NOTES


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The Peter Lalor Home Building Co-operative Society Limited is abbreviated to PLHBSCL in these notes. The two Peter Lalor Co-operative Housing Societies were called ‘PL Nos 1 & 2’ prior to a name change to ‘Northern Nos 1 & 2’.
Notes: Introduction

PAGE:

1  
*Sun*, 29 April 1948, p. 3, reported the protest meeting, as did *The Age*, 29 April, p.1

L Purcell, ‘Circular’, undated. It advertised a meeting to be held at 8.00pm on Wednesday 28 April 1948, contained in the personal papers of Jack Harvey (Peter Lalor builder and committee man), now in possession of his son, Neil Harvey, Melbourne.

The radio program commenced in 1945 under the title, ‘Servicemen’s Question Box’, but, by 1948 it was being referred to as ‘Ex-Servicemen’s Question Box’, a title it retained until the mid 1950s. For example, in *Labor Call*, 2 May 1946, p. 6, it is called ‘Serviceman’s Question Box’. *Labor Call*, 16 April 1948, p. 7 refers to ‘Ex-Serviceman’s Question Box’.

L Purcell, ‘Circular’, undated.

Victoria, Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, vol. LA226, 28 April 1948, pp. 758–763 & 4 May 1948, pp. 777–780. This debate affirmed worldwide shortages of coal after the war. Closer to home, limited supplies of black coal from NSW were seen as the cause of coal shortages in Victoria and South Australia, flowing on to shortages in the production of cement. At p. 779 a table depicting cement allocations for Victoria for one week generally supported the concerns raised by the public meeting.

2  
*Sun*, 29 April 1948, p. 3.

The indented quotations can be found at: Victoria, Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, vol. LA226, 28 April 1948, p. 758–60. All references to John Cain are to John Cain Senior.


*Sun*, 29 April 1948, p. 3.

3  
The indented quotations can be found at: Victoria, Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, vol. LA226, 28 April 1948, p. 758–60.

4  
*Sun*, 29 April 1948, p. 3.

5  

6  
See for example an advertisement for Lalor in The Argus, 16 January 1947, p. 12, in which ‘(pronounced Lawler)’ is written underneath the name.


PLHBCSL, ‘Progress & Promise’, p. 2


See Payne, The Centenary History’, 1975 pp. 42; Michael Jones, Nature’s Plenty, 1992, pp. 258. The War Service Homes Commission, established in 1919, became a Division of the Department of Works and Housing in 1947. I will refer to it as the War Service Homes Division (WSHD) throughout this book as this title covered most of the relevant timescale for the co-operative.


Johns, email, 19 May 2008. Unfortunately the findings are not reproduced in the paper and Johns no longer has copies of them.


Mark Davis, *Stockade*, Swinburne Film School, Melbourne, 1984;

Desmond Purcell, transcript of interview with the author, 2007, pp. 37–38. NOTE: All the interviews with the author have been transcribed and bound copies will be made available in the Mill Park Library in the City of Whittlesea, Victoria, and on this website.

David Nichols has written about town planner Saxil Tuxen, who at the end of his distinguished career designed the layout for the PLC site. In that context Nicholls has made small references to Lalor. See David Nichols, ‘The Merrilands Triangle,’ *Melbourne Historical Journal*, vol. 28, 2000, pp. 60–73. I am grateful to David Nichols for sending me his relevant articles.


Lalor High School, ‘With Our Own Hands’, poster in the private collection of Dot Hodgson (was Thompson), Lalor.


For further analysis of historians who have been the architects of this ‘history from below’ in British history, see Ann Curthoys & John Docker, *Is History Fiction?* Sydney, 2006, p. 125.


It is pleasing that as a result of this research, there will now be an entry by the present author on Leo Purcell in volume 18 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*: http://adb.anu.edu.au/


18 Barbara Breaks, interview with the author, 2005, p. 3.


The Whittlesea Council has commissioned a series of oral history interviews with many of the migrant groups. They are available in the Mill Park Library.
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PAGE:

28 The website for the suburb of Lalor announces that Lalor was started by a group of ex-servicemen.


Alastair Greig, The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of: Housing Provision in Australia, 1945–1960, Melbourne, 1995, pp. 55 & 69, wrote about the private sector's reluctance to recommence building projects unless they were for government.

30 See an organisation chart for the PLC at, p. 85 of the book.


War records are available for four of the five initiators: Leo Richard Purcell, individual war record, NAA, series B883, VX108201 & V4378, Arthur Alton Greenwood VX10665 & V124214, Stephenson Fox UKX5; William Thomas King, individual war record, NAA, series B884, V275378. See also AA Pay Corps, ‘War Diaries’, AWM Archives, Series 52:15/1/1-10.

Johns, ‘Building a Suburb’, 1978, acknowledgements page. King was interviewed by Johns


Fuller biographies of all these originators of the co-operative are at Appendix A on this website.

Ted Purcell, telephone conversation with the author, 29 August 2006, emphasised the pronunciation of the name.


Northcote Leader, 2 September 1937, 7 & 28 July 1938 (no page numbers) reported the Northcote City Council elections


Leo Purcell, individual war record; Labor Call, 23 January 1948, p. 8. Prior to the war, the Northcote Leader had publicised the housing problem in the context of slum abolition. See 29 April 1937 (no page numbers). In the latter stages of the war the Commonwealth Housing
Commission released its first and second ‘Interim Reports’ prior to its ‘Final Report’ in August 1944, through which it publicised the looming crisis.


32 See Leonie Purcell, ‘Justice Expectations: An analysis of the collision of “consciousness” between the Vatican Curia and Dr FJ Purcell’, BEd paper, La Trobe University, 1978, p. 31. This information was based on an interview with her father. The full title for the union was the Australian Tramway and Motor Omnibus Employees’ Union.

Leo Purcell, individual war record.

The reference for the Northern Suburbs Co-operative Store is: Registrar of Industrial and Provident Societies, ‘Register’, Melbourne, PROV, VPRS 8277/P/0001, 1940.


Correspondence from Purcell, Victorian Labor Party, Executive Officers, ‘Minutes’, SLV, MSF 10389, (DLP records), 23 July 1945, Item 19, 24 August 1945, Item 6 (between folios 14 & 15). John Cain (snr) moved and JV Stout seconded a motion to temporarily appoint such a committee, the membership of which was the Executive Officers as named in the text (Vic Stout, Pat Kennelly, Jean Daley), Greenwood and Purcell with approximately five other ex-servicemen. They were to deal with cases as submitted.

34 On 19 May 1947, the Manager of 3KZ, John Madden, wrote to Dinny Lovegrove about the 3KZ Labor Hour program in which he stated, ‘If I may humbly say, the “Labor Hour” enjoys great popularity with a large and far flung audience. Evidence to that fact is forthcoming in the large number of letters which are received.’ See, Victorian Labor Party, Executive Officers, ‘Minutes’, 19 May 1947, folio 108. Many of the Lalor residents stated that they heard of the co-operative scheme through Leo Purcell’s broadcasts.

Desmond Purcell, interview 2007, p. 4.

Whittlesea Post, 5 March 1947, p. 12. This is the reference for the Leo Purcell quotation.

35 The ‘Movement’ was the popular title for the Catholic Social Studies Movement. See, for example, Paul Ormonde, The Movement, Melbourne, 1972.

Frank Purcell, written annotation on the Ted and Val Purcell, interview with the author, 2 September 2006, p. 1.
The fact that the dispute with Cain was over a land deal can be found in two sources: Frank Purcell, interview with the author, 2007, pp. 8–10; Robert Murray, *The Split: Australian Labor in the Fifties*, Melbourne, 1970, p. 40. The count was 582 votes for Cain and 225 for Purcell. See Northcote Leader, 27 February 1952, p. 7, 5 March 1952, p. 4.


Greenwood is cited as the chair at the meeting reported in *The Argus*, 10 December 1946, p. 3


The Ringwood Co-operative Food Stores can be found in: Registrar of Industrial and Provident Societies, ‘Register’, Melbourne, op. cit., 1925.

All the references are in AA Greenwood, personal papers, held by Norma Greenwood, Hobart.


It is probable that Bill King’s role began after some of the ideas had already evolved.

I could find no record of Lillian Valarie King’s name before her marriage.

William Thomas King, individual war record.

Bill King’s name is mentioned in pre-selection battles as follows: Victorian Labor Party, Central Executive, ‘Minutes’, 15 October 1947, folio 123; *Labor Call*, 25 March 1949, p. 7.


Doss Lawson, interview with the author, 12 December 2005, p. 33.


Fox, *Stephenson Called Peter*, 1995, pp. 20–21. The cover jacket described Fox as ‘a cultured, sensitive man, a poet and singer – and a public accountant’.

Stephenson Fox, individual war record.


PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, December 1946 to April 1949 (incomplete) shows the role of Fox.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, December 1946 to April 1947 (incomplete) shows the Russell.


Some biographical material was found on Russell’s certificate of marriage to Mavis Augusta Wren in 1932. See ‘Registry of BDM’, Department of Justice, Victoria. Peter Russell-Clarke, Russell’s son, also provided information in a telephone conversation with the author, 16 July, 2007.


*Australasian Post*, 20 June 1946, pp. 9–13 also provides biographical data about Russell.


Argus, 5 December 1946, p. 14, Russell foreshadowing the first meeting.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 13 December 1946.


Fox was a university qualified accountant and Greenwood was a book-keeper.

See for example, Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend*, Melbourne, 1994, for a thoughtful analysis of the ways in which the Anzac legend has evolved.

See the biography of Purcell at this website in Appendix A.


Victorian Labor Party, Executive Officers, 'Minutes', 23 September 1947, folios 116–17 has reference to the Purcell correspondence.

*The Age*, 5 April 1948, p. 5 reported the opening of the suburb.

See for example, Inglis, Kenneth and Braxier, Jan, *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, Melbourne, 1998 for a comprehensive analysis of war memorials in Australia.

The quote by VH Lloyd is from: John Barrett, *We Were There*, 1987, pp. 420–21. Barrett’s study involved questionnaires from 3700 ex-servicemen. One such man is quoted here. He was not a Peter Lalor Cooperator, but encapsulated their ethos.


Argus, 10 December 1946, p. 3.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 3 January 1947 for the expression of their neutrality.


RSL National Conference, ‘Minutes’, 24 July 1946, available at Anzac House, Albert Street, Melbourne. It is not known if Purcell was a member of that committee at the time of this conference, but he was a member some time in the later 1940s and early 1950s.


See, for example, Renate Howe, ‘Reform and Social Responsibility: the Establishment of the Housing Commission’, *New Houses for Old*, edited by Renate Howe, 1988, pp. 20–44.

See for instance, Leonie Sandercock, *Property, Politics, and Urban Planning*, 1990, p. 112, in which she stated 'These arguments provided the political impetus for the establishment of a public housing programme for they appealed to Christian humanism, to economic reason and to political prudence.'


John Barrett, *We Were There*, 1977, p. 409, & p. 303, in which a sergeant in the AA Pay Corp ‘had to take a suitcase of new money into Tobruk’.

AA Pay Corp, ‘War Diary’, AWM 52: 15/1/6 (Greece) & AWM54 57/1/1 (New Guinea).

AA Pay Corps, ‘War Diary’ of the AIF Base Pay Office in Greece, March to May 1941, written by Major AST Linley, discussed the 6th Field Cash Office in Egypt, AWM 52: 15/1/5.


Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, 1960, London. Howard’s 1898 book was re-issued under this new title in 1902.


*The Argus*, 5 December 1946, p. 14

Fox was in the Middle East from January 1941 to mid 1942 and Greenwood from April 1940 until June 1943. See, Arthur Alton Greenwood, individual war record, Stephenson Fox, individual war record.


Frank Purcell, ‘Co-operation’, 1848, pp. 23–24.

Desmond Purcell, interview with the author, 2007, p. 6.


That day was 17 August 1947. Frank Purcell annotated the transcript of the author’s interview with Ted and Val Purcell, 2 September 2006, p 1, highlighting the fact that Purcell disagreed with Greenwood over this issue. While Frank went on to state that 'I think Dad realised then that Alf was a Liberal', this was probably more a term of abuse in the course of the argument than any seriously held view. According to Greenwood’s wife, Norma, Alf Greenwood was a solid Labor man all his life. See Norma Greenwood, interview with the author, 2007, p. 13.


Stuart Macintyre, *The Labour Experiment*, 1989, p. 4. I have adopted Macintyre’s analytical method here as he stated that his ‘principal aim is to establish the extent to which labour was able by political means to alter class relations, and the concepts employed...[were] those of class analysis—labour, capital and the state’.


PLHBCSL, 'Progress and Promise', 1947, p. 2

It was the sentiments in the article by Russell is in *The Argus*, 'Weekend Magazine', 18 May 1946, pp. 2–3 that were reflected in this paragraph from 'The Idea'.

PLHBCSL, 'Progress and Promise', 1947, p. 2

PLHBCSL, 'Progress and Promise', 1947, p. 2
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67  According to Johnston Birchall, the Rochdale Pioneers solved the basic problem faced by prior attempts at co-operative stores: the ‘inability to distribute some of the fruits of co-operative trading to the members, so that they would remain loyal’. Birchall continued, ‘the Rochdale Pioneers solved the problem by admitting unlimited numbers of members and distributing surpluses as a dividend on the purchases’. Johnston Birchall, *Co-op: The People’s Business*, 1994, p. 31.

67  See Pickering, *Chartism and the Chartists in Manchester and Salford*, 1995, for discussion of Owen’s ideas.

68  Co-operative principles can be found in: Johnston Birchall, *Co-op*, 1994, p. 54.

Per T Ohlsson, ‘Sweden: Still the Middle Way?’, a talk presented at Columbia University in New York City, 2006. Childs subsequently went on to be the first winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Distinguished Commentary in 1969.


Lewis, in describing a similar situation in mining towns in NSW, attributed this success to the immigration of English, Welsh and Scottish miners who brought co-operative ideas to Newcastle, Sydney, Illawarra, the Balmain Colliery and Lithgow. The great stranglehold of Rochdale was among the miners and later the transport and steel workers, and above all, those of Newcastle.’ Lewis, ‘The Quest for a “Middle Way”’, 1989, vol. I, p. 2.

The mining town co-operatives are all listed in the register: Registrar of Industrial and Provident Societies, ‘Register’, PROV, VPRS 8277/P/0001, Melbourne, 1925 & 1946.


Cochrane, ‘The Wonthaggi Coal Strike’, 1974. See, for example, pp. 17 & 19. Cochrane described the way the co-operative store distributed early rebates of members’ purchases and supported the Miners’ Federation with an initial loan of £1,500. The Union Theatre, the venue for the large town meetings, ran nightly picture shows at a discounted price, with all profits going to the miners.


The Department of Post War Reconstruction provides here an amazing story for a government department.


The Argus, 10 December 1946, p. 3.


Labor Call, 21 November 1946, p. 5.

I am indebted to Sarah Gregson, UNSW, and the Eastern Goldfields Historical Society for putting me in touch with Rip Heyhow. Rip was aged 94 when I interviewed him by telephone on 12 November 2007; see also, Labor Call, 21 November 1946, p. 5.

Labor Call, 21 November 1946, p. 5.

Kenneth Barry Bracegirdle, individual war record ‘WWII Nominal Roll’, WX4251.

Labor Call, 21 November 1946, p. 5. Wiluna was resurrected in the early 1980s when uranium mining commenced.

George (Rip) Heyhow, telephone conversation with the author, 2007.

The history of Serviceton was written and produced by the local historical society in 2007; see Fred Clark & Vicki Mynott, Serviceton - the Soldier Settlement that became Inala, Richlands, Inala and Suburbs History Group Inc, 2007.

The original description of the proposed scheme appeared in Labor Call, 21 November 1946, p. 5

Labor Call, 21 November 1946, p. 5; Robert Freestone, Model Communities, 1989, p. 224.

It is not clear if the £50 covered the cost of the building block. If the £50 covered only one share, this was not a scheme designed for working-class families. The pricing for the Peter Lalor scheme was: one share cost £10, and a block cost £25 (though the price later increased to £35). Either way, the Lalor scheme was less expensive for the share and land package.


Clark & Mynott, Serviceton, 2007, p. 56. Upon his return to Australia, Davis spent some years at the Bonegilla army camp in Victoria as a motor-bike instructor. By November 1944 he had been posted to
Queensland where he stayed after his demobilisation in September 1945.


75 Labor Call, 21 November 1946, p. 5.

Freestone, Model Communities, 1989, p. 224.

Graham Holland, Co-Operative Housing for Australia, Sydney, 1973, p. 5.


Victoria, Legislative Assembly, Debates, vol. LA167, 17 September 1924, p. 441. This was the second reading speech by Attorney General, William Slater. The 1928 Act was based on the Provident Societies Act that had first been introduced in 1873 and updated in 1915. Although the amendments were passed in 1924, the legislation was consolidated with a range of other legislation in 1928. It remained unchanged but it this explains why the legislation is always referred to as the 1928 Act.


This analysis comes from the Registrar of Industrial and Provident Societies. Register, 1924 - 1960. Agricultural co-operatives comprised almost half of the 150 or so registrations.

Lewis, ‘The Quest for a “Middle Way”, 1989, vol. I, p. 223. There is nothing, though, in the title to lead us to believe Cheltenham was a Rochdale Store, but it seems that Lewis knew that it was.

Registrar of Industrial and Provident Societies, 'Register', 1925. Sunraysia was registered in 1935 as Victoria was emerging from the depression. It appears never to have really got off the ground.


Griffiths, ‘Not for Us, but for All’, 2004, Leo Purcell and his family were all involved in YCW which by the 1950s came to have a major influence on the co-operative credit movement in Victoria.

McKay & French, The Co-Operative Economy, 1941, p. 46 & pp. 50–51. According to the ‘Register’ of Industrial and Provident Societies, the three consumer societies were the Melbourne Rochdale Consumers’ Co-operative Society Ltd, Hobson’s Bay Co-operative Society Ltd and Northern Suburbs Co-operative Society Ltd which was situated in Preston. The credit union, which predated its enabling legislation by 13 years, was the Christian Co-operative Fellowship Credit Union Ltd.


The Age, 28 November 1946, p. 2.

The Age, 13 January 1947, p. 2.

Baguley wrote in The Age, 2 October 1946, p. 2.

Later he explained the benefits: The Age 18 January 1947, p. 2.

The Age, 18 January 1947, p. 2.

Change Over, vol. 2, no. 4, p. 3 (undated but probably mid 1948) ran an article on the successful Oakleigh Co-operative Food Store.


Barry’s stance on the issue of co-operative stores is from Labor Call, 20 February 1947, p. 1.


Labor College Review, August 1947, p. 3.

For the radical nature of Owen’s socialism, see, Pickering, Chartism and the Chartists in Manchester and Salford, 1995, p. 105.


A pamphlet containing the ‘Rules’ for the five Melbourne Trades Hall societies is included in the papers of Kevin Gunn, provided to me by John Waghorn of the Whittlesea Historical Society; Leo Purcell’s brother, Frank Purcell, was Secretary of the Victorian Police Association and at one time it was suggested that the Secretary Manager of the PLC, Alf Greenwood, should also provide managerial support to that organisation. While the PLC approved this arrangement, it never eventuated.

The number of registered societies was published in: Victoria, Legislative Assembly, Debates, vol. LA226, 1947–48, pp. 777–79.

For a biography of Doug Burgess, see this website at Appendix A.

Labor Call, 3 March 1950, p. 3.

Victoria, Legislative Assembly, Debates, vol. LA226, 1947–48, pp. 778–79. A review of the list of 106 co-operative housing societies that had registered in Victoria by May 1948 reveals that many of the places that had recently opened Rochdale Co-operative Stores also had registered Co-operative Housing Societies. In NSW, Lewis noted a similar confluence as a ‘new wave of co-operative enthusiasts [became] interested in both Rochdale and financial co-operation in building societies and credit unions believing that these could help a co-operative new order.’ Lewis, ‘The Quest for a “Middle Way”’, 1989, vol. I, p. 194.


I am indebted to Frank Bonjorno for the insight about the role of governments and elites in post-war reconstruction.


Terminating societies ended when the agreed life of the society ended and all loans had been repaid. See Hill, Housing Finance in Australia, 1959, pp. 26–33.

The Age, 2 December 1977, p. 2. From oral testimony and PLHBCSL Committee of Management ‘Minutes’, I believe the loan was from the
Commonwealth Bank. However, Hill, *Housing Finance in Australia*, 1959, p. 81 stated that the Commonwealth Bank did not lend for housing until 1950. The State Bank of Victoria was the main home lender. It may have been Prime Minister Chifley’s influence, discussed in the next chapter, which caused this specific policy alteration.


86–87 PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 20 December 1946. The different timescales for repayment allowed poorer members a longer period to repay the loans. Heffey was probably another contact arranged through the Melbourne Trades Hall.

Access to other credit facilities was not required until the residents began to occupy their homes, and by the early 1960s, the residents formed a little Co-operative Credit Society through the fledgling St Luke’s Catholic Church, which later expanded into the Plenty Community Credit Union. This is discussed further in Chapter 8.

87 PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 21 April 1947, 9 May 1947, 6 June 1947, 4 July 1947. This is discussed further in Chapter 3.


Whittlesea Shire council, ‘Rates Book’, In Thomastown Riding. The PLHBCSL legally transferred the store to its subsidiary, the Lalor Consumer Co-operative Society (LCCS), on 1 December 1950. It appears to have been paid £592/10/- for the transaction though if this is accurate, it was a grossly inflated price and the consumer co-operative did not have that kind of cash available. Perhaps this annotation referred to the amount of capital available to the store.


Barbara Breaks, telephone conversation with the author, 12 November 2006. Barbara and several other older children worked in the shop after school.

Corporate Affairs Office, ‘Index to Defunct Company, Association and Business Name Registrations’, PROV, VPRS 8268, Melbourne, 1864–1990 (sic). The LCCS was not formally wound up until 9 February 1988. In August 1954 the LCCS presented a petition to the Whittlesea Shire Council which contained forty-one signatures, requesting permission to build a new store on the site where the temporary building had been. The Council granted approval (*Whittlesea Post*, 19 August 1954, p. 7). The registration under the *Industrial and Provident Societies Act* was cancelled on 23 November 1954 and the registration
of the society transferred to the newly enacted Co-operation Act 1953 the next day. Later the store was taken over by a private store-keeper.

For the definition of a co-operative cited, see the website for the International Co-operative Alliance: <http://www.ica.coop/coop/index.html>. See also the brochure for ‘Co-operation and the Politics of Consumption’, Australian Association for the Study of Labour History, Conference, 17 March 2006.

Registrar of Industrial and Provident Societies, ‘Register’, no. 116, 1948. The registration took effect from 11 February. The ES co-operative was cited in the protest march in the Introduction to this book.


The emphasis on co-operative enterprise came from _Change Over_, vol 2, no. 2, undated (but probably February 1948) p. 5. Because such a large investment had already be made in the Stockade factories, it may have been prudent for Purcell to use the ES Society for individual veterans to build at any location, using co-operative Stockade products, rather than emphasising the importance of community development in complete co-operative suburbs as in the original plan.


The ES Co-Operative Society Limited, ‘Rules’, Clause 4, p. 2. Members of this society were required to be ‘an “Australian Soldier” as defined by the Commonwealth War Service Homes Act 1918–1947, or any statutory modifications thereof, or the “female dependant” of an “Australian soldier” as defined in the said Act.’


Anne Wirth (nee Purcell), Leo’s youngest daughter, in an interview with the author, 17 November 2006, p. 12 said, ‘But he was a great entrepreneur, Dad. He always had a scheme.’

_Labor Call_, 28 January 1948, p. 8. Although the report proposed the location of the Junget factor was Northcote, it probably was in nearby Preston.


Labor Call, 20 February 1948, p. 3.

The photograph of a Junget house was in Change Over, vol. 2, no. 3, (undated but probably April 1948) p. 6.


Records of the ES Co-operative Society suggest that it remained operative and under Purcell’s stewardship at least until the end of 1949. After that time the Registrar complained of a failure of the society to lodge the requisite returns. By 1952 Purcell was apparently no longer involved and it went into voluntary liquidation late in 1959. See Registrar of Industrial and Provident Societies, ‘Register’ and detailed records of co-operative societies, PROV, VPRS 497, Unit 7 (these are uncatalogued boxes of records).

PLHBSCL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes of Meeting’, 27 December 1946.


The Leo Purcell quote was found in an unidentified press clipping, held in the City of Whittlesea historical collection. It is dated 5 April 1948.

Mark Davis, Stockade, Swinburne Film School, Melbourne, 1984. These words, ‘was started by people who always had second best etc’ from the transcript may not be Purcell’s exact words. The transcript documents his views as compiled by Mark Davis after many hours of interviews.

Davis, Stockade, Swinburne Film School, 1984. The Anzac legend has been highly contested and has been since historian CEW Bean ‘more than anyone, gave the Anzac tradition substance and direction.’


Victorian Labor Party, Executive Officers, 'Minutes', 24 August 1945, Item 6 (between folios 14 & 15).


PLHBCSL, 'Progress & Promise' 1947, front page.

Gollan, *Revolutionaries and Reformists*, pp. 144–205. Gollan used the expression ‘interlude of hope’ as the chapter heading covering this period.

*Change Over*, vol. 1, no. 10 August 1947, p. 4.

PLHBSCL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 23 May 1947.

PLHBSCL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 26 September 1947.

PLHBSCL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 10 October 1947.

PLHBSCL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 10 October 1947.

PLHBSCL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 1 April 1949:
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Birchall, Co-op: The People’s Business, 1994, p. 54, provides a good analysis of the co-operative dilemmas.


PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 13 March 1947. These minutes, and several addenda, provide some coverage of the PLC’s dealings with the PM and federal ministers.


Ted Purcell, transcript of interview with the author, 17 November 2006, p. 31. Leo’s son Ted said, ‘Dad was very, very close with Calwell. Like we’d go in there to the Labor Hour and they’d come out after Dad had finished—they’d stand on the steps of the Trades Hall there for an hour sometimes, you know, talking politics before they’d go home.’


The indented quotation is from Fox, Stephenson Called Peter, 1995, p. 52.
The context within which Chifley and Calwell were operating is best analysed by Tom Sheridan in *Division of Labor: Industrial Relations in the Chifley Years, 1945–49*, Melbourne, 1989, pp. 37–38.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’ agendum. no. 2, ‘Conference with Minister for Information and Immigration’, 19 March 11947.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, ‘Conference with Prime Minister and Mr Calwell’ 19 March 1947


All the information about this meeting can be found in PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, ‘Conference with Prime Minister and Mr Calwell’, 19 March 1947.


Herbert Percival (Bertie) Gridley, ‘Diary’, Melbourne, 1946–47. I am indebted to Gridley’s three daughters for access to relevant references in this diary.

The meeting with Rasmussen is reported in PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 10 January 1947.


Purcell would have known of the ‘Little Dover’ co-operative success (Antigonish Co-operative) through which local fishermen built their own lobster-processing factory thus removing the middle-men who were grinding them into poverty. See Race Mathews, *Jobs of Our Own: Building of a Stakeholder Society: Alternatives to the Market and the State*, Annandale, NSW, 1999, pp. 155–56.

PLHBCSL, ‘Progress & Promise’, 1947, p. 3.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Agenda for discussion with the Prime Minister on 19 March 1947’. It stated that the membership was 511, and of these, 100 were trained in building or allied trades.

Stuart Hornery, A.O., ex-Chair of the property development company, Lend Lease, commented that the Peter Lalor ‘project’s scale and timeframe were enormous. Some 4000 people were to be accommodated in a few short years. Even developments today would find this overly ambitious, and impossible if it included approval times, which the Lalor project required.’ Stuart Hornery, correspondence with the author, 3 June 2010.
The quotation ‘Homes of the highest standard….’ was found in ‘The birth of Lalor’, unnamed and undated press clipping provided by Alma Boyle of Lalor. The article quoted Purcell and was written in the late 1960s.


For discussion of women’s pay see: Doss Lawson, interview with the author, 8 December 2005, p. 5; Lorraine Harvey, interview with the author, 1 February 2008, p. 7. See also Marilyn Lake, Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism, St Leonards, 1999, p. 188.


A comprehensive coverage of WSHD lending after WWII can be found in Hill, Housing Finance in Australia, 1959, especially Chapter 4.

Correspondence from Minister for Works and Housing, Nelson Lemmon, to Leo Purcell 18 November 1947. The letter states that Lemmon and Sandford had met that day. I am indebted to the Purcell family for making this letter available. Contained in the personal papers of Leo Purcell, in possession of Leonie Purcell, Melbourne, 2006.

Hill, Housing Finance in Australia 1959, p. 57, reported that because of the lag in approvals for WSHD loans, people needed to find temporary finance. This is what many ex-servicemen in Lalor did. They used the PL financing societies as bridging loans until the more lenient WSHD finance became available. Also in 1947 a change to the Act encouraged the WSHD to begin group building schemes but it could not find builders. Hill continued, ‘In an effort to overcome the difficulties of securing builders the Division also encouraged co-operative building schemes among applicants.’ p. 55.


Hill, Revolutionaries and Reformists, 1975, pp. 111–112 provided the context here. By the time of Fox’s visit, though, the 1944 and 1946 powers referenda had been lost.

All the information about the meeting with Dedman can be found in PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, agenda no. 3, ‘Employment’, undated (March 1947).


Fay, Co-Operation at Home and Abroad, 1948, p. 43.


Robin Boyd, ‘How to Make a Suburb’, ‘Small Homes Section’, The Age, 14 April 1948, p. 3.

Eve Guy, ‘Ex-servicemen help to build each other’s homes’, Australian Women’s Weekly, 8 January 1949, pp. 44–45.


Greenwood is quoted by Eve Guy, ‘Ex-servicemen help to build each other’s homes’, Australian Women’s Weekly, 8 January, 1949, pp. 44–45.

Discussion of medical facilities can be found in PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 2 January 1948.

Dr Bacon was the father to five children of whom Jim Bacon, formerly Premier of Tasmania and journalist Wendy Bacon, are the best known. The two first doctors were mentioned in many interviews. According to Harry Fielding (interview with Ruth Ford, 19 November 1998, pp. 190–191) Bacon was an ex-servicemen, who had been an Army doctor with the 2/19 Battalion and wounded at Tobruk. The ex-service members of the PLHBCSL always asked to see Dr Bacon of the Oakland Clinic in Reservoir. Once a week the two Doctors used a room in the Symes’ home, and later had a surgery in the Stockade. The Reservoir Chemist, Val Preston, would collect the prescriptions from the Doctors at the end of surgery, fill and scripts and deliver them to the newly occupied Lalor households. Many interviewees commented that this was one aspect that was better then than today.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 2 January 1948. The female perspective of this co-operative will be considered in Chapter 7.

The Age, 5 April 1949, p. 3.


PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 12 August 1948. The minutes reflect withdrawal transactions at almost every meeting, at least throughout 1947.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, Mr LC Cooper, Procurement Manager, ‘Report’, no. 4, 26 April 1947.

Fay, *Co-Operation at Home and Abroad*, 1948, p. 325 analysed the importance of the cash trading principle.


Purcell quotation comes from *Whittlesea Post*, 5 March 1947, back page.

Fox quotation can be found in PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 27 March 1947, File Note Number 5.


Robin Boyd, ‘How to Make a Suburb’, *The Age*, 14 April 1948, p. 3.


Balnave & Patmore, ‘Localism and Rochdale Co-Operation’ 2006, p. 50. This was also the experience in the UK. See, for example, Fay, *Co-Operation at Home and Abroad*, 1948, p. 151.


PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 17 March 1947. Leo’s son Frank recalled, ‘I remember being quite stunned when Alf Greenwood took the job with them...because he was obviously an accountant of some kind and he could do books. And he was an educated man, by our standards anyway...I don’t know how they paid him, but anyway they did somehow.’ Frank Purcell, interview with the author, 20 April 2007, p. 15.


PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’ 23 May 1947, 6 June 1947


The first reference to Edward is his building supervisor’s report in September 1947 though he may have been doing the job prior to that. See PLHBCSL Committee of Management ‘Minutes’, 12 September 1947.

*Change Over*, vol 2, no. 2, undated (but almost certainly February 1948), p. 4, referred to Edward.
Rennie Beale Edward, individual war record', NAA, Series B884, V9010.


PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 7 November 1947, 17 May 1947,

Greenwood's report: PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes' 2 July 1947,

Edward quotation: PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes' 12 August 1948.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 18 February 1949

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 24 January 1949, 2 February 1949, 18 February 1949

WSHD, 'Disposal of Land', NAA, MP599/1/14990, Melbourne, 24 April 1956. This will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

Leo Purcell, Chairman, PLHBSCL, reference for AA Greenwood, 11 May 1949, AA Greenwood personal papers.


Australasian Post, 12 February 1948, pp. 7–9 described the number of houses.


Robin Boyd, 'How to Make a Suburb', The Age, 14 April 1948, p. 3 described the opening of Lalor.

Australasian Post, 12 February 1948, p. 9.

Balnave & Patmore, 'Localism and Rochdale Co-Operation', 2006, p. 50 discussed the dilemma about members becoming workers.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 9 May 1947.


PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 1 November 1948, 4 July 1947.

Australasian Post, 12 February 1948, p. 9.


Michael Fielding, interview with the author, 23 July 2007, p. 27.

Fred Harris, interview with John Waghorn, Whittlesea Historical Society, 6 July 2006.

128  Lalor Consumer Co-operative Society Ltd. ‘Papers’, PROV, VPRS 497, Unit 7, 1500V

_Whittlesea Post_, 8 October 1952, p. 1, reported the 1951 profit.


130  *Change Over*, vol. 1, no. 6, January 1947, p. 6.

131  Richard Leo Purcell, bankruptcy record, NAA B160/0, Creditors Petition No. 137/60, sequestration order no. 152/60, Melbourne; Frank Purcell, email, 3 December 2009 in which he stated, ‘I thought Dad began working for the Cooperative full time in 1949’. For a full biography of Leo Purcell see this website at Appendix A.
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132  Maurice Nelson, transcript of interview with the author, 4 April 2006, p. 18.

Hill, Housing Finance in Australia, 1959, p. 4, states ‘Dwelling completions fell from an annual rate of around 50 000 in the middle 1920s to under 10 000 in the early 1930s’.

Kate Darian-Smith, On the Home Front: Melbourne in Wartime 1939–1945, Melbourne, 1990, p. 12. Australians remembered British campaigns promising ‘homes fit for heroes’, which had been widely publicised after the WWI. See, for example, John Burnett, A Social History of Housing 1815–1970, Great Britain, 1978, p. 137. They sought explanations for why their dreams were being dashed after WWII.


132–33  Whittlesea Post, 5 March 1947, p 12. We can see that ALP right wing Catholic Purcell was not aligned with those in the right wing Santamaria group who attributed industrial unrest to the work of Communists. See, for example, Mathews, ‘Collateral Damage’, 2007, pp. 89–112.

133  Housing demand in this post-war period translated into home ownership because, as Alastair Greig cogently argued, there was little other choice. See Greig, The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of, 1995, pp. 119 & 196.


133–134  Patricia Donnelly, interview with the author, 13 December 2005, pp. 14–15. Pat and Jack had not been successful with the first ballot for a house through the PLC, but they were the fourth name on the second ballot. Their block had been allocated to someone else who had withdrawn.


See for example, Warwick Eather, ‘We Only Build Houses: The Commission 1945–60’, New Houses for Old: Fifty Years of Public
Housing in Victoria 1938–1988, edited by Renate Howe, Melbourne, 1988, p. 81. Camp Pell was a cluster of Army huts, converted into emergency accommodation at the end of the war. They soon became slums.

Department of Works and Housing, Homes for Australia, Canberra, 1949, front page.

Gollan, Revolutionaries and Reformists, 1975, p. 156.

Sheridan, Division of Labour, 1989, summarised at pp. 1–2.


Greig also reports that between 1945 and 1952 brick veneer houses increased by 229 per cent and weatherboard by 235 per cent. Greig, The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of, 1995, p. 35.

The quotation about ‘socially essential interests’ can be found at Michael Howard, ‘Beyond Full Employment’, p. 29.

136 Dinny Lovegrove quoted in Labor Call, 7 February 1946, p. 3.

Labor Call, 21 February 1946 p. 4.


137 Labor Call, 30 January 1947, p. 3 reported Cain’s announcement.


The Argus, 16 January 1947, p. 12. The Committee was expecting this architectural service to be provided to the society pro bono.

Whittlesea Post, 5 March 1947, back page.


Stanley Lewtas Frew, individual war record, NAA, series B833, VX75221. Born in 1914, he served in the 2/6 Field Company.

RAIA, (Victorian Chapter), ‘Membership lists’, SLV, MS 9454Y; Stanley Lewtas Frew, individual war record; See also Miles Lewis, Philip Goad, & Alan Mayne, Melbourne: The City’s History and Development, Melbourne, 1994, p. 121. The firm of Bates, Smart and McCutcheon
won, in 1932, the RAIA (Victorian Chapter) Architecture Medal for the design of the AMP building.


According to Nichols, both the Merrilands and Leslie estates at Reservoir, the Meadowbank at Glenroy and a lot of Keon Park were designed by Tuxen: David Nichols, email, 31 October 2005.


Chris McConville, 'Green, Solomon (1868–1948)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, vol. 9, 1983, p. 94, stated that there was a development at Black Rock. This is disputed by the Heritage Alliance, City of Bayside, 2008, p. 32.

Ashton & Pickering, Friends of the People, 2002.


Heritage Alliance, City of Bayside, 2008, p. 29.


David Nichols, 'The Merrilands Triangle', 2000. It was known that Tuxen was influenced by Walter Burley Griffin.

PLHBCSL, ‘Minutes of Special Meeting’, 24 July 1947. The prices were hand-written by Jack Harvey (builder) onto the minutes. They appear correct according to individual rates notices and were supported by oral testimony. See, for example, Doss Lawson, interview with the author, 8 December 2005, p. 5.


Renate Howe, ‘The Concrete House Frontier: The Victorian Housing Commission and the Planning of Melbourne in the 1940s and 1950s’,

The CSIR was established in Melbourne in 1926, a precursor to the CSIRO which was established in 1949. See University of Melbourne eScholarship Research Centre, Encyclopedia of Australian Science: (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research) 2008, available from <http://www.eoas.info/biogs/A000195b.htm>.


Vic Michael, interview with Ruth Ford, 1998, p. 148–49. Vic Michael stated, ‘And then—something that had never been heard of—in Victoria—in fact maybe in Australia, a pre-cutting plant was purchased’.

Greig, The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of, 1995, 92 discussed the large firms’ reluctance to engage in pre-fabrication.

‘Pre-Cutting Plant on Housing Estate’, unlabelled press clipping in the City of Whittlesea historical collection, dated in the week after the opening of Lalor on 4 April 1948.

The indented quotation can be found at PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, addendum no. 3, Building Program, 9 May 1947.

Dingle, ‘Self-Help Housing and Co-Operation in Post-War Australia’, 1999, p. 349; Peg Mackenzie, interview with the author, 13 October 2005, p. 6; Ron Moore, interview with Ruth Ford, 25 October 1998, p. 125. As previously discussed, many of Lalor’s ex-servicemen had to raise short-term finance through, for example, the Peter Lalor Co-operative Housing Societies, afterwards switching to a WSH loan.

Hill, Housing Finance in Australia, 1959, p. 47.

The exact numbers of ex-servicemen cannot be established from the available information. From the data, at least 55 were ex-servicemen, though the number was certainly higher. The database containing the names of most ballot winners, 739 records in all, has been matched with on-line WWII nominal rolls. The ballot lists contained surname and initials, and sometimes the originating suburb of the member. Where names are unusual, clear matches can be made. Oral testimony can confirm identity in some cases though not for ballot winners who never lived in Lalor. More than 50 individual war records have also been investigated from the full records that exist in the NAA. There are many cases, though, where a clear enough match could not be made between several different possible war records. This has resulted in under-reporting of the numbers of ex-service personnel. Full
prosopography tables of war service can be located at this website at Appendix H.

This information has been compiled by using the ballot lists and a comprehensive database about each of the households in this early Lalor settlement. The database was compiled from Rates Books, BDM data, WWII records, City of Whittlesea records, additional archival material, press reports and oral testimony. The prosopography tables – at this website at Appendices B–K – have been constructed from the database.


There is no list available for the ballot in December 1947. By November 782 names had been drawn from the ballots, so Gary John’s figure of 822 in total by December is probably accurate. See PLHBCSL, ‘Ballot Lists’, February to November 1947; see also Johns, ‘Building a Suburb’, 1979, p. 12. Although no written evidence remains, Maurice Nelson, who joined the co-operative in September 1949, believed he was in the last of the ballots, though it is uncertain how many more names were drawn or how many other ballots there were between December 1947 and September 1949 though they were certainly not monthly as they had been in 1947. See Maurice Nelson, interview with the author, 4 April 2006, p. 11.

144 Grey, ‘The History of the Formation of the Shire of Whittlesea’, 1961; Whittlesea Post, 27 April 1961 p.3. Grey believed they were required to use fixed contracts. As I have stated in the Introduction there are significant errors in this article, so this statement cannot necessarily be relied upon.

Clem Lloyd & Jacqui Rees, The Last Shilling: A History of Repatriation in Australia, Melbourne, 1994, p. 344. The WSHD soon found builders unwilling to sign fixed price contracts because of such volatility, hence ‘rise and fall’ provisions were added to their contracts. It was probably too late for the co-operative to emulate this practice and was one the disadvantages of the trail-blazing efforts of the PLC.

Davis, Stockade, Swinburne Film School, 1984. Although the 1944 and 1946 prices referenda had been lost, the Ten Year Plan was supposed to keep prices in check and, as Tom Sheridan stated, ‘the point to be stressed here is that in the key transitional period [after WWII] the government maintained control over the major economic variables’. See Sheridan, Division of Labour, 1989, p. 31.

Sheridan, Division of Labour, 1989, p. 31


The quotations about timber controls can be found in PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, LC Cooper, Report, 9 May 1947. PLHBCSL, Committee of Management ‘Minutes’, Secretary’s Report, 23 May 1947.


*The Age*, 5 April 1948, p. 3.

*The Age*, 12 September 1947.


Greenwoods quotation can be found in PLHBCSL, ‘Periodical Circular’, no. 8, 11 September 1947.


*Change Over*, vol. 2, no. 2 undated (January or February 1948).

*Whittlesea Post*, 18 February 1948, front page.

The indented quotation can be found in *Australasian Post*, 12 February 1948, pp. 7–9.


Although the first issue of *Australian Builder* post-dated the events of 1947, it is unlikely that the ethos and philosophy changed in this time.


It is not known if he tried to use his networks in the RSL to influence these business associations.

*Labor Call*, 20 February 1948, p. 3.

The indented quote comes from *Labor Call*, 20 February 1948, p. 3.

“‘Jamming’ Supplies Charge by Building Society’, *The Sun*, 7 November 1948; ‘Who is Blocking Diggers’ Self-Help Plan?’ *Truth*, 18 September 1948, p. 1; Un-named and undated press clipping in the City of
Whittlesea historical collection, titled, “‘Discrimination,” says Building Society: Difficulty Over Materials’.

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Balnave, & Patmore, ‘Localism and Rochdale Co-Operation’, 2006, pp. 50–51; Lewis, ‘The Quest for the “Middle Way”’, 1989, vol. I, p. 63. See also Paul Hubert Casselman, The Cooperative Movement and Some of Its Problems, New York, 1952, p. 9, who stated, ‘Capitalists, financiers and business men may quarrel with the movement because they fear its spread may affect their business... The organized anti-cooperative efforts of certain Chambers of Commerce or of Tax Equality Associations fall into this category.’

Several Lalor residents reported that Purcell spoke his mind on his program, ‘Ex-Servicemen’s Question Box’ and the whole Victorian listening community was treated to the vicissitudes of Lalor’s development. See, for instance, Les Casbolt, interview with Ruth Ford, 24 October 1998, p. 39; Dot Thompson, interview with the author, 1 May 2006, pp. 36–37.

Labor Call, 9 April 1948, p. 8.


Dot Thompson interview, with the author, 2006, p. 31 commented on Purcell’s broadcasts.

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Whittlesea Post, 7 April 1948, p. 4.

Truth, 18 September 1948, p. 1.

Indented quote comes from Truth, 18 September 1948, p. 1.

Labor Call, 29 October 1948, p. 2.

Standish Michael Keon was at the time the Labor member for Richmond and undoubtedly an associate of Purcell’s. He was also campaign secretary for Arthur Calwell, but, unlike Calwell and Purcell, he joined the DLP in 1955. Robin Gollan identified Keon as one of the ‘two most consistent exposer of communists in high places’. See Gollan, Revolutionaries and Reformists, 1975, p. 277.

150–51

Truth, 26 September 1947, p. 1.

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As previously discussed their decision was based on the latest advice from CSIR, and the example evident by Commonwealth Housing Commission’s pre-fabricated concrete houses being manufactured at Holmesglen, and in the light of a lifting of war-time restrictions on cement.

Truth, 26 September 1948, p. 1.

Truth, 26 September 1948, p. 1. They were built by the ES Society and described in detail in Chapter 2.

The statement about the PLC’s failure to deliver came from Harold Fielding, interview with Ruth Ford, 19 November 1998, p. 182.
Doss Lawson, interview with Ruth Ford, 24 October 1998, p. 89. The situation she described probably occurred in the last quarter of 1948.

An undated and unsourced newspaper clipping titled ‘The birth of Lalor’, c 1969 reported that many people lost their money.


See, for example, Pat Tuttle, interview with the author, 25 September 2006, p. 45; Roy Wicks, interview with Ruth Ford, 23 November 1998, p. 359. Both comment on the great work of Belle Dunton.


PLHBCSL ‘Notice to Members: Special General Meeting’, 7 July 1948; PLHBCSL, ‘Periodical Circular’, no. 25, 9 July 1948. All the information about the meeting with the solicitor, William R Hunt, can be found in PLHBCSL, ‘Minutes of Special Meeting’, 9 July 1948. The legal firm was called ‘Thomas Cleary and Hunt, Barristers and Solicitors’, and their chambers were in Winfield Building, 495 Collins Street, Melbourne. Information about the legal firm can be found in correspondence from Thomas Cleary and Hunt to Lloyd Hertzog, Co-operative member, 31 October 1949, in the private collection of Jude Davis.

The quote from Fox can be found in PLHBCSL ‘Minutes of Special Meeting’, 9 July 1948.

PLHBSCL, ‘Minutes of Special Meeting’, 9 July 1948


The Age, 2 December 1977, p. 2. This article quoted King.

I am indebted to Doss Lawson for providing a copy of the ‘Syndicate Agreement’ of which her husband, Clive Lawson, was a member.


United Grand Lodge of Victoria, ‘Lodge Registration Books’, Anzac House, Melbourne, Book 9, Eros Lodge, no. 416, p. 343, showed that Austin James (Jim) O’Connor aged 38, carpenter, 2/12/46 made application—admitted 12/2/47; Allan Murray O’Connor joined aged 30, carpenter, made application on 7/2/49—admitted 4/4/49. Book 16, Epping Lodge, revealed Clive Alexander Lawson, contractor also as a member of Eros Lodge, no date. However his membership came later than the O’Connor brothers. Doss Lawson recalled, ‘Jim O’Connor
asked Clive if he’d like to go into the Lodge, and Clive became Master in 1964’. Doss Lawson, interview with the author, 8 December 2005, p. 5. From the ‘Lodge Registration Book’, op. cit., the others in the syndicate were not members of Eros Lodge, and may not have been Masons, or they may have brought with them to Lalor, Lodge membership from other places in Victoria.


Whittlesea Post, 2 June 1954, p. 8.


According to Bill Nelson’s diary, they joined the society on 28 April 1949 and had paid off their block by 28 July. They also joined the Peter Lalor No. 1 Co-operative Building Society on 13 April.

Maurice Nelson, interview with the author, 4 April 2006, p. 11.

Indented quote comes from Maurice Nelson, interview with the author, 4 April 2006, p. 18.

Barbara Breaks, interview with the author, 8 December 2005, p. 20.

Kenneth Frederick Lonne, individual war record, NAA, series B883, VX58142; Maurice Stanley Nelson, individual war record, NAA, series B883, VX120055.

Kenneth Frederick Lonne, individual war recorded that this injury caused his return to Australia. After some time in Army administration he was discharged as medically unfit in March 1944; Maurice Stanley Nelson, individual war record.
Barbara Breaks stated: ‘Dad was a soldier for eight days. He had duodenal ulcers and he didn’t pass the medical. And he got a certificate. He tried the air force and the army, and was rejected both times which upset him terribly.’

Kenneth Frederick Lonne, individual war record; Maurice Stanley Nelson, individual war record. See also Barbara Breaks, interview with the author, 13 October 2005, p. 13.

Bill Nelson was at 23 Vasey Avenue and Maurie was at number 3.


Barbara Breaks, interview with the author, 8 December 2005, p. 21.

Indented quote comes from Maurice Nelson, interview with the author, 2006, p. 18.

Bill Nelson, diary.

Bill Nelson, diary.

Bill Nelson, diary.


Bill Nelson diary


Writing in 1987 as part of John Barrett’s investigation of returned WWII servicemen, C.C. Lee wrote, ‘The really big thing overlooked is the length of time it takes to really return to civilian life; it would average seven to ten years to get back to some sort of normal behaviour.’ Barrett, We Were There, 1987, p. 441.


Bill Clark & Irene Wood (nee Clark), interview with the author, 19 October 2006, pp. 4 & 10.

The Violet Burgess quote is from Violet Burgess, interview with the author, 20 April 2007, p. 4.

Whittlesea Post, 21 December 1949, p. 16.

WSC, ‘Minutes of Meetings’, item 6, 14 September 1949, p. 225.

Leo Boyle, interview with the author, 24 February 2006, p. 11.
The indented quote is from Leo Boyle, interview with the author, 24 February 2006, p. 12.

163–64 Doss Lawson, interview with the author, 8 December 2005, p. 5.
164 ‘Pre-Cutting Plant on Housing Estate’, unlabelled press clipping in the City of Whittlesea files, dated in the week after the opening of Lalor on 4 April 1948.
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Gwen Hawkins, interview with the author, 2 November 2006, p. 25.

*Whittlesea Post*, 21 December 1949, p. 16.

*Whittlesea Post*, 21 December 1949, p. 16.


PLHBCSL, ‘Progress and Promise’, 1947, p. 3.


166–67  *Labor Call*, 3 April 1947, p. 3.

167  Johns, ‘Building a Suburb’, 1978, p. 9, stated that the total sum paid was £14 939. He does not quote his source for this. It may well be that he had access to some co-operative records which demonstrated that this figure included additional costs such as conveyance fees. I have relied on the rates notices, WSC, ‘Rates Books’, Epping no. 1, 1942–1948, PROV, VPRS 14620/P0001/58–59.


168  Jones, *Nature’s Plenty*, 1992, pp. xiv & 170. According to John Waghorn of the Whittlesea Historical Society, a subdivision of a similar tract of land had been planned in 1926 but did not proceed. Plans for the Newtown Park Estate can be found at PROV, VPRS 421/PO, unit 670. I am indebted to John Waghorn for this reference.

Indented quote is from WSC, ‘Minutes of Meeting’, 11 June 1947, item 14, p. 239.


PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 19 June 1947. It was Bill Mann’s property that the Commonwealth Bank would not approve for purchase.


Indented quote is from *Whittlesea Post*, 24 May 1950, front page.

As an example of the interests of the council, see: WSC, ‘Minutes of Meeting’, 10 March 1948, p. 20.


Payne, *The Plenty*, 1975, p. 44.


Cr CA Smith is quoted in *Whittlesea Post*, 23 February 1949, p. 1.

*Whittlesea Post*, 18 February 1948, front page. There is no record of when the meeting with the MMBW took place, however, the Lalor representatives had clearly taken from the meeting, the impression that the land could be adequately drained.

For example, according to WSC, ‘Minutes of Meetings’, item 27, 11 April 1951, p. 176, the state Treasury wrote to council wanting to know if it intended to borrow Loan Council funds. The answer was no.

*Whittlesea Post*, 18 February 1948, front page.

*Whittlesea Post*, 31 March 1948, front page.

*Whittlesea Post*, 23 February 1949, front page.

*Whittlesea Post*, 24 November 1948, p. 8 & 20 October 1948, p. 8. PMG was the Post Master General’s Department that at the time handled
post and telephone services. The SEC was the State Electricity Commission. Both acronyms represented popular usage.

Whittlesea Post, 23 February 1948, front page.
Whittlesea Post, 20 July 1949, front page.

Cr Balharrie is cited in Whittlesea Post, 20 July 1949, p. 8.


Whittlesea Post, 11 May 1949, front page. The Post regularly updated the population growth in Lalor.


See this website at Appendix C where there is a table aligning the individuals to the organisations. The amount of overlap is obvious.

Whittlesea Post, 8 March 1950, p. 12. The cricket team made it into the semi-finals in its first season.
Whittlesea Post, 5 July 1950, front page.

Indented quotation is from Whittlesea Post, 5 July 1950, front page.

Whittlesea Post, 28 February 1951, p. 8. The Engineer explained that the £450 was much less than the amount received in rates. This reference also includes the indented quotation.

Frank Purcell, interview with the author, 20 April 2007, p. 15. Frank stated, ‘When Dad went and joined it and sold the shop, he was taking a big punt too. But I remember saying to him one time, “why do you want to do that?” and he said, “Oh I couldn’t be a shopkeeper for the rest of my days.”’

Purcell, in seeking pre-selection for the Senate, gained 12 641 votes, but came fifth in a large field, behind the four candidates, Senators D Cameron, JJ Devlin and JM Sheehan, plus RA Clarey, a Melbourne accountant, who were pre-selected. See Labor Call, 6 May 1949, p.1 & 2 September 1949, p. 1.

Whittlesea Post, 24 January 1951, front page & 6 December 1949, front page. Born in 1920, Jack Gunn had served in the 33rd Flying Squadron
with the RAAF and bought his PLC built home in Gratwick Street with a WSH loan. See William John Gunn, individual war record, WWII Nominal Roll, 034726. He played with the Lalor Cricket team, also serving on the Cricket Club Committee. Michael Fielding, interview with the author, 23 July 2007, p. 3. Fielding said, 'Jack Gunn was a direct descendent of the famous Gunn family of England who were the makers of cricket bats. And if you had a Gunn and Moore cricket bat, you were made.'

177 Indented quotation is from Whittlesea Post, 25 November 1953, p. 9.

178 Two of the three families were still living in temporaries.
The women’s deputation was reported in Whittlesea Post, 12 April 1950, front page.
Whittlesea Post, 13 February 1952, front page.
Whittlesea Post, 5 March 1952, p. 5.


Whittlesea Post, 18 June 1952, front page.

179–80 Davies, Local Government in Australia, 1951. Indented quotation is at p. 21. Reference to the property qualification is at p. 25.

180 From the ‘Rates Books’ it would appear that 9 blocks were solely owned by women; 78 were jointly owned by women. It is unclear whether the Lalor blocks, for which they paid either £25 or £35, were valued by council as more or less than £25 thereby attracting one or two votes. WSC, ‘Rates Book’, PROV,VPRS 14620/P0001/66, 1948–1954. There is a table describing ownership in Appendix G at this website.

Whittlesea Post, 9 September 1953, p. 4.

180–81 Whittlesea Post, 23 August 1950, front page. A biography of Jim O’Connor is in Appendix A at this website.
Whittlesea Post, 30 August 1950, front page.
Whittlesea Post, 1 August 1951, front page.
Whittlesea Post, 13 September 1950, front page.
Whittlesea Post, 8 August 1951, front page. In 1951 Les Casbolt of Vasey Avenue was Purcell’s campaign manager. A biography of Casbolt can be found in Appendix A at this website.
Desmond said, 'the man behind Winterton was Adams, who for some reason hated Dad. And I don't know what it was...the Adams kids were the closest friends of my brothers and sisters.' The contest between the fathers did not stop the children all playing cricket in Middleton Street where they were neighbours. Ex-serviceman, Don Fitzgerald, from Vasey Avenue was Winterton’s campaign manager. Biographies of Winterton and Adams can be found in Appendix A at this website.

McManus was assistant secretary of the Victorian Branch of the ALP 1950–1955. He became a DLP senator. Gordon Bryant was elected the ALP member for Wills in 1955 after the split. He served in the Whitlam Cabinet in 1972 as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. ALP MHR Reginald Pollard was a civil libertarian, like Purcell he supported bank nationalisation, and he supported Evatt’s campaign against the referendum to outlaw the Communist Party.

Vic Michael has already appeared in Chapter 4. A biography can be found in Appendix A at this website.

As a scholarship boy, Norm Griffiths trained as industrial chemist and was in a protected industry during the war, working on the development of penicillin with the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories. A biography can be found in Appendix A at this website.

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This terrible episode in Purcell’s life was never discussed at home. The children found the situation very shocking. While they do not know the details of their father’s business, they believed their father had invested too much in the Co-operatives. See Frank Purcell, interview with the author, 2007, p.11. Upon selling the house, Purcell discharged all his debts and was not declared bankrupt. He became bankrupt, however, in 1960 as a result of a failed timber business. Again, from the bankruptcy data, it would appear that Purcell was doing his best in a difficult situation: another great scheme that was under-capitalised and therefore unprepared for adversity, in this case consistently bad
weather and an accident with machinery. Attorney-General’s Department, Bankruptcy Branch, Victoria, ‘Richard Leo Purcell, Bankruptcy Record’, NAA, B160/0, Creditor’s Petition No. 137/60, sequestration order no. 152/60, Melbourne, 1960.

184 Whittlesea Post, 9 September 1953, p. 4.
The quote by Norm Griffiths appeared in Whittlesea Post, 19 August 1953, p. 6.

Just prior to Batten’s election, he had succeeded in having land at Wollert approved for subdivision. Similarly, Mann was also in the process of developing his land into a housing estate known as Bella Vista, making council membership an attractive proposition. See WSC, ‘Minutes of Meetings’, 9 July 1952, p. 63, 15 April 1953, p 181 & 10 June 1953, p. 207.


185 Indented quotation appears at Whittlesea Post, 30 June 1954, p. 5.


Disadvantage for working class people in the allocation of resources is discussed by Greig, The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of, 1995, p. 40.
NOTES: Chapter 6

PAGE:

188  PLHBCSL, 'Circular', no. 37, 1 September 1949.

PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, 'Minutes', 18 February 1949.

WSHD, Group 74R Thomastown, 'Disposal of land', NAA MP599/1, 14990, Melbourne, 28 August 1953.

188–89  PLHBCSL, 'Circular', no. 37, 1 September 1949. This confirms my argument from Chapter 4, that members who wanted to withdraw, did so because they no longer wanted to be at Lalor, not because they could not gain access to a building block.


WSHD, Group 74R Thomastown, 'Correspondence', NAA MP797/1/0, G13115, Melbourne, 21 September 1950; Greig, The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of, 1995, pp. 77–79 discusses the close relationship between the government and the big construction companies.


190  From available information it would appear that there were about 50 WSHD loans.


190  The land became known as the 'Lalor Station Estate', but for WSHD purposes it was Group 74R (v) Thomastown. NAA, MP599/1,13016, Melbourne.

WSHD, Group 74R (v) Thomastown, 'Creation of Reserves', NAA, MP599/1/0 G14574.


190–91  Of the original 483 blocks bought by the WSHD, 8 sold to applicants, 5 transferred to council for road making purposes, and 4 retained by WSHD. This left 466 blocks.


WSHD, Group 74R Thomastown, 'Disposal of Land', 28 August 1953, 31 August 1953

191–92  WSHD, 'Correspondence', 27 April 1953.

192  Whittlesea Post, 4 March 1953, p. 8 King is reported at the PLHBCSL half-yearly meeting.

193  The WSHD also initially held back its approval for the street construction proposals. Whittlesea Post, 16 May 1957, p. 1, reported that the WSHD had blocked the Lalor Street construction scheme 'by
refusing to pay the £8500 for the 40 blocks it owns' in the relevant section of the PL Estate. After an outcry, it withdrew its objections. *Whittlesea Post*, 30 May 1957, p. 1. For individual PL owners who wanted to erect garden fences on blocks adjoining those owned by the WSHD, there were often considerable delays. See WSHD, Group 74R Thomastown, ‘Fencing’ NAA, MP 797/1/0 G 13116, Melbourne, 1950–59.

WSHD, Group 74R Thomastown ‘Proposed sale of 10 lots to Education Department’, NAA, MP599/1: 14801, 14 September 1951.

Labor MHR Pollard was invited by Purcell to the inaugural meeting of the Lalor Branch of the ALP but as discussed in Chapter 5, he apologised.


WSHD, 'Disposal of Land', 21 October 1955. Prior to the sale, 29 lots had to be withdrawn because the Shire Engineer deemed the drainage was unsatisfactory. He added that ‘I do not think that the [MMBW] Board will build the necessary drain for some years’.


WSC, ‘Rates Book’, no. 80.

195 See also Coolnong Estates Pty Ltd, Company Register, VPRS 80269/P0001. Registered 1931, by 1941 Burke family names were added to the list of Directors. The link between the Coolong Estates and T.M. Burke Pty Ltd is further reinforced as T.M. Burke resold the Lalor estate land on behalf of Coolnong. See also Gary Lewis, ‘The Quest for a “Middle Way”: Radical and Rochdale Co-Operation in New South Wales, 1859-C1986’, PhD thesis, Australian National University, 1989, vol. II, notes p. 82; Tony Hannan, ‘Burke, Thomas Michael (1870 - 1949)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Melbourne, vol. 7, 1979, pp. 486 – 87.

A description of both elite and mass prosopography is to be found in the Introduction to this book. See also Lawrence Stone, 'Prosogography', 1972, p. 108


Lorraine Harvey, interview with the author, 21 February 2008, p. 11. See a short biography Jack and Lorraine Harvey located in Appendix A at this website.

The material described in this prosopography is contained in a database that has been specifically designed for this project. The data has been compiled from a large range of official sources, newspaper reports, oral testimony, diaries and other personal papers. Hundreds of specific references have been used to collate the information in these pages 198–203. It was impractical to include them in the book. The prosopography tables, constructed from the database, are to be found in Appendices B to K at this website.

Michael Erban, 'A Preliminary Prosopography of the Victorian Street', *Auto/Biography* 4. No. 2/3, 1996, p. 54, used the street approach, but with very different findings.

See a diagram naming the occupants of this street p.197 of the book. This format was used by Geoffrey Bolton in his book, *Daphne Street: The Biography of an Australian Community*, Fremantle, 1997.

Pascoe, A Community Portrait, 2001, p. 144 listed all the VC winners whose names were used for Lalor streets.


*Whittlesea Post*, 5 September 1951, p. 8; Dot Thompson, transcript of interview with the author, 1 May 2006, p. 10.


One reason for the failure to establish a given name for Mrs Mott is that oral testimony has been used to gain this information for many of the women. However, the Motts left Lalor in 1955, making it difficult for people in their nineties to remember her name. The use of prosopography as a methodology for the study of working class communities almost inevitably runs into problems such as this: the occupant of number 14 is only known to us as Mrs Mott. For this reason many exponents of the approach limit its application to the examination of elites. As outlined in the discussion in the Introduction to this book, Lawrence Stone’s famous definition actually denotes the approach as ‘elite prosopography’. See Stone, ‘Prosogography’, 1972,
When Peg's mother died in 1951, they moved back into the Gratwick Street house with Doug, where they stayed until they moved into their house.

Archibald family took over and finished a partly built home in Paschke Crescent before moving into it in 1951.

The original owner of the Witt’s house was ex-serviceman, Geoffrey O’Neill. It is very unlikely that he lost any money on the sale of this property.

Bill and Eunice Clark, interview with the author, 2006, pp. 19–20
It is unlikely that the original owner, ex-servicemen Geoffrey O’Neill, would have lost any money on this deal.

Whittlesea Post, 23 September 1954, p. 8. The Mother’s Club referred to here was the LWSC.

Again, it is unlikely that the previous owners, George Blackburn and Caroline Mann, lost money on the sale of number 15. They had bought the block, ‘temporary’ and foundations from Harry Moate in 1952 for £440.

Dot Thompson, interview with the author, 2006, p. 50.
In Appendix E at this website, there is a list of Lalor resident familial relationships, to the extent that they are known. This is intended to be indicative and is almost certainly incomplete.


Bureau of Census and Statistics, Census, 30 June 1954, vol. II, part. IV, p. 13. The census understated the number of homes (198 according to the census, 208 according to the Rates Book) and therefore almost certainly understated the number of people. However, the numbers presented here are not intended to present statistically valid samples.
The numbers are too small and the data too sketchy. The best that can achieved is to create an impression of the most likely dominant features of this community.

There is no evidence of any house being purchased without a mortgage.

Prosopography tables supporting all the analysis in Chapter 6 can be found in Appendices B–K at this website.

See maps, situated with the photographs in the book, which attempt to paint a picture of the development of the housing estate. The maps are as accurate as the sources have allowed. See also, 1954 residential data in Appendices F & G at this website.

War service data is in Appendix H at this website.


Doss Lawson, interview with the author, 12 December 2005, p. 38.

See the known cases in Appendix C at this website. Although outside the 1954 snapshot, it is worth noting that at least another dozen of the men who served in the armed forces did not reach the age of 60.

Biographical data sheets are in Appendices J & K at this website.


McVicar, interview with the author, 2008, p. 3.

Boot clickers cut out the leather for the different parts of the shoe.

For example, Kath Griffiths was dux of her school and gained a scholarship to university to train as a physical education teacher. Beth Indian, Pat Donnelly and Doss Lawson all won scholarships to continue on at school. Beth partially trained as an art teacher, Pat did well in mathematics, but Doss’s aunt persuaded her mother that she did not need to attend an independent girls grammar school for which she had gained entrance. Irene Hertzog attended Bowen High School (Queensland) for three years where she was dux. She won first prize in a free scholarship examination and completed a one-year qualification in accountancy and secretarial work in Brisbane. See Kath Griffiths, interview with the author, 20 October 2006, p. 24; Beth Indian, interview with the author, 13 March 2006, p. 18; Pat Donnelly, interview with the author, 13 December 2005, pp. 11–12; Doss Lawson, interview with the author, 8 & 12 December 2005, p. 11; Judy Davis (nee Hertzog) email 15 March 2009.
For example, Peg Adams was Catholic and Arch only became ‘half-heartedly’ Catholic upon their marriage; Nita Nelson was Catholic, but Maurie stayed away; Gwen Hawkins was Catholic and Frank only joined and became active in St Luke’s Church later in their lives, and Peter Kyle was active in the Catholic Church and Marla was for a short time active in the Presbyterian. See also Siobhan McHugh, ‘Not in Front of the Altar: Mixed Marriages and Sectarian Tensions between Catholics and Protestants in Pre-Multicultural Australia’, History Australia: Journal of the Australian Historical Association, vol. 6, no. 2, 2009.
NOTES: Chapter 7

The ideals were spelt out in Chapter 1.
The quotation is from: PLHBCSL, ‘Progress & Promise’, 1947, p. 2.


214 See for example, Sophie Watson, Accommodating Inequality: Gender and Housing, Sydney, 1988, pp. 19–20.


Bill Mackintosh, interview with the author, 2007, p. 11. Bill continued, ‘Yes so this Leo Purcell was a terrific bloke. He was on the Labour Hour ...And he helped her a lot.’

Bill Mackintosh, interview with the author, 2007, p. 24. Several biographies of the Lalor women are contained in Appendix A at this website.

215 Dot Thompson, interview with the author, 1 May 2006, p. 20.

Isobel Tunzi, interview with the author, 2006, pp. 5–7. Whittlesea Post, 30 June 1966, p. 3 reported his death at the age of 48. See also William James Tunzi, individual war record, NAA, series B883, VX31148.


For instance several of the Lalor women worked at the Crestknit factory in Epping: Jeanne Eastham, Maggie Winterton, Honor Mackie, Grace Bayne to name a few. While it was factory work, at least they enjoyed the fact that their friends were there.


Lalor Social Club, ‘Circular’, undated by probably October 1947, held in the personal papers of Jack Harvey, in possession of Neil Harvey, Melbourne. The meeting occurred on 10 November 1947. The committee was initially called the Ladies Committee, but was quickly renamed the Lalor Ladies Social Club before being renamed the Lalor Women’s Social Club.


PLHBCSL, Committee of Management, ‘Minutes’, 17 July 1947. The motion also stated that the naming of the streets was to be left to the Chairman (Purcell) and the Secretary (Greenwood).


At least three women had become widows since moving to Lalor: Dot Thompson, Valerie Bonderenko and Annie Mackintosh.

Lawson, interview with the author, 8 December 2005, p. 7.

Lawson, interview with the author, 12 December 2005, p. 17.


Elizabeth Indian & Anne Ramsay, interview with the author, 13 March 2006, pp. 30–31. Their building syndicate was made up of four families: Harry and Phyllis Martin, Reg and Dianne Lynch, Alan and Anne Ramsay and Hugh and Beth Indian. They built in that order.


Rea Michael, interview with the author, 25 July 2007, p. 34.

PLHBCSL. ‘Periodical Circular’, undated. Only page 2 is available, but it probably dates from late 1948 or early 1949 as 14 homes were occupied.

There are many more women who could just as easily have been written into examples. However, the abovementioned women were selected, both for the dominant roles they played and because information about them was available from oral sources.

Lawson, interview with the author, 29 May 2006, pp. 17–18. While residents called them ‘rent’, they were in fact the repayments for
housing loans from the PL Nos. 1 & 2 Co-operative Housing Societies. Such language is further symbolic evidence that home ownership was a new achievement for them.

223 Kathleen Jones, interview with the author, 19 April 2007, p. 21.

Lawson, interview with the author, 8 December 2005, p. 1, as discussed in Chapter 4.

Lawson, interview with Ruth Ford, 1998, p. 92. The 'Smiths' were Ern and Mag Smith, French Street, and as previously discussed, he was the plumber in the syndicate.

Lawson, interview with the author, 8 & 12 December 2005, pp 19–23. It was typical of her generous spirit, that when I interviewed her in 2005 she had prepared a list of the ‘quiet achievers’ in Lalor who she thought needed to be recognised through this study, for voluntary contributions each had made to the community. She mentioned John and Pauline Peterson who helped so much with the pre-school and the school; Peter Kyle who, through his employment at the Herald, organised printing for most Lalor formal occasions; Ken Groves who was a bank manager and did everyone’s accounting, Joy Klein who taught elocution, and was active in the Presbyterian Church. Doss said, ‘What I was trying to find was the people who gave of their knowledge and everything to everybody.’ (p. 23.)

224 Griffiths, interview with the author, pp. 13–14.


Some of the other women with school aged children also helped with the building. However, it was Lil’s contribution that was often mentioned through the oral testimony.


Rea Michael, interview with the author, 2007, p. 17; Lawson interviews with the author, 8 & 12 December 2005, p. 35.

They enlisted the support of Leo Purcell in the campaign for a new school. The Whittlesea Post failed to mention the first link in the chain of activism for the school (the women), when it said of Purcell that he ‘was the chief instigator in securing the school for Lalor.’ Whittlesea Post, 30 June 1954, p. 5.


Adele Casbolt, who was a major worker for the Helping Hand (in both a voluntary and paid capacity) has written an unpublished history of the Whittlesea District Branch of the Helping Hand Association for Persons with an Intellectual Disability. I am indebted to her for making this available to me.

Between 1956 and 1960, the Cooper family followed Arthur's work to Yarraville, during which time a Salvation Army Hall was opened in Lalor. When Muriel returned she resumed her Sunday school duties.


Kathleen Jones (nee Michael), interview with the author, 19 April 2007, p. 19.

Lawson, interview with the author, 12 December 2005, p. 35.

There are no records for the society for this time period, however, elections for positions on the Committee of Management were held every six months and the term was for at least one year. The Whittlesea Post records the fact that Nancy Walker stood down from the Committee in August 1951 (see 5 September 1951, p. 8).


See the women's list of Lalor residents' affiliations/memberships in Appendix C at this website. See also Whittlesea Post, 5 September 1951, p. 8. Nancy Walker lived at 1 Newton Crescent. See WSC, 'Rates Book', Thomastown Riding, PROV, VPRS 14620/P0001/59, September 1948.

Not forgetting of course that Mrs Witt had to lock her husband in the shed to get away to a meeting of the LWSC. See Chapter 6.

In this respect the LWSC was continuing in a localised way, some of the tradition established by the Women's Co-operative Guild in the UK in the 1880s. Liddington and Norris have argued that, 'For the first time, working class women found in the Guild... and similar groups, a forum to express their grievances and work out their own ideas and campaigns. They also found, again for the first time, outlets for their talents of leadership and organization.' J. Liddington & J. Norris, One Hand Tied Behind Us: The Rise of the Women’s Suffrage Movement, London 1978, p. 41, cited in Heather O'Connor, "Life as we have known it": the Women's Co-operative Guild 1883–1927', M. Ed paper, Monash University, 1981, p. 4.

Whittlesea Post, 6 December 1950, front page. Married to Gordon Skinner, no given name has been found for Mrs Skinner in the written record. The Skinners were part of a syndicate, in which theirs was the first house built in Vasey Avenue. Hilda Perrott occupied a PLC built home in Chowne Street. Ivy Egan lived at 10 Gratwick Street and played the piano for the first church service held in Lalor. It was a Methodist service held at the Recreation Hall in the Stockade on Sunday night 20 August 1950. See Whittlesea Post, 23 August 1950,
The names, birthdays and level of schooling are all hand written in a note-book provided by Maureen Adams (nee Nelson) as a contribution to this research. Maureen’s mother Lil Nelson ran the first Kindergarten and the names are written in her handwriting. I am indebted to Maureen Adams for this material.


Reference to Lot 244 can be found in WSC, ‘Rates Book’, Thomastown Riding, no. 66, 1948–1954: One hundred and forty blossoming gums and other ornamental trees were provided by the Forestry Commission for planting in the grounds. Whittlesea Post, 18 July 1951, front page.

For example, Doss Lawson and Bub Turner were young mothers doing war work.

Lyndsay Gardiner, The Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria, 1908–1980, Burwood, 1982, pp. 102–112. While the move to place kindergartens under the health umbrella emphasised the strand of the kindergarten movement more concerned with the health and hygiene of young children, than the educational benefits, this should not be overstated. It was more a bureaucratic ploy to evade the educational restriction on the funding of denominational education which could have precluded funding of denominational kindergartens.


Whittlesea Post, 1 August 1951, front page.


Unfortunately at the time the PLHBSCL was carrying a debt of approximately £40 000 so was in a weak position to borrow: See Whittlesea Post, 22 August 1951, front page & p. 8.

228–29

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Certainly, the Journal had published figures on the costs of kindergarten as £10 per child per annum. The state government contribution at that time was £4 which, according to this journal, left local government to find the balance.

*Australian Municipal Journal*, vol 25, no. 522, 20 August 1945, p. 54.


Whittlesea Post, 17 October 1951, front page.

Shire Secretary Cook remembered this differently. By his account, the hall was the first priority, with the kindergarten an addition when they needed to call on a government grant. See Whittlesea Post, 24 March 1966, p. 1. This view is not supported by the written evidence through the Whittlesea Post nor by Doss Lawson or Kath Griffiths.


Dot Thompson, interview with the author, 2006, pp. 19–20; Geoffrey Thompson, email, 27 October 2009. Wayne has since taken his father’s given name, Geoffrey.

Whittlesea Post, 4 March 1953, front page.

Whittlesea Post, 31 March 1954, p. 1. Hugh Indian took over as building supervisor, assisted by Bill Nelson and Norm Griffiths. There was a call for more volunteers. The LWSC provided morning and afternoon teas for the workers. The Lalor Men’s Club (by then called the Thomastown, Epping, Lalor and Keon Park Men’s Club or TELK) also offered its assistance, with both labour and fund-raising. The men’s group organised a Bush Christening and variety night raising £41/6/5.


George and June Jacobs, interview with the author, 2006, p. 22.

Whittlesea Post, 14 July 1954, front page. It seemed that every Sunday there was work to be done of some kind. Concurrently with the building of the Lalor ‘kinderhall’, Bill O’Connor was also taking the lead role in the building of the Epping RSL Hall which was due to open before Christmas. In the meantime, Eric Gunten’s home in Mackey Street had burnt to the ground and had to be rebuilt by donations, fund-raising and working bees. For a biography of Gunten, see Appendix A at this website.


Lawson, interview with the author, 8 December 2008, p. 2; *Whittlesea Post*, 11 November 1954, p. 8. The newspaper simply recorded that ‘a generous donation by a local resident had enabled the floor of the new Kindergarten Hall to go down’.


*Whittlesea Post*, 28 October 1965, p. 1, 24 November 1965, p. 4, 24 March 1966, p. 1. Although on 14 February 1966 Australia moved to decimal currency, the figures quoted in March 1966 were still in pounds.

George Jacobs, interview with the author, 2006, p. 27.

This statement was made after considerable contact with this community. There has not, however, been a statistical survey done of the educational or occupational attainment of the second generation as it was beyond the capacity of this study. Nonetheless, as we will see in the next chapter, and unlike the surrounding areas of Lalor, many of those who grew up in the co-operative, soldier settlement triangle became professional people, academics, teachers, lawyers, nurses, or small business owners.


NOTES: Chapter 8

PAGE:


246   *Whittlesea Post*, 21 November 1951, p. 12; Frank & Gwen Hawkins, interview with the author, 2006, p. 32.

246   *Whittlesea Post*, 22 October 1059, p. 7.

246   *Whittlesea Post*, 16 July 1959, p. 7, 29 October 1959, p. 15. Both the Salvation Army and Presbyterian churches also had strong though smaller communities developing around them.

246   Marla and Barry Kyle, interview with the author, 2006, p. 20.


247   Brian Donnelly, writing of his father, Jack, stated, ‘One of his notable contributions to the local community was input to the St Luke’s Credit Union. He was one of the early directors of the credit union, which provided financial support to many local residents.’ See Brian Donnelly, email, 15 November 2006, p. 2; Plenty Community Credit Union, ‘Our History’, <www.plentycredit.com.au>.


247   Marla Kyle, interview with the author, 13 October 2005, p 5. Marla had written on a scrap of paper, ‘Peter also assisted in the setting up of the Plenty Credit Union at the back of St Luke’s Church Hall.’ She also said that Peter had printed their tally sheets and reconciliation books at the Herald where he worked. Kevin O’Rourke married Peg Adams, the oldest daughter of Arch and Peg Adams. He was one of the founding members of the credit union. See Pat Adams, correspondence with the author, 28 March 2006. Pam Summerville was also on the committee: See also Marla Kyle, interview with the author, 13 October 2005, p. 5; Barry Kyle, interview with the author, 19 October 2006, p. 20.


247   The indented quotation was from the *Whittlesea Post*, 11 October 1972, p. 8.
As we have seen, devout Catholic, Leo Purcell, is attributed with having played a major role in the fight to gain a non-denominational public school in Lalor. Dave Burgess, although a Mason, appears not to have favoured the ‘brotherhood’ in his employment policies. Catholic Jack Kernaghan played a key role for Burgess in delivering the plasterwork for the Olympics.


Davis, ‘Some Hertzog History’, email 15 March 2009

Lil Nelson, kindergarten enrolment books.

Two central players, Jim and Bill O’Connor, were Masons who were reared as Catholics.


Harry Jenkins, interview with the author, 2006, p. 23.

Jack Harvey from the original committee still lived in Lalor, but was not one of the originators. Bill King, not a resident, continued his role as Chairman of the two PL Co-operative Housing Societies for most of the 30 years of their existence, resigning in May 1974, three years short of their closure in 1977. See, *The Age*, 2 December 1977, p. 2.

These are but three examples. Many families could have been selected for mention. Some are in the biographies at this website in Appendix A.


*Labor Call*, 2 September 1949, p. 5.

Victorian ALP & THC papers, in Doug Burgess, personal papers 1944–1970, held in the private collection of Mavis Burgess. See also, Mavis Burgess, interview with the author, 20 May 2006, p. 6.

Victorian ALP & THC papers, in Doug Burgess, personal papers.

Clarence Arthur Love, individual war record, WWII Nominal Roll, V155698 & 429709; PLHBCSL, ballot list, February 1947. Love for one made a profit on the sale and would have recovered the cost of his co-operative membership.

Doug Burgess, personal papers.

He had wanted to train as a carpenter, but the queues were prohibitive.

WSC, ‘Minutes of Meetings’, 14 April 1954, Correspondence, item 15, p. 330. Burgess, Wood and Co Pty Ltd sought permission to construct a private crossing in Epping Road where their factory was under construction.

Whittlesea Post, 18 May 1961, p. 1, article entitled ‘Thomastown Concern Hit by Recession—Many out of Work.’ The article claims 170 workers had been reduced to 63. Jim McVicar, Jack Follett, Joe Adams, Jack Donnelly, Vic Michael, Ron Moore and Jack Kernaghan—all Lalor men—are known to have worked there.

Violet Burgess, interview with the author, 2007, p. 20.

Violet Burgess, interview with the author, 2007, p. 20.

Violet Burgess, interview with the author, 2007, p. 28. See also, ‘Special Olympic Reports’, The Age, undated press clipping (1956) held in the private collection of Violet Burgess.

Violet Burgess, interview with the author, 2007, p. 25. In the 1961 recession, the business also suffered from the credit squeeze. Burgess was forced to retrench more than one hundred workers, and he said ‘instead of his firm doing an average of 30 housing jobs a week they were now lucky to get two’. The demand was still there, but ‘finance facilities’ were unavailable. See Whittlesea Post, 18 May 1961, p. 1.

Whittlesea Post, 30 June 1954, p. 5.

Harry Jenkins (Jnr) interview with the author, 25 October 2006, p. 1. Prior to their arrival the nearest doctors were Drs Wilson and Bacon from Reservoir. See Chapter 3, page 111; Beth Indian, interview with the author, 2006, p. 23; see also Lorraine Yeomans, email, ‘Re: Peter Lalor Estate Research’, 30 November 2006.

Whittlesea Post, 15 June 1961, p. 7 reported that Dr and Mrs North were moving to Ivanhoe, though Dr North reportedly stated that he would continue his work in the district.


Whittlesea Post, 18 June 1959, p. 7. See also Australia, House of Representatives, Main Committee, Condolences, 4 August, 2004, pp. 32191–2, Condolence Motion speech by Martin Ferguson, MHR. According to Ferguson, Jenkins’ medical practice in Thornbury, which he operated prior to Lalor, was just as well regarded.

Whittlesea Post, 11 June 1964, p. 3.

The ‘garden city’ movement is discussed in Chapter 1.


Whittlesea Post, 18 November 1954, p. 6.


Vic Michael later called this ‘the same old merry-go-round... The Board [MMBW] refused to sanction subdivision because of absence of water, but would not connect water until there was progress in the area.’ Whittlesea Post, 14 August 1958, p. 1.

Whittlesea Post, 10 May 1956, p. 1.

Between 1956 and 1959 Whittlesea Shire and Eltham Shire had one representative. Between 1956 and 59, as the votes were tied, the Returning Officer cast a ballot favouring Eltham. See Whittlesea Post, 4 May 1961, p 1. By February 1962, Vic Michael represented Whittlesea and Eltham, Whittlesea Post, 22 February 1962, p. 1.

These positions were retained until at least 1962. Whittlesea Post, 6 July 1961, p. 5. The group of 24 were still meeting regularly at the home of Harry and Wendy Jenkins in April 1964. Whittlesea Post, 2 April 1964, p. 3.


Whittlesea Post, 16 October 1958, p. 1

Whittlesea Post, 16 October 1958, p. 1

Whittlesea Post, 16 May 1957, p. 5.


Lack & Templeton, Bold Experiment’, 1995, p. 10.

Lack & Templeton, Bold Experiment’, 1995, p. 28.


Glenda Sluga, Bonegilla: A Place of No Hope, Melbourne, 1988. The camp at Bonegilla was euphemistically called a ‘Reception and Training Centre’.


Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Census, 30 June 1954, vol. II, Victoria, part I, p. 78, listed immigrant numbers as: 46 from Holland, 26 from Germany, 42 from Poland, and 49 from the Ukraine.


Department of Immigration, Statistics Division, ‘Overseas Born: Local Government Areas’, 30th June 1971, p. 3. Of a total Whittlesea population of 30,327, 2,415 had less than five years residence, 5,435 were British nationals, 3,120 were from Italy and 2,131 from Greece.


Jenkins, interview with the author, 2006, p. 22.

See the biographies of Luba Stambanis, Connie Testagrossa and Josie Minniti in Appendix A at this website.


Josie Minniti, interview with the author, 2009, p. 36.


Frank Hawkins interview with the author, 2006, p. 41.


Gwen Hawkins interview with the author, 2006, p. 41.

St Luke’s Parish, *Together We Are the Church*, p. 12. Similar figures were reproduced in the *Whittlesea Post*, 16 September 1970, p. 3.
Fuller biographies and biographies of other migrants are in Appendix A at this website.

Testagrossa, interview with the author, 2009. A fuller biography of Connie Testagrossa can be found in Attachment A at this website.

As Templeton reports, prior to WWII there was a strong presence of Italian workers in the timber and cane cutting industries of Western Australia and Queensland. Men often stayed for long periods, sending money home. In 1925 a royal commission investigated this issue in Queensland. See, Jacqueline Templeton, ‘Here, There or Nowhere? Italian Sojourners Write Home’, The Australian Immigrant in the 20th Century: Searching Neglected Sources, edited by Eric Richards & Jacqueline Templeton, Canberra, 1998, pp. 76–77.

Testagrossa, interview with the author, 2009, p. 11.

Testagrossa, interview with the author, 2009, p. 16.

Mick and Steve Dimos, interview with the author, 2009, p. 2–6. Biographies of Mick and Steve Dimos can be found in Attachment A at this website.

The indented quote from Mick can be found at Mick and Steve Dimos, interview with the author, 2009, p. 10.

Mick and Steve Dimos, interview with the author, 2009, p. 10–12

Mick showed me a photograph of a presentation in recognition of his forty years service to the ALP. The strength of his involvement is also apparent from the local ALP records. See Australian Labor Party, Lalor Branch, ‘Branch Papers’, held in the political papers of Harry Jenkins, MP, Bundoora.

Mick Dimos, interview with the author, 2009, p. 15.

Whittlesea Post 24 January 1974, p. 4. This chapel was lost in the 2009 bushfires.

Held in the private papers of Mick Dimos.

Whittlesea Post, 27 May 1970 p. 1, ‘Migrants pour into riding’. Two out of five adults living in the Thomastown Riding were European migrants. ‘Nearly half of the migrants come from Italy and Sicily. The country of origin of the next largest group is Greece.’

Koukoulas, interview with the author, 2009, p. 5. A biography of Peter Koukoulas can be found in Appendix A at this website.


Jenkins, interview with the author, 2006, p. 7.

The City of Whittlesea Council has from time to time organised oral history interviews with some of these groups. Their stories are held at the Mill Park Library.
Many of the children of the estate, now in their fifties and sixties, have written their memoirs for this project. They are listed in the bibliography available at this website.

See for example, Steven Carroll, The Art of the Engine Driver, Melbourne 2001. Set in a northern suburb of Melbourne, just south of Lalor, this award-winning novel provides a literary backdrop which complements the stories told by Lalor baby boomers.

Jan Wesselman, ‘Memories of 65 Derrick Street, Lalor, where I spent the first 25 years of my life’. (Handed to me at a public meeting on 28 November 2007.)

Alexandra Hill (nee Stambanis) email, 7 April 2010.


Whittlesea Post, 29 March 1972, p. 3.


269  Jenkins, interview with the author, 2006, p. 22.

270  It was probably a monthly publication, with the first issue appearing in March 1971.

Outlook, April 1971, p. 2.
Lalor Library plaque, May Road, Lalor. Also, in July 1974, the Whitlam Government funded a Citizens’ Advice Bureau to be opened in Lalor with twenty volunteers and interpreter services. This, along with the Good Neighbour Council, was a concrete step from the federal government, to provide active support for a policy of multiculturalism. See *Whittlesea Post*, 10 July 1974, p. 1.


Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land*, 1991, pp. 187–221. Collins evaluated the extent of upward mobility of the second generation of migrants in Australia. The results were mixed, as ‘class, ethnicity, gender and time of arrival become central features in determining the broad contours of migrant life’. (p. 154). Collins concluded ‘that while Greeks and Italians have a high proportion of students who carry on to tertiary education, they also have a high proportion of those who drop-out before finishing secondary school’ (p. 189).

Corporate Affairs Office, ‘Index to Defunct Company, Association and Business Name Registrations’, PROV, VPRS 8268-P1, Melbourne, 1864?–1990[sic].
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272  Whittlesea Leader, 30 November 2004, p. 17.

272–73  Australian Women’s Weekly, 8 January 1949, pp. 44–45.

273  Whittlesea Leader, 13 April 2004, p. 8. However, in recognition of the increasingly ageing demographic, the new pre-school was combined with another from William Street, which closed.

City of Whittlesea, ‘Councillors, Mayors and Presidents from 1957’, 11 March 2010. The Whittlesea Shire Council was proclaimed a City effective from 15 April 1988.

Jenkins, transcript of interview with the author, 2006, p. 15.

274  The SEIFA index of disadvantage for 2006, rated Lalor and Thomastown on the lowest decile of 1, a percentile of 7, and a ranking of 25 and 26 respectively. By comparison Bundoora was ranked with a decile of 7, percentile of 65 and a ranking of 369. Mill Park was similar to Bundoora.


He cites C. Forster, Australian Cities: Continuity and Change, Melbourne, 1995, p. 112.


Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics, ‘2006 Census for postcode 3075’ (Lalor)


VicUrban, the Victorian government developer of the Aurora Estate in Epping North in 2004, based its marketing on a demographic which assumed ‘the “natural market” for Epping North housing will be the south western precincts of the City of Whittlesea’. See The Hornery Institute, ‘Aurora Context Study’, 1 April 2005, p. 17.


Tim Colebatch, ‘Dazzled by Housing’s Magic Rise’, *The Age*, 16 March 2010, p. 11

Senate Select Committee on Affordable Housing in Australia, A good house is hard to find: Housing Affordability in Australia, Canberra, 2008, Chapter 5, refers to the skills shortage in the building industry.


This scheme was similarly sponsored by the non-profit ACTU-Lend Lease Foundation. See ACTU-Lend Lease, Foundation, *You Can Make a Difference*, Sydney, 2000, pp. 41 & 73. The housing being built for indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory and North Queensland, as part of the federal government’s ‘intervention’, could similarly be making much greater efforts at skilling indigenous tradesfolk as part of home ownership schemes.

See for example, City of Whittlesea Statistical Section, ‘Australian Household Survey, Lalor, 2004’.


City of Whittlesea, 'Whittlesea Leads on Diversity', media release.
NOTES: Conclusion

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290   Frank Purcell, annotation on transcript of Ted Purcell, interview with
       the author, 2 September 2006, p. 1. See also Murray, The Split, 1970,
       p. 40.

291   Freestone, Model Communities, 1989, p. 224.

293   PLHBCSL, ‘Progress and Promise’, 1947. ‘The Idea’ is analysed in
       Chapter 1.

       They were not the only ones. As already discussed, Robin Gollan
       named the immediate post-war years, from 1945 to 1947, ‘the
       interlude of hope’. See Gollan, Revolutionaries and Reformists, 1975,
       pp. 144–205.

       See the Introduction to the book, p. 9.