry and Christian's father (Jack's great-great-great-great-grandfather) was David Ziebell.

Born in 1767, David was a Brühl butcher who lost his first wife (a butcher's widow) in 1798 after she gave birth to a stillborn baby.

David Ziebell remarried within three months, to a sailor's daughter, with whom he had five sons.

Henry was just 11 when his father died of "water in the chest" at 51.

It seems Henry's fate is unknown, but much more is known of his presumed son Ernst.

After initially living and working on the Ziebell farm at Westgarthtown, Ernst Ziebell moved to Epping where he plied his trade as a butcher. He and Rosanna had 12 children, including Otto, and Ernst died from heart problems in Albury in 1910, aged 70 (Gary Ziebell recently located his grave in the Albury Pioneer Cemetery). Rosanna outlived him by six years.

The Farmhouse

Jack Ziebell and his sister Elle never even knew of the existence of Ziebell's Farmhouse until three weeks ago.

Their father Gary hadn't been there either, but their grandfather Ian Ziebell, now in his 80s, had visited the place for the one and only time about 20 years ago.

So when the *AFL Record* arranged for this Ziebell quartet to have a guided tour around the historic site little more than a week ago, it became something of a pilgrimage.

We were greeted by a bitterly cold and windy day on the rocky, gentle rise of the reserve. Rain threatened but mercifully avoided us.

That was one of a few lucky breaks.

On the way there, Jack and Elle had a somewhat eerie experience.

Without realising they were just around the corner from the farmhouse that bears their surname — our meeting place — they stopped in German Lane outside the cemetery.

"I had no idea there was anything else here — I thought we were just going to see the old Ziebell Farmhouse that I'd been told about," Jack Ziebell told the *Record*.

"We drove past the cemetery and the first tombstone I saw was Christian Ziebell's. I said to Elle: 'There's a Ziebell tombstone. That's a bit strange.' It's certainly not a common name around Melbourne."

Strange is one way to describe it. Another is freakish.

Here we were at the site of the old property of Jack Ziebell's great-great-great-great-uncle Christian Ziebell, and in a cemetery comprising more than 200 graves boasting names like Schultz, Zimmer, Graff, Nebel and Siebel, some of which included German inscriptions, the first grave Jack just happens to spot is Christian's.

Jack and his family met some distant relations they never knew existed, including my neighbour Cedric and his sister Irma Hatty (whose parents and other family members are buried in the Westgarthtown cemetery).

Irma is secretary and treasurer of the cemetery and church — the oldest operating Lutheran church building in Australia — which she happily opened for us. Jack and Elle got into the spirit by playing an 1850s period organ with apparent competence.

Friends of Westgarthtown president John Fry assumed the role of tour guide, and you'd need an entire Sunday afternoon to absorb it all.

The farmhouse, which has been meticulously restored by the Whittlesea council, is a virtual mini-museum with



Above: Friends of Westgarthtown president John Fry with Elle and Jack Ziebell

information boards and artefacts. But it hasn't lost its homely charm.

There was some amusement over the contrasting pronunciations of Ziebell, but both parties politely agreed to disagree.

Jack and his family were fascinated by what they saw, heard and learned. They asked questions, smiled often, nodded and shook their heads in semi-awe, and made the odd profound statement.

As Gary Ziebell stood in the doorway of the farmhouse with its 61cm-thick bluestone walls, he declared: "It feels like I'm standing in the doorway of my own house."

Ian Ziebell leant on his walking stick and said: "I've learnt a lot of things about my family today that I never knew, and never thought I would."

Then Gary marvelled: "I'm just blown away by the significance of this place and the role our family played in it."

Jack also seemed astonished.

"It's really cool," he said.

"I'd always thought we were Danish so it's amazing to learn that we're actually German.

"And it's quite extraordinary that all our family history, which I'd never known about, is just 20 minutes up the road.

"There were a few generations that had 10 and 12 kids, so no wonder we lost track — it's a big bloody family!

"I'm just rapt, and I feel extremely fortunate that it's come to our attention."

The man who brought it to our attention was simply pleased to have helped.

"It's a family history we all share," Cedric said.

"Imagine if there were fantastic stories like this in your family and you never found out about it. Now that would be a real shame.

"See what happens when neighbours talk!"

The pilgrimage ended back at the farmhouse where Friends of Westgarthtown secretary Gillian Borrack had arranged cake and coffee, which, along with the warm conversation, fortified our souls against the now biting cold and drizzle.

Like Jack Ziebell the footballer, we had timed our run to perfection.

John Stanley Carr (c.1795-1854)

BY ROBERT WUCHATSCH

In 1850 John Stanley Carr, in conjunction with William Westgarth, purchased 640 acres of crown land in the Parish of Keelbundora, ten miles north of Melbourne, which soon became known as Westgarthtown. Who was Carr and how did he come to be involved in the establishment of Victoria's first German settlement?

John Stanley Carr, known as Stanley Carr, was the son of Captain John Carr and was born about 1795 at Castlebar in County Mayo, Ireland. Carr's mother's name is not known but he had at least three sisters and the family are believed to have been Wesleyan Methodists.

On 14 March 1816, aged about 21, Carr was appointed to the 70th (or Glasgow Lowland) Regiment of Foot as an Ensign, or junior officer. Most of the regiment was then stationed at Kingston in Canada, but he was posted to the Regimental Depot at Edinburgh Castle and spent much of his time on recruiting duties at Paisley until joining the regiment at Fort George, Canada in August 1817.

On 4 December 1817 Carr transferred to the 24th Regiment of Foot. Although this regiment was then serving in India, he was based at the Regimental Depot in England, mainly at Dover. He served with the 24th Regiment until 9 December 1819 when he transferred to the 10th Regiment on half-pay, or effective retirement on a pension.

Carr had married Cessnock-born Johanna Wallace of Kelly, Scotland at Glasgow on 4 August 1818. Where they lived after he left the army in 1819 is not known, but it was possibly at Castlebar, as the Carr family purchased Creagh's Villa there around this time. By the mid 1820s, however, Carr and his wife were living at Wandsbeck near Hamburg and in 1828 he purchased the Tüschenebeck Estate near Lübeck in the Duchy of Lauenburg, where they remained for over 20 years. Lauenburg was then part of the Kingdom of Denmark.

From the early 1830s, Carr began to be referred to as Captain Stanley Carr. He was still an Ensign when he relinquished his British Army half-pay on 13 November 1832 for a commuted allowance, so possibly served with a Lauenburg regiment. At Tüschenebeck he modernized the farming practices and by 1847 was said to have 'a thousand acres under the plough, a small steam-engine for thrashing, and all the best implements...he employs

three times as many people as were at work upon the land before he bought it; he raises four times as much produce; has drained and subsoiled the farm; sells his butter and cattle at twenty-five per cent higher prices than his neighbours.'

Carr was an Honorary Member of the Royal Agricultural Society of England and his writings for the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society include *Prize Essay on Rural Economy Abroad* (1839) and *Rural Economy of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg* (1840). During the 1840s his wife Johanna Carr also acted as correspondent for the English journal *Continental Echo and Protestant Witness*; wrote a book *The German Reformation of the Nineteenth Century* (1846); and translated several religious books by contemporary authors from German into English.

In early 1849, on the resumption of fighting following a truce during the First Schleswig-Holstein War (1848-50) with Denmark, Carr sold Tüschenebeck and made arrangements to travel to Australia, where he intended to establish a German settlement. On 3 November 1849 he embarked at Plymouth aboard the *Alfred* for South Australia and Port Phillip. In his care was Prince Friedrich Christian Carl August of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg (1830-81), aged 19, a cousin of Prince Albert and nephew of Queen Victoria. The Prince's father was commander of the Schleswig-Holstein army and during the war the Danes had ruined the family's estate on the Isle of Aslen.

After a brief stopover in Adelaide, Carr and the Prince, who travelled under the name of Lieutenant von Grönwald, arrived at Melbourne on 24 February 1850. There Carr and the Prince met with Superintendent LaTrobe, William Westgarth and other members of Port Phillip's German Immigration Committee. Over the next two weeks they visited various places around Melbourne and Geelong, before arranging the purchase with Westgarth of 640 acres of unsold crown land (Section 25, Parish of Keelbundora) on 6 March 1850 for £1 per

acre. This land became the German settlement known as Westgarthtown.

Julius Groening and Friedrich Timm, who also arrived aboard the *Alfred*, were original landowners at Westgarthtown. Another passenger, Christian Bindt, settled nearby at Wollert. Groening and Christian Ziebell were chosen by the Germans to take ownership of the 640 acres on their behalf, but when it was realized this would delay the purchase until the two men were naturalized, a requirement for land ownership, Carr and Westgarth agreed to buy the land in trust for the Germans. In a letter written soon after, Carr stated that the settlers paid '£490 and I have arranged a loan for two years for them for the remaining £150 at 10 per cent. These people will work by selling firewood in town and supplying vegetables and potatoes which grow well but are always dear because wages are so high.' Title to the land was granted to Carr and Westgarth on 22 June 1850 and it was then divided among the Germans as they became naturalized.

Over the next few months Carr actively promoted the benefits of German migration to Port Phillip. In May, Carr left for the Western District, accompanied by Westgarth as far as Geelong, where Carr spoke about the need to improve sheep breeding as well as supporting the importation of Germans who understood sheep raising.

By early July 1850 Carr was at Portland, where the *Portland Guardian* claimed Carr intended to purchase land and make Portland a centre for bringing immigrants direct from Germany, by establishing a village near the town. Carr was also reported to have purchased a station near Mt Napier. This station was Lyne, a 20,000 acre run purchased from Messrs Elms and Lang. Carr took John Robertson Nowlan into partnership to manage the station. He also imported Merino sheep from Germany.

Carr then travelled to Sydney with the Prince who departed for Calcutta on 1 August. Carr returned to Lyne where he appears to have remained for a year, before visiting the Bathurst goldfields in July 1851. Soon after, he sailed

for Europe and arrived in London in December 1851, having travelled overland across Panama by mule and small boat. Unfortunately, all Carr's travel journals were lost when the boat sank, journals which presumably recorded details of his visit to Keelbundora and meetings with the Germans who settled there.

In London, Carr took up the cause of Australian emigration, chairing a newly formed group named the 'Committee of Australian Colonists'. He suggested families be sent to Victoria to overcome the shortage of rural labour caused by the rush to the goldfields. His life and work were cut short, however, when he died 'after a lingering illness' at St. Lorenz near Lübeck on 13 May 1854, aged 58. His executors were his wife Johanna Stanley Carr and son-in-law Baron Magnus Frederick Baker von Lösecke, who had married his adopted daughter Emma Adela Williams Carr in September 1850 during his absence in Australia. Carr's property in England, Ireland, Germany and Victoria was left to family members in Germany and Ireland.

As the ten acres of land reserved in 1850 for the Lutheran church, school and cemetery at Westgarthtown remained in Carr and Westgarth's name at the time of Carr's death, it could not be legally transferred to the Lutheran trustees Leberecht Fiedler, Johann Gottlob Siebel and Johann Wuchatsch until Baron von Lösecke visited Australia in 1856. Lyne was also sold. Johanna Stanley Carr died at Travemünde, near Lübeck, on 11 July 1863 aged 77.



Robert Hoddle's 1848 map showing Section 25, Parish of Keelbundora, County of Bourke — the 640 acre block purchased by Westgarthtown and Carr in 1850 on behalf of the Germans.

Dairying at Westgarthtown in 1863

BY ROBERT WUCHATSCH

In 1863, *The Farmers' Journal and Gardeners' Chronicle* published a series of articles on Melbourne's milk supply. In describing 'a few of the "cow walks" within a radius of ten miles from the city' the paper included reports on three of Westgarthtown's farms. These farms were owned by 'Mr Zeiber' [Siebel], 'Mr Zeimer' [Zimmer] and Mr Zeibel [Ziebell]. Hopefully, the reporter's accounts of these farms are more accurate than his spellings of their owners' surnames. Words in brackets have been added by me. Even Westgarthtown was described incorrectly as 'Westcotetown'.

From Mr Motherwell's property we passed on to German Town and visited the property of Mr Zeiber [Siebel], the "Westcotetown" dairy. This gentleman has a small farm of 29 acres on which he has erected a substantial stone house [which still stands], and numerous outhouses and sheds. He has a comfortable stable and cow-house, but merely keeps four cows which produce enough milk to enable him to supply a few German neighbors with butter. He sends no milk to Melbourne. The method upon which this farm is laid out is very creditable. There are a few acres under mangel wurzel, and lucerne, and there is a field of oats for hay; a small vineyard has also been laid out, about two acres, and some excellent red and white wines were made last season from the grapes which it produced. Mr Zeiber [Siebel] intends to give more attention to this branch of industry in future and expects to be able to sell wine next year. Besides the sources of profit mentioned, there are upwards of 100 fowls on the farm, and several pigs are also kept.

Almost immediately adjoining the last mentioned property is that of Mr Zeimer [Zimmer], who possesses 50 acres, and carries on a similar business. There is a large stone house [since demolished] also on this farm, with commodious outbuildings. The dairy business is confined to the local sale of butter, which is the produce of seven cows.

Within a short distance of the above mentioned farms is the property of Mr Zeibel [Ziebell], the "Thomas town dairy." This property comprises 900 acres [it included 800 acres rented from the Campbell family] of well grassed land, on the slopes of the creek. Upwards of 250 acres of this land has been under cultivation during successive seasons, but Mr Zeibel [Ziebell] found his crops invariably infected with blight, and he now cultivates only a sufficient area to supply his own animals. There are at present from twenty to thirty acres

under crop of oats for hay. There are in all about 200 head of cattle, but only 40 in milk, and their produce is sent to Melbourne to the "Thomas-town" Dairy, a large establishment, No. 111 Little Bourke street east, also owned by Mr Zeibel [Ziebell]. [The Thomastown Dairy in Melbourne was managed by Carl Frahm, Christian Ziebell's son-in-law]. No butter is made on this farm; a few fowls are kept on the property, the eggs also, being forwarded to Melbourne. There have been no cases of disease [pleuro-pneumonia] among Mr Zeibel's [Ziebell's] cattle during the past two years, although previously one or two were affected. Great attention is paid to the comfort of the herds, and new cattle are only introduced after careful examination, so that the chances of infection are greatly lessened; we understand that none of Mr Zeibel's [Ziebell's] cattle have been inoculated.

THOMASTOWN DAIRY.

114 Little Lonsdale Street East.

Der Unterzeichnete macht hiermit seinen Deutschen Landsleuten die ergebenste Anzeige, daß er ein Etablissement unter obigem Namen eröffnet hat. Er besitzt, durch den Verkauf der besten in sein Fach schlagenden Artikel sich den Zuspruch und das Vertrauen eines geehrten Publicums zu erwerben.

Charles Frahm.

Butter, frisch und von bester Qualität; täglich frische Eier und unverfälschte frische Milch immer vorrätig und zu den niedrigsten Marktpreisen bei

Charles Frahm.

Die geehrten Kunden werden pünktlich mit Milch jeden Morgen und Abend versehen werden. Ebenso werden Bestellungen auf Sahne entgegen genommen und pünktlich besorgt von

Charles Frahm,

114 Little Lonsdale-Street.

Advertisement for Frahm's Thomastown Dairy in the Melbourne German newspaper *Germania*, 16 May 1862 (La Trobe collection).

2016 Westgarthtown Descendants' Day

BY SYLVIA VAGG



Planning for the 2016 Descendants' Day on Sunday 6 March 2016 at Ziebell's farmhouse is well underway and we are hoping for a great attendance. Please join with us and make 2016 the year that as many of your family attend as possible.

From now on, we intend to focus on attracting as many members as possible from a particular family each year. In 2016 we are making a special effort to attract descendants of Ernst Ziebell. Ernst, Christian Ziebell's nephew, arrived in Australia in 1856, aged 16. Jack Ziebell, the AFL footballer, is descended from Ernst and Rosanna (née Brady) Ziebell. Following the article in the *AFL Record* in August 2015 about Jack's recent visit to Westgarthtown, Frode Olsen, a Ziebell relative from

Denmark, has contacted us and filled in more of the gaps in Ernst's interesting German/Danish family history.

Our format for the day will be similar to previous years — bring your own lunch for a picnic in the beautifully restored garden, followed by informal mingling and viewing of the farmhouse, cemetery and surrounds, an update on the great work of the Friends of Westgarthtown and a shared afternoon tea, with tea and coffee provided. Selected publications, relevant to Westgarthtown, will be available for purchase on the day.

We look forward to seeing you and your family on Sunday 6 March 2016.

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@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 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

Conservation Analysis and Management Plan

Gillian Borrack describes how a concerted effort to formally document the garden maintenance process at Ziebell's Farmhouse has resulted in the recent release of our first Conservation Analysis and Management Plan.

The new Conservation Analysis and Management Plan for Ziebell's Farmhouse garden has already assumed its place as the primary resource for the management and maintenance of the garden. Burnley graduate Christine Burke has now been working in the garden for four years, and in that time much thought and effort has been put into this document by Christine. The document will be reviewed and updated regularly.

Christine's introduction to the document indicates the approach to the analysis and management.

"Stepping into the garden at Ziebell's Farmhouse is like going back in time. There is a certain magic which lingers, preserved from modern life outside the picket fence-line. For nearly four years I have been working in the garden, and it has certainly become very important to me that its management continues with care.

The directive for maintaining heritage gardens can be viewed from many perspectives, but it is vital every garden be viewed as an individual. Its history is paramount in design and planting considerations. Stories shared by family members give us insight into how we can continue to use parts of the garden in traditional ways. For example how it pleased Gran, (Dorothea Ziebell – who lived to be 96) sitting in the kitchen looking out onto a colourful

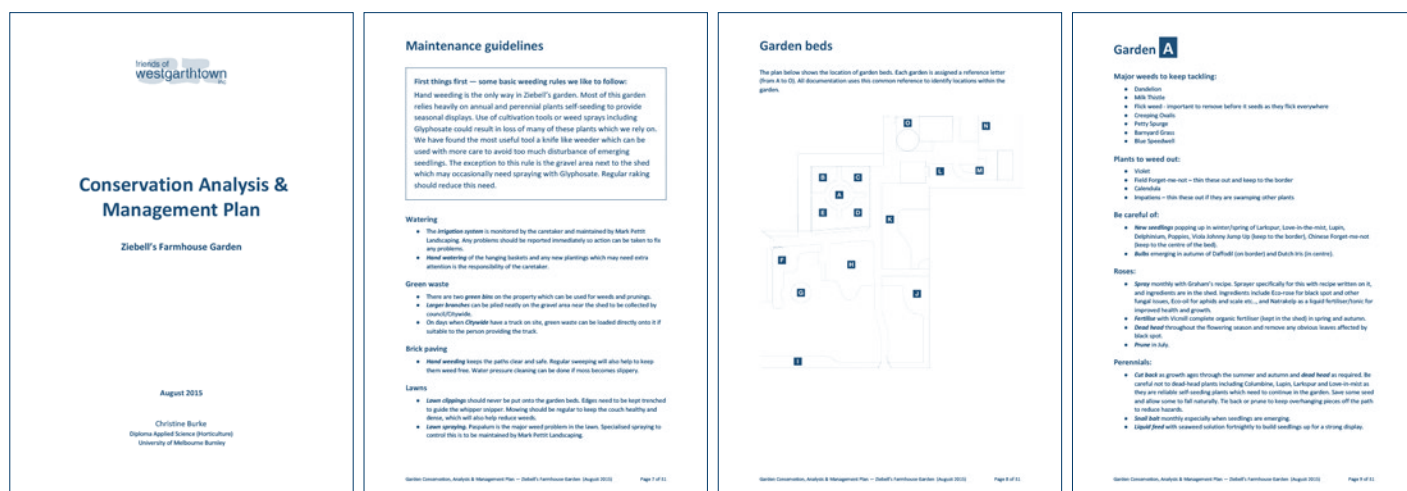
border along garden bed K. There are other factors which weave into the story, as this garden and the people involved in it will be ever changing.

Through the involvement of descendants the garden continues to write its story, as their thoughtful additions allow the garden to develop. With careful management and maintenance we can preserve not only design, but also a vast range of plant species which have travelled through the history of this garden.

This management plan aims to guide any person who comes to garden at Ziebell's Farmhouse so that the garden's assets are preserved and work can be continued with confidence.

We are confident that this documentation will ensure the steady progress of the garden into the future.

After the April 2015 newsletter was completed Ziebell's Farmhouse garden was selected to be the second garden presenting in the new Open Gardens Victoria Scheme. Our planned Cultural Heritage Open House and Garden was extended to include Saturday 4 October as well. Sue Allen's account (see following page) reflects the success of the combined Cultural Heritage and Open Gardens Victoria event held on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 October.



Sample pages from the Conservation Analysis and Management Plan for Ziebell's Farmhouse garden.



Open Garden weekend: The wisteria in full flower and Marcel Borrack cooking Bratwurst for our German sausage sizzle at the entrance gate.

First weekend in October — Open Garden day at Ziebell's Farmhouse

Sue Allen travelled from her home in Canberra to volunteer at the open garden. Here she writes about her experience greeting and farewelling visitors at the entrance gate.

“What a wonderful place! This is such a fascinating garden, so different from many of the other Open Gardens, and the house and surrounds is so steeped in family history.”

This was one of many comments made from visitors to the Open Garden weekend at Ziebell's Farmhouse, held on the first weekend in October.

The gardens, looking stunning after all the work by a small regular group who plant, collect seeds, pot up plants, prune and maintain the garden, held up even in the strong north winds on Saturday and the calmer day on Sunday.

More than three hundred visitors wandered around the gardens, through the buildings and sat on the verandah sharing their wonder at the quality of the gardens, personal memories or delight that such a building and its gardens are retained and maintained in such a wonderful fashion within this urban environment of Thomastown.

“I live in the next street and I never knew it was here. I plan to visit regularly.”

“How can I become a volunteer? Even though I live

nearer the city, I just love the garden and would love to help.”

“We have stayed half the afternoon, I love the cottage plants they remind me of my grandmother. We plan to come back to see it regularly as it changes each season.”

To receive such comments from these visitors and many others is due wholly to the hard work of all involved in the Ziebell's Farmhouse Precinct over the years and these last months in particular. To ready a garden such as this for a single weekend in spring, takes coordination, planning, dedication and the work of the Committee, volunteers and support staff have obviously been totally committed to this end.

It was the overall attention to detail – the chance to buy plants and seeds, to talk to family descendants, to be able to have a coffee and biscuits on the wide verandah, to look though the buildings and read all the displays, to enjoy Bratwurst sausages sitting under the trees outside, to wander over to see inside the church, to ask questions about descendants, or even arrange for groups to visit at a later date — that ensured this weekend was a great success.

Westgarthtown & WWI

BY JOHN FRY



Above: Troops marching at the Broadmeadows army camp (1914 by Geo Rose)

Our ANZAC Centenary Grant Project is proceeding apace. Léon Borrack has done a masterful job in designing the “Home” and “Warfront” banners, juxtaposing the experiences of those who fought for Australia with the racism faced by their families back here.

As was to be expected we are faced with an embarrassment of riches of what could be included in the video. Léon and I are going through the process of writing the script from the great wealth of material provided by Rob Wuchatsch. Unfortunately much more will end up being left out than can be included. From there we expect to be filming in the new year. We are considering ending the video with a crowd scene at our Descendants’ Day in 2016. We think this would be a good demonstration of the numbers of the descendants of these brave settlers.

If nothing else, this project has unearthed a treasure trove of information on the families, both on the home and war fronts, and what they faced. Information we will also be able to use in the future.

STOP PRESS: CEMETERY BURIALS LIST

We have just updated our online Westgarthtown Cemetery burials list. There are now over 250 names and also additional information regarding birth dates. Visit our cemetery minisite at www.westgarthtown.org.au/cemetery

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Westgarthtown is the oldest and most intact German/Wendish settlement in Victoria. Established in March 1850, it celebrated 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.