

The History of Cook's Corner Store - Kallista

Cook's Corner Store is a landmark on the corner of Grantulla and Emerald-Kallista Roads and named after the Cook family who came out to Australia in 1924. This corner is opposite Sherbrooke Forest and near where the road to Jefferson's Hill met Hall's Track in the early 1900s. The original selector of this large block of land was John Thomas who later sold it to John Halifax. This family kept the land for many years until a daughter sold the block to Mrs Cook in 1933.

Algy Cook had been working with Alby Crerar building houses in the district for some of the newcomers who came up to the hills after WWI.

Cook's house was in Anderson Street where Algy kept his cow. He delivered milk to the neighbourhood in large 10 gallon cans transported on his motorbike. The milk would be ladled into the customer's own jug or billy that they had left out on their doorstep the previous night.

Mrs Cook had their garage moved further down the block to the corner to make a kiosk.

From there she sold hot water for the picnickers' teapot or billy and a few other supplies for the many visitors to this popular picnic ground.

attracted many holidaymakers who enjoyed the fresh air, beautiful scenery and forest walks particularly on Sundays and holidays. Artists, writers and sculptors were also attracted to the area, the artist Tom Roberts lived on the hill opposite and 'Glenelva' guesthouse was across the road.

Algy Cook's son, Harry took over the milk round in 1939, but by then milk was coming in bulk from Gippsland to the dairy built in Anderson Street. Algy resumed the milk delivery business while Harry was away during WW2. On his return from the war, Harry married a local girl and took over a number of milk runs and bought a house in Tom Roberts Road. He also built a bottle washing plant near the site of the present Kallista kindergarten.

With a few additions the kiosk had grown into a small shop that became known as Cook's Corner Store. Mrs Cook continued to run the business with the assistance of her daughters who were also involved in the social activities in the local school and community.



COOK'S CORNER STORE 1934

White-haired and energetic Algy Cook had resumed his interest in building. By now the Cook family had become an integral part of Kallista.

This was the era when guesthouses in the hills Cook's Corner Store was sold to the Wrigley

family in 1954 and although Mr Wrigley died suddenly a month later, Mrs Wrigley continued in the business for two years, during which time she obtained a contract for mail delivery between Kallista and Olinda. She also built a brick house next door where she lived for the next 20 years.

The area and the business has had a number of changes over the years. A public phone box was put outside the store in April 1960 and a tree beside the shop decorated for Christmas in 1958-60. Presents for the Children's Hospital would be placed around it.

There have been numerous owners in the years since the

corner store was sold by the Cooks. There have been interesting additions to the store such as tearooms, licensed restaurant and craft gallery. During the 1970s, the then owner introduced "Applesia", an American Indian craft of apple sculpting. This was probably the most interesting of the innovations introduced to Cook's Corner Store.



COOK'S CORNER STORE IN 1993

Local residents watched with interest when the ABC Film Unit came to film segments of a TV series "The Keepers" in 1983. Unfortunately for the store owners, the ABC mobile canteen arrived to supply the crew with sandwiches and snacks leaving little business for the store.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

There has been lots of reminiscing on Facebook lately about growing up in Monbulk in the 1950s and 60s. Here is just a few of the memories mentioned by *Jennifer*.

- Mr and Mrs Connell's bakery and all those yummy pies, vanilla slices, and eclairs (more affectionately known as dog bones), just to name a few. 15 cents for a pie and sauce, and a cake, free!
- Mr Gray's butcher shop with the sawdust on the floor.
- The old Catholic Church with its little rickety wire fence.
- The sounds of the sawmill at Anderson's.
- The Kinder with Mrs Sands and Mrs Cowell.
- Mrs Hanes, Mrs Taylor, Mrs Willis and Mr Shilcox at the State School.
- Mr and Mrs Howell's haberdashery where you would get school shoes.
- Mr Rich's supermarket.
- At the stables behind Micky Seamer's shop, you could get bags of lettuce leaves and carrots for our bunnies, all free from Mr Seamer.
- Stripping the leaves of the willow branches and using them as whips, making helicopters from the maple tree seeds and racing sticks in the drain after the rain, to pass the time on our walk home.
- Money left in the letterbox for the milk delivery.
- You knew everyone in the street.
- Spending school holidays playing in the bush with the local kids, building cubbies with not a thought of snakes. Riding the scooter up the back road, no helmets needed, no rego either.

Do you have memories of Monbulk, Kallista or The Patch that you would like to share? Monbulk Historical Society would love to hear them. Please pop in to the Monbulk Hub on a Wednesday morning for a chat or post them on our Facebook page. We'd love to reminisce with you.