

ANNIS &
GEORGE



BILLS
TROUGHS



**HERITAGE
SERIES**

ANNIS & GEORGE BILLS TROUGHS

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INTRODUCTION

Name: Bills Troughs
Donated by: Annis & George Bills
George: b11 Mar 1859, d14 Dec 1927
Married: Annis Swann 1885
Annis: b25 Sept 1859, d20 June 1910
Known for: Donating horse water troughs

George migrated from England with his family and later met and married Annis Swann in Brisbane while running a bird shop. After Annis died, George donated horse troughs bearing both their names across Australia and the World.

George and Annis Bills
State Library Victoria

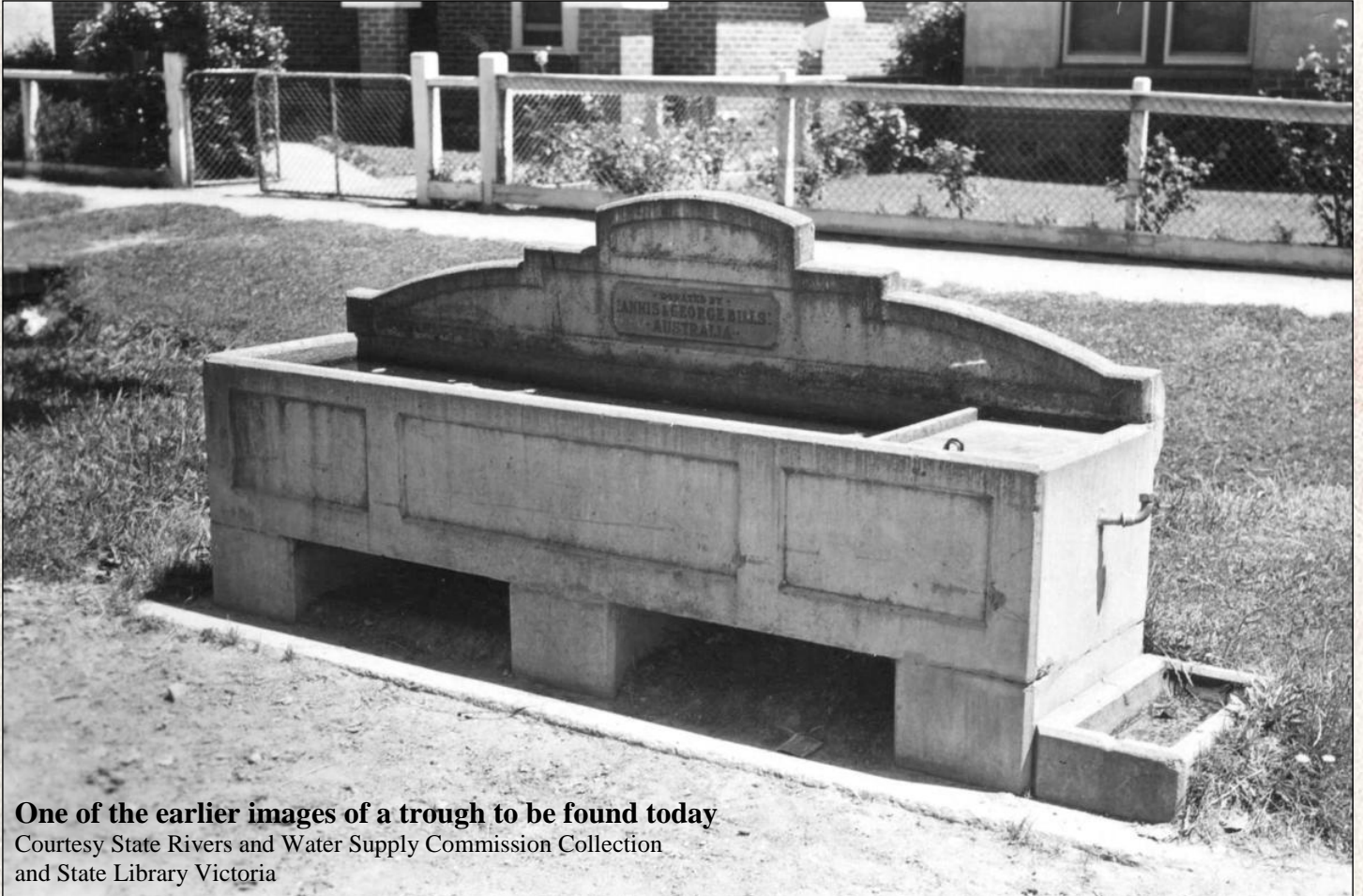


Early life

George (Joe) Bills was born into a large family in Brighton, England in 1859, son to an English Naturalist. The family first migrated to New Zealand, and then to Australia in 1873 when George's father accepted a contract to work as a naturalist for the Australian Government. Eventually the family settled on a humble selection located between Moama and Torrumbarry.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION



One of the earlier images of a trough to be found today

Courtesy State Rivers and Water Supply Commission Collection
and State Library Victoria

Suffering of animals

During the lean years on the farm George's father witnessed the suffering of animals with little food and water, and this no doubt impacted the way he saw the animal world. While he was not in a position to do much himself at that time, he resolved to help animals if and when he could. As providence would have it, his wish would eventually be fulfilled through the life of his son George, who knew of his father's caring ambition. There is no doubt that George shared his fathers passion. But this was later on.

George moved to Brisbane in 1882 and opened a small bird dealership and it was here that he met his British bride Annis Swann, a migrant from Sheffield. He married her in 1885. At this time George's brother Henry was also in the bird business, operating a business at 12 George Street (Market), Sydney. Henry announced he was retiring from the business in 1886, however in 1887 he advertised he was importing the largest collection of British birds ever imported into the Colony, and bird advertisements continued to appear into early 1889.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

Mattress Wire Weaving Machinery and Patent

While in early 1889 George was still operating his bird business, we know that by 1888 he was also operating a wire mattress business (trading as Henry Bills) from Liverpool Street, Sydney, with his brother George. Henry's bird adverts stopped around this time.

The mattress business moved to 62 Harbour Street, Sydney in September 1889 and the brothers patented their own mattress wire weaving machine in 1893. This patent paid off handsomely for the family. The family went from barely making ends meet, to earning a small fortune. The business, which had previously traded as *Henry Bills*, was renamed ten years later (March 1898) to *Bills Brothers*.

Societies for the Protection of Animals

George had by this time associated himself with the activities of the Society for the protection of Animals in England, New Zealand and Australia. Now in a more financially secure position, he donated large sums of money to societies in line with his father's (and his own) love of animals. Later, in 1924, George received a Life Membership with the RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).

Death of Annis in England

George retired in 1908 and moved to the Melbourne suburb of Hawthorn in 1910. George and Annis, who had no children, travelled to their homeland of England. But Annis fell extremely sick while there and passed away. She was buried at Brighton Cemetery. George returned to his home in Hawthorn where he continued to live until early 1927 when he moved to 50 Broadway, Camberwell ([click for Google Street View](#)).

Charitable George Bills

George was a charitable man and had a reputation for constantly reaching out to people in need. He also had a deep compassion for the welfare of animals and it was this love that saw him finance the production of concrete horse troughs, to help meet the need of thirsty horses across the entire British Empire, but especially in Australia. Every trough carried a terracotta plaque with Annis' name inscribed first. This act was no doubt a lasting memorial to his beloved wife. Today over 300 troughs are extant worldwide, though most are found in Australia.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

Death of George Bills

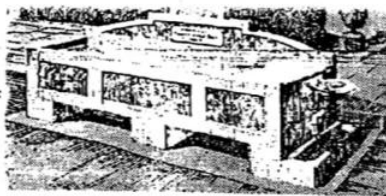
George died at his home at 50 Broadway, Camberwell on 14 December 1927 and was cremated at a private family ceremony held at the then newly established Melbourne General Cemetery at Fawkner.

Will of George Bills

George's will consisted of just over 4,800 pound worth of reality and 2,600 pound of personal effects. After all other outgoings were disposed of, just over 85,000 pound remained for the construction of horse troughs. As per the instructions in his will, a trust was set up to:

'..construct and erect and pay for horse troughs wherever they may be of the opinion that such horse troughs are desirable for the relief of horses and other dumb animals either in Australasia, in the British Islands or in any other part of the world subject to the consent of the proper authorities being obtained.'

According to the *Horsham Times* on 22 January 1935, just six years after George's death, the trust had seen nearly 250 concrete troughs cast and erected, all built by contractor to the estate JB Phillips of Hawthorn. At the time JB Phillips advertised themselves as being designers and manufacturers of all types of precast and concrete work and were located at 44 Auburn Road, Hawthorn, Melbourne (Phone: HAW 205).



REGISTERED DESIGN

Contractor to the Annis and George Bills Estate

J. B. PHILLIPS

*Designer and Manufacturer of
All Types of Pre-Cast Concrete Work*

442 Auburn Road, Hawthorn, Melbourne, E.2.

PHONE HAW. 205

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

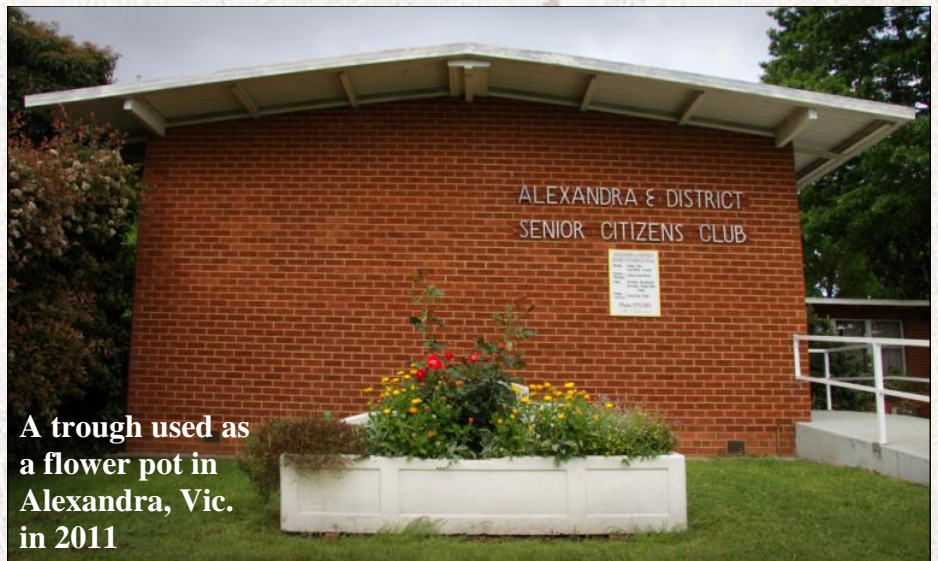
His will also directed that 500 pound be gifted to the Melbourne branch of the British Union for Abolition of Vivisection, an organisation established in 1898 and involved in the early social justice movement which wished to stop experimentation on live animals (vivisection). The gift, worth nearly one million dollars in today's currency, was awarded in February 1929.

One of the oldest surviving troughs

One of the oldest troughs in Australia is located at Centennial Park, Sydney, which was donated three years before George died in 1924.

Troughs today

Annis & George Bills Troughs are no longer used by thirsty animals, and are often now used as flower pots, however they have now become a sought-after historical relic from a time long past. They often bring a high price at auction and towns and cities across Australia are now paying more attention to them. Many are being restored and moved into prominent positions.



A trough used as a flower pot in Alexandra, Vic. in 2011

Trough list and history maintained by George Gemmill

The longest growing and most comprehensive list of the locations of the Bills Horse Troughs has been prepared and maintained by Victorian man George Gemmill of Stanhope. More details on George and his wife Bev's efforts to document the history and record the locations of troughs can be found on the following page.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

Introducing George Gemmill

George Gemmill is Australia's longest-serving researcher for the Annis & George Bills Troughs and he maintains a comprehensive list and photographic database of their locations across Australia and the world. George first became involved in the history of the troughs and recording their locations in 1984.

George was born in 1937 and grew up in Newport. He attended Oxford Street Primary School (No. 113) and the Williamstown Boys School.



As a young boy he sold papers on the Williamstown Short Road Ferry and remembers a Bills Trough in a park over the road from the Newport Hotel, near the bus stop. Around 1948, he would meet with friends around this spot and the trough was used by the few horses which were still being used to deliver bread, milk, ice and wood around Newport. George recalls how the horses would cover more than 25 mile each day delivering their goods.

He worked as an apprentice motor mechanic to the Department of Supply in Ashley Street, Maidstone and after marrying in 1959, the family moved the following year to Stanhope, where they raised their family. In 1984, when Keep Australia Beautiful started the Tidy Towns campaign, his family became involved in the clean up. Then while tidying up around the Annis and George Bills horse trough in Stanhope, he became interested in who Annis and George Bills were. Ever since, he has been collecting information and photographs.

Now a retired motor mechanic and with a computer and time on his hands, he has produced a website to accommodate what is the most comprehensive list and gallery of Annis & George Bills Troughs and their locations. George has received photos from England, Ireland and three photos of troughs at Northcliffe, Hines Hill and Merredin, all towns in Western Australia. All the troughs bear plaque inscribed, Donated by Annis and George Bills Australia.

George continues to operate a website for the troughs. If you see a trough and are able to take a picture of it, please forward it onto George so his list can continue to grow and refine.

billswatertroughs.wordpress.com

billshorsetroughs@hotmail.com

TIMELINE

BASIC TIMELINE OF EVENTS



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

- 11 March 1859** George Bills was born.
- 25 September 1859** Annis Swann was born.
- 1882** George moved to Brisbane and opened a small bird dealership, where he later met his future wife Annis (née) Swann. His brother Henry also ran a bird sale business in Sydney.
- 1885** George married Annis (nee) Swann.
- 1889** The mattress business run by brothers Henry and George Bills at Liverpool Street, Sydney, moved to 62 Harbour Street, Sydney.
- 1898** The mattress business changed its name from *Henry Bills* to *Bills Brothers*.
- 1893** Henry Bills applied for a patent for an improved mattress and sofa.
- 1908** George retired.
- 1910** George and Annis moved to Hawthorn, Melbourne.
- 20 June 1910** Annis dies in London.
- 1924** George received a Life Membership with the RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).
- 14 December 1927** George died at his home in Camberwell. His Will consisted of over 4,800 pound realty and 2,600 pound personal. After all other items were taken care of, just over 85,000 pound remained for the use by the trustees in the construction of horse troughs, suitably inscribed with Annis & George Bills.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

- 1929** A granite trough with a dog dish and drinking fountain was erected in Barton Street, Hawthorn in memory of Mr Bills (*The Herald*, Saturday 19 January 1929).
- 1933** By 1933 the trust fund has resulted in over 250 concrete troughs being cast and placed in the field, all built by contractor to the estate JB Phillips of Hawthorn.
- 2011** Contact made with George Gemmill.
- 2011** Artworkz commenced work on this factsheet.

GALLERY

RELATED IMAGERY

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



This trough at Burwood is located at the main entrance to the front entrance to the Royal Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) in 2011.

George became a Life Governor of the RSPCA in 1924, after working with the organisation for sometime. He was often giving gifts to the group.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



A trough at Tilehurst, UK in 2011

This trough is inscribed with George's name first, and is therefore notably different to many of the other Australian troughs. The design is also different.



Alexandra

Site: Alexandra
Address: Bayley Street, Alexandra
Condition: Good
GPS: S37.194288, E145.709377
Sighted: 23 August 2019
Notes: Outside the Senior Citizens Club



This trough is located outside the Alexandra & District Senior Citizens Club in Bayley Street and is in reasonable condition. This photoshoot was conducted with George and Bev Gemmill, Australia's foremost expert on Bills Horse Troughs (pictured). The trough has been used as a planting box and features a rose bush as the main feature. This trough is not on concrete blocks.



Replica Bills Horse Trough

Item:	Replica Bills Horse Trough
Material:	Plaster of Paris
Artist:	George Bills
Year:	2019
Gifted:	Gifted to Artworkz in 2019
Notes:	This is the first miniature replica horse trough we have ever seen

This outstanding example of creativity was produced by George Gemmill, the Australian expert on Bills Horse Troughs. He made a small number of the troughs in his garage, and the natural patina of the plaster of Paris has produced an almost romantic looking trough. George's passion and friendship has been behind the creation of this free factsheet.



Stanhope

Site: Stanhope
Address: Brudenell Street, Stanhope
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S36.446187, E144.982384
Sighted: 24 September 2020
Notes: Opposite the main shopping strip



It was originally located at the entrance to the former Stanhope Railway Station, but was moved by the Shire of Campaspe in 2017 to parkland where they built an Art Space and toilet. It is the closest *Annis & George Bills* Horse trough to George Gemmill, Australia's foremost expert on them. His former dog Hamish can be seen in the 2014 photo near the trough's dog bowl. This is one of Australia's better preserved troughs.



Courtesy George Gemmill

Courtesy George Gemmill



Brimpaen

Site: Grampians Horse Riding Club
Address: 430 Schmidt Road, Brimpaen, Victoria
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S37.077997, E142.277602
Sighted: 1 October 2006
Notes: This is a great example of a Bills Horse Trough



This trough is in excellent working condition and is accessed from the Grampians Horse Riding Club in Brimpaen, near Horsham. It is believed that this trough was originally located at Horsham. It is the only photograph of a horse at a Bills Trough that we have seen, and shows the trough at the right height.



Courtesy George Gemmill

Courtesy George Gemmill



Yea

Site: Yea
Address: Pelissier St, Yea
Condition: Good
GPS: S37.212306, E145.425068
Sighted: 22 October 2014
Notes: A trough in great condition and in public parkland



This trough is in good condition and is easily accessed in parkland off from Pelissier Street. The trough has been placed directly in front of the Hume and Hovel memorial cairn and is also mounted in the correctly sized bricks to bring the trough to the height that best served horses drinking from the trough.



Urana

Site: Urana, NSW
Address: Corner Williams and Vardy Streets, Urana
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S35.334278, E146.269278
Sighted: 21 September 2019
Notes: Creative use of a Bills Trough



This trough is in excellent condition and can easily be accessed roadside. The area around the trough has been creatively utilised to produce a period scene from the early 1900s of a horse taking a drink. The artist has also created a corrugated iron flock of sheep their own corrugated shepherd. This complimentary Bills Tough scene is unlike any other we have seen to date.



Heathcote

Site: Heathcote
Address: Old Gaol Museum, public access from Herriot Street
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.923642, E144.707489
Sighted: 5 September 2019
Notes: This is a great example of a Bills Horse Trough



This trough is in good condition and easy access can be gained to it from Herriot Street. Walk up the laneway towards the old gaol and the trough will be directly in front of you, along the fenceline separating the historic precinct from the Heathcote Primary School. Please respect the nearby neighbours at all times.



Castlemaine

Site: Wattle Flat, Castlemaine
Address: Corner Muckleford-Castlemaine Road & Mary Street
Condition: Poor
GPS: S37.046344, E144.207017
Sighted: 15 September 2019
Notes: Roadside, with a Cricket monument



This trough is in poor condition, however still has the original concrete cap at one end. The trough is located roadside under a very old pine tree. It is just metres away from an historic memorial cairn and plaque that commemorates the first defeat of an English XI team in Victoria. The defeat was against local Castlemaine team (150 to 148). Click the plaque for more.



Kangaroo Flat

Site: Kangaroo Flat, Bendigo
Address: In Kangaroo Flat Park, Camp Street
Condition: Poor
GPS: S36.796438, E144.246739
Sighted: 15 September 2019
Notes: Located beside the small lake



This trough is in poor condition, though remains a good example of a Bills Horse Trough. Located in parkland near a small lake, it can be easily accessed from the end of Camp Street. Park in the carpark then walk along the track to the small ornamental lake. It is positioned on the southern side of the lake. Please respect other park users at all times.



Darlington Point, NSW

Site: Darlington Point
Address: Stock Street, Darlington Point, NSW
Condition: Good
GPS: S34.567989, E146.000625
Sighted: 21 September 2019
Notes: Located in parkland



This Bills Horse Trough is in good condition and is located in parkland just off the main street and just a few minutes walk from the Murrumbidgee River. Darlington Point has a population of around 1000 people and is home to the Darlington Point Solar Farm which is 10 km south of the township.



Williamstown

Site: Commonwealth Reserve, Williamstown
Address: Nelson Place, Williamstown
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S37.862717, E144.904036
Sighted: 1 October 2019
Notes: Parkland, with interpretive signage



This trough is located in one of the most picturesque locations in Williamstown. Previously located beside the street on Nelson Place, it was removed in February 2017, refurbished and relocated to Commonwealth Reserve in 2018. The trough has interpretive signage which explains the reason the trough exists. This is an excellent example of a Bills Horse Trough.



For the relief of horses:
a gift from Annis and
George Bills

'I empower my said Trustees... to construct and erect and pay for Horse-Troughs wherever they may be of opinion that such horse troughs are necessary or desirable for the relief of horses or other dumb animals either in Australasia in the British Islands or in any other part of the World'.

George Bills will, 1925

Annis and George Bills shared a sympathetic attitude towards animal welfare and were supporters of Australia's Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (later the RSPCA).

After George retired in 1908, the couple embarked on a series of overseas holidays to Britain and Europe. Sadly, Annis died during a visit to England in 1910. When George died in 1927, through his will he directed that a significant portion of his estate be put towards alleviating the suffering of animals. He asked that his trustees arrange for the provision of inscribed watering troughs for horses, and that funds be allocated to a number of animal welfare groups.

Over 500 horse troughs were constructed in Australia and overseas. The concrete troughs cost £13 each and were precast by Rocla Concrete Pipes Ltd.

Municipalities were able to apply to the family trust for a trough and within a few short years, Bills' troughs could be seen at intersections, markets and urban and rural centres across the country. Production ended with the advent of the Second World War when materials were scarce and motor cars began to vie for the horse's position on Australia's roads.

In Williamstown two Bills' horse troughs remain - the one located here and the other is located in front of the Morning Star Hotel, Electric Street. This trough was restored in 2017-18 and relocated from opposite Holy Trinity Church, Nelson Place.



Cape Clear

Site: Cape Clear
Address: Corner Pitfield-Scarsdale Road & Rokewood Road
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S37.786961, E143.612549
Sighted: 13 April 2016
Notes: Opposite Cape Clear Lighthouse and near the pub



This red and gold painted trough is in good condition and is located at Cape Clear, the only location in Australia where a lighthouse is located over 80 km from the coast. Cape Clear is named after Irish goldminers who came from Cape Clear in Ireland to search for gold. It is located 37 km south west of Ballarat and has a population of just over 120 people.



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Corowa, NSW

Site: New Market Hotel
Address: 249 Honour Ave, Corowa
Condition: Good
GPS: S35.993143, 146.391899
Sighted: 26 September 2019
Notes: Located at the front of the hotel



This trough is in reasonable condition and is located in front of the New Market Hotel, located at 249 Honour Avenue in Corowa NSW. The hotel was originally built in 1888 when Corowa was a bustling river port serving the agricultural industry along the Murray River. In 1893 a Federation League Rally was held in Corowa making it a central part of Australia's historical Federation timeline.



© Denis Martin 2019

Corowa, NSW

Site: Corowa racecourse and showgrounds
Address: Brocklesby Street
Condition: Very good
GPS: S36.022774, E146.370686
Sighted: 26 September 2019
Notes: Located inside side entrance to grounds



This is the second of two Bills Troughs located in Corowa. The main entrance into the racecourse/showgrounds is from Adams Street. This trough has previously been relocated from the old saleyards to this site. The second trough is situated on the footpath in front of the Newmarket Hotel in Honour Avenue.



Wangaratta

Site: Wangaratta Museum, WH Edwards Building
Address: Ford Street, Wangaratta
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.355810, E146.323553
Sighted: 27 September 2019
Notes: Parkland, with interpretive signage



This trough is in good condition and is located at the front of the WH (Billy) Edwards Building in Ford Street, Wangaratta, which is used as the home for the Wangaratta Museum. The museum is run by the Wangaratta Historical Society Inc. and the trough has been respectfully positioned to have a central position at the front of the museum building.



© Denis Martin 2019



© Denis Martin 2019

Moama, NSW

Site: Moama
Address: Shaw Street, Moama
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S36.115116, E144.757347
Sighted: 4 December 2019
Notes: In parkland



This trough is located in parkland near the northern end of the Echuca-Moama Bridge. While not mounted on the standard three bricks (which raises the trough to the right level for horses to drink from), it is otherwise in excellent condition thanks to it being renovated at some point. It sits in parkland under a lovely medium sized tree and beside an historic local monument.



Tallangatta

Site: Tallangatta
Address: 30/20 Towong Street
Condition: Excellent and in full working order
GPS: S36.216053, E147.178299
Sighted: 29 November 2019
Notes: In parkland opposite the Masonic Lodge



This trough is in full working order and contained water at the time of sighting. Given that Tallangatta is 'The Town That Moved' in 1956 it is most likely that the trough was originally located at the Old Tallangatta township, which is approximately 8 km further east along the Murray Valley Highway. The rear of the trough has no panels.



© Denis Martin 2019



© Denis Martin 2019

Yarra Glen

Site: Yarra Glen
Address: Corner Melba Highway and Anzac Ave
Condition: Good
GPS: S37.656994, E145.374419
Sighted: 10 November 2019
Notes: Outside Yarra Glen RSL



This trough is in good condition, is located at the front of the Yarra Glen RSL and near a war memorial cairn. The RSL is located on the south eastern corner of McKenzie Reserve; near the children's playground. This trough is connected to the mains water and has a working tap, enabling animals to drink from the trough below it. Having a water connection is rare these days.



Beechworth

Site: Beechworth
Address: Town Hall Gardens, Ford Street
Condition: Good
GPS: S37.101332, E147.591798
Sighted: 29 December 2019
Notes: Open to public



This trough is located on the south eastern side of the Town Hall Gardens, opposite the Beechworth Historic Court House and the Vault Museum. Beechworth was originally known as Mayday Hills until renamed in 1853, the year the Post Office opened (first opened as the Spring Creek Post Office). It was renamed Beechworth Post Office during the following year.



Seymour

Site: Seymour Kings Park
Address: Kings Park, Goulburn Valley Highway, Seymour
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S37.022761, E145.129958
Sighted: 30 June 2020
Notes: This is a great example of a Bills Horse Trough



This trough is in excellent condition, is centrally located within the large Kings Park recreation area, and is easily accessed. The trough holds water and sits on a solid concrete base. It is also located directly in front of a healthy spotted gum, is close to a large carpark area, and is surrounded by green grass.



Myrtleford

Site: Myrtleford Historical Society
Address: Corner of Albert and Elgin Streets
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.562556, E146.729026
Sighted: 25 July 2020
Notes: This is a great example of a Bills Horse Trough



This trough is very in good condition and is positioned on a concrete base outside the Myrtleford Historical & District Society. The trough was originally located in Smith Street near the Railway Station. Though it also spent time at the Myrtleford Showgrounds before being moved to its current location. Interpretative signage is also found beside the trough.



Bright

Site: Bright
Address: Apex Park, Great Alpine Road, Bright
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.728858, E146.957825
Sighted: 25 July 2020
Notes: This is a great example of a Bills Horse Trough



This trough is in good condition and is located in the small Apex Park and beside a small stream on the Great Alpine Road. It is just a few minutes walk from the centre of Bright. Also in the park is a traction engine which is in excellent condition and very photographic. The park is especially beautiful in Autumn.



Avoca

Site: Avoca
Address: 115 High Street, Avoca
Condition: Poor
GPS: S37.088772, E143.473786
Sighted: 2 October 2020
Notes: Against the northern wall of the hotel



This is an example of a trough that has not been maintained and is in extremely poor condition. The trough is viewable in the Avoca Hotel carpark which is on the north of the building near Cambridge Street. Avoca is 71 km from Ballarat and in the Pyrenees Shire and was established in 1850 when gold was found in the District.



Maryborough

Site: Maryborough
Address: Princess Park, Park Road, near Lake Victoria
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S37.042267, E143.740509
Sighted: 2 October 2020
Notes: A roadside trough including a dog trough



This trough is in excellent condition and is easily accessed, being roadside at Princess Park and near the oval and Lake Victoria. It is the only trough at Maryborough, a town on Central Victoria 58 km from Ballarat. It has a population of around 8,000 people and was originally called Simpsons.



Tooradin

Site: Fisherman's Cottage, Tooradin
Address: 13 Foreshore Road, Tooradin
Condition: Good
GPS: S38.214473, E145.378636
Sighted: 24 November 2020
Notes: Parking and picnic tables nearby



This Bills Horse Trough is located outside the beautifully restored Fisherman's Cottage at Tooradin, which now operates as an historical museum. The trough is situated on the nature strip, is in good condition and is opposite a picturesque tidal inlet and reserve with walking track. Parking is nearby.



Copyright © Kathie Maynes



Devenish

Site: Devenish
Address: Main Street, Devenish
Condition: Poor
GPS: S36.331689, E145.894469
Sighted: 17 October 2020
Notes: Beside the Devenish Silo Art



This is an example of a well kept trough in a small rural township. The trough is next to the Devenish Silo Art and the area around the trough is neat and tidy. Devenish has a population of around 200 people and is an example of a town that has used silo art to attract visitors. In their case it is working extremely well.



Dunkeld

Site: Parker Street, Dunkeld
Address: Corner Parker and Templeton Streets, Dunkeld
Condition: Good
GPS: S37.649518, E142.344948
Sighted: 1 January 2021
Notes: 150 metres from the Dunkeld Visitor Centre



This Bills Horse Trough is on the nature strip near the Dunkeld Visitor Centre. It is in good condition and is opposite the War Memorial. Dunkeld is at the southern end of the Grampians (Gariwerd) and between the larger rural centres of Stawell and Horsham. In 1944 a third of the homes in Dunkeld were destroyed during a bushfire.



Portland

Site: Portland Botanic Gardens
Address: Corner Parker and Templeton Streets, Dunkeld
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S38.353356, E141.611314
Sighted: 2 January 2021
Notes: Highly rated sunrise to sunset botanic gardens



This Bills Horse Trough is inside the fence of the Portland Botanic Gardens and is in excellent condition. Access is between sunrise and sunset, and the gardens are particularly beautiful. It is not on the blocks that would normally have it sitting at an easy horse height. Portland was named in 1800 by navigator James Grant.

IN 1927
 GEORGE BILLS LEFT
 SEVENTY THOUSAND POUNDS,
 (APPROX. 1.5 MILLION DOLLARS
 IN TODAY'S DECIMAL CURRENCY)
 TO PLACE THESE HORSE TROUGHS
 IN AUSTRALIA AND OVERSEAS.
 7000 WERE PLACED WORLD WIDE —
 ABOUT 500 IN AUSTRALIA.



Dunolly

Site: Rene Fox Memorial Garden, Dunolly
Address: Inkerman Street, Dunolly
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S36.860367, E143.731475
Sighted: 4 January 2021
Notes: Near the public toilets and at the rear of the garden



This Bills Horse Trough is at the rear of the Rene Fox Memorial Garden under a large shading tree. Access is through the gardens from the main street, or via Inkerman Street. It is not on the blocks that would normally have it sitting at an easy horse height. Dunolly was established during the Victorian Gold Rush.



Albury

Site: Albury, NSW
Address: Corner Old Hume Highway and Ebden Street
Condition: Fair, old painted surfaces are flaking
GPS: S36.088693, E146.908751
Sighted: 21 April 2021
Notes: Located in Australia Park, opposite the BP servo



One of three Bills Troughs listed as being located in the Albury area. This trough has been painted, though the paintwork is now in poor condition. The other interesting point is that there is an old original hitching post located beside the trough, which is also painted. It is easily accessible with nearby parking available.



Wahgunyah

Site: Wahgunyah
Address: Corner Foord and Short Streets
Condition: Fair
GPS: S36.008560, E146.394041
Sighted: 18 May 2021
Notes: Alongside local fish & chip shop



Located on the nature strip, it has recently been upgraded with the addition of an information board. The Wahgunyah township is located on the banks of the Murray River adjacent to the much larger town of Corowa NSW. In historic times Wahgunyah boasted a port for paddle steamers and a Customs House located on the Victorian/NSW border.



Omeo

Site: AM Pearson Historic Park, Omeo
Address: 173 Day Avenue (Great Alpine Road)
Condition: Very good
GPS: S37.101360, E147.591764
Sighted: 16 Dec 2019
Notes: Trough against a wall of an old wooden building



Omeo was originally a very old, rich gold mining area and the locality contains many relics of that era. Chinese miners played a major role in the original diggings. The Historic Park contains many other relics including some Indigenous artefacts such as a canoe tree and a variety of indigenous implements.



© Denis Martin 2019

© Denis Martin 2019



THE "BILLS" WATER TROUGHS

GEORGE AND ANNIS BILLS WERE ALWAYS CONCERNED ABOUT THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS. ANNIS DIED IN 1910 AND GEORGE IN 1927

GEORGE WAS A SUCCESSFUL "WIRE INNERSPRING MATTRESS MANUFACTURER" HE LEFT HIS ESTATE TO BE ADMINISTERED BY HIS NEPHEW J.B. PHILLIPS WHO WAS A CEMENT CONTRACTOR IN HAWTHORN MELBOURNE. HIS WISHES WERE THAT CONCRETE WATER TROUGHS "FOR HORSE MAN AND DOG" WERE TO BE INSTALLED.

IN 1931 SOME 500 OF THESE TROUGHS WERE ERECTED AT A COST OF THIRTEEN POUNDS EACH (\$2000) ALL OVER AUSTRALIA, IN BRITAIN, IRELAND, SWITZERLAND AND EVEN JAPAN. THIS TROUGH IS ONE OF FOUR REMAINING IN GIPPSLAND..

Berrigan, NSW

Site: Berrigan
Address: 129 Hayes Park, Jerilderie Street
Condition: Fair
GPS: S35.660706, E145.813792
Sighted: 14 June 2021
Notes: Located in the Hayes Park roadside stop complex



The trough has recently been relocated by the Shire from the Berrigan Sportsground. The site at Hayes Park is being revamped as a modern roadside stop incorporating toilet facilities, B-B-Q and information boards. The damage to the trough sustained while at the Sportsground will be repaired. Easy access and parking available.

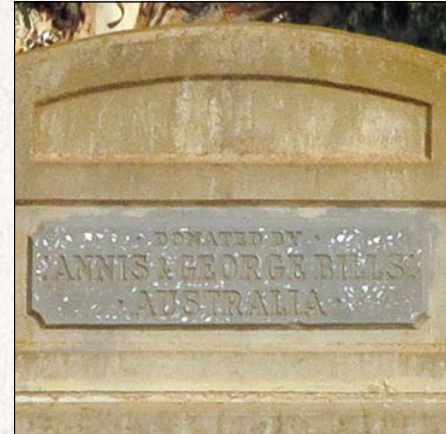


Chinkapook, Vic

Site: Chinkapook
Address: Vacant block on William Street, Chinkapook
Condition: Average
GPS: S35.187565, E142.944938
Sighted: 28 July 2021
Notes: Roadside



Located beside the road in the small rural township of Chinkapook, 64 km from Swan Hill. Chinkapook is probably best known for being where Australian poet John Shaw Neilson's poetry notebooks were partially eaten by mice during a mouse plague. It led poet Douglas Stewart to pen the poem *The Mice of Chinkapook*.



© Geoff Zoch 2021

Swan Hill, Victoria

Site: Swan Hill 1
Address: Pioneer Settlement, 125 Monash Drive
Condition: Fair (with water connected)
GPS: S35.347540, E143.564652
Sighted: 12 June 2021
Notes: One of two located inside the Pioneer Settlement



This is one of two troughs located inside the Pioneer Settlement (entry fees apply). This trough is situated outside the old Printing Office and appropriately near where the horse and wagon picks up passengers for joy rides around the complex. A third trough is located outside the old Swan Hill Police Station.



Swan Hill, Victoria

Site: Swan Hill 2
Address: Pioneer Settlement, 125 Monash Drive
Condition: Fair
GPS: S35.346726, E143.564732
Sighted: 12 June 2021
Notes: One of two located inside the Pioneer Settlement



This is one of two troughs located inside the Pioneer Settlement (entry fees apply). This trough is situated outside the old Inn. There are no other identifying signs at this site other than the normal identification sign. A third trough is located outside the old Swan Hill Police Station.



Swan Hill

Site: Swan Hill 3
Address: Roundabout on McCallum and Murray Valley Hwy
Condition: Good
GPS: S35.338372, E143.560639
Sighted: 18 June 2022
Notes: Be careful of traffic when inspecting this trough



This trough is in good condition though it is dangerous to photograph and view as you need to stand in the roundabout. Swan Hill is a very popular tourist destination on the south side of the Murray River with a population of just over 11,000 people. It was named by explorer Sir Thomas Mitchell who camped in the area on 21 June 1836.



Wodonga, Vic

Site: Wodonga
Address: Wodonga Race Course Complex
Condition: Good, not connected
GPS: S36.133700, E146.891095
Sighted: 21 June 2021
Notes: Outside the Exhibition Centre building



This Bills Horse Trough has been located at Wodonga race course complex since at least 2005 and access to the complex is best achieved via Wilson Street. Enter the front gate and walk south for around 300 m to the large Exhibition Centre building. The trough is located beside a wall of the building.



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Stanhope

Site: Stanhope
Address: Brudenell Street, Stanhope
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S36.446187, E144.982384
Sighted: 30 March 2021
Notes: Opposite the main shopping strip



Stanhope is located in Central Victoria and is home to a Bills Horse Trough. This trough is in excellent condition and located in parkland beside a newer public toilet. This is one of the closest Annis & George Bills Horse troughs to George Gemmill's home, Australia's foremost expert on them. This is also one of Australia's better preserved troughs.



© Bob Wilson



Beulah, Vic

Site: Beulah
Address: Corner Bell Street and Hopetoun Road
Condition: Good
GPS: S35.938248, E142.422457
Sighted: 21 September 2021
Notes: Best found when entering town from the east (Birchip)



A small plaque on the trough indicates it was built in 1932 'on former site of water trough for stock'. The trough itself is in good condition however the fence encompassing the trough is needing a good facelift. The intersection road reserves are large and wide open and the trough can easily be seen from the roads.



Yackandandah, Vic

Site: Yackandandah
Address: Corner of High Street and Wellsford Street
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.313151, E146.838256
Sighted: 2 February 2023
Notes: In the main street, opposite the original Post Office



This trough is on the footpath outside the Yackandandah Soldiers Memorial Park, near the Star Hotel. It's in good condition, however is currently full of rubbish and not being cared for. Yackandandah is another of the North East's old gold towns and contains many historic buildings and mining relics. Home of Gum Tree pies.



© Denis Martin 2021



© Denis Martin 2023

Bendigo

Site: Bendigo cemetery
Address: Carpenter Street
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.778406, E144.284390
Sighted: 21 April 2021
Notes: Located in Australia Park, opposite the BP servo



This Bills Horse Trough is just inside the Carpenter Street main entrance at the Bendigo Cemetery. The trough is beside the main office which has a slate roof that is also in good condition. The trough is 105 metres from an historic Burke & Wills Monument and the same from a rare Chinese Kiln. It was moved here from the Bendigo Council depot in 2018.



Barham, NSW

Site: Barham 1
Address: Corner Murray and Noorong Streets
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S35.630007, E144.128348
Sighted: 14 June 2021
Notes: One of two troughs along Murray Street



This trough is situated on the footpath outside the extremely well kept and maintained Barham Cenotaph near the round-a-bout. This trough has hitching posts located either side plus a wooden fence on three sides; both unusual features. The second trough listed as being located along this street was not sighted. Easy parking and near rest rooms.

© Denis Martin 2021

THE BILLS TROUGH
 The Bills Trust relates to George Bills, an Englishman, who came to Australia when a youth. He and his brother established the BBB Innerspring Mattress manufacturing business in Sydney. Upon his death in 1927, his will stated that the income from his estate was to be used to provide troughs for horses and the prevention of cruelty to animals. The trough production ceased with the decline of working horses. Bills Trust continued operating by animal welfare, the major benefactor the RSPCA. Between 1930 and 1939, more than 500 Bills horse troughs were made. They were throughout Australia, mainly Victoria and NSW. Made by the Rocla Pipe Company to the standard design, the inscription reads: Donated by Annis & George Bills. They were delivered and installed as directed by the Trust to Communities and Shire.



© Denis Martin 2021

Scarsdale

Site: Scarsdale Town Hall
Address: Corner Pitfield-Scarsdale Road and Macauley Street
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S37.670789, E143.654835
Sighted: 24 November 2021
Notes: Inside the fence of the old Town Hall building



This Bills Horse Trough is against the wall on the northern side of the Scarsdale Town Hall. Scarsdale is a small agricultural community 25 km from Ballarat. The origin of the name is unknown, though it may be related to an early settler or gold prospector. Gold was first found locally in 1856.

© Kathie Maynes2021



© Kathie Maynes 2021

Williamstown

Site: Morning Star Hotel
Address: 5 Electra Street, Williamstown
Condition: Good
GPS: S37.86420, E144.89920
Sighted: 16 December 2021
Notes: Outside the hotel under a tree



This Bills Horse Trough is the second of two troughs in Williamstown. It is located on the footpath under a large tree in front of Williamstown's Morning Star Hotel. It has a wooden barrier in front of it and a dogs bowl at the end. However the trough is not hooked up to the water supply. It is in good condition.

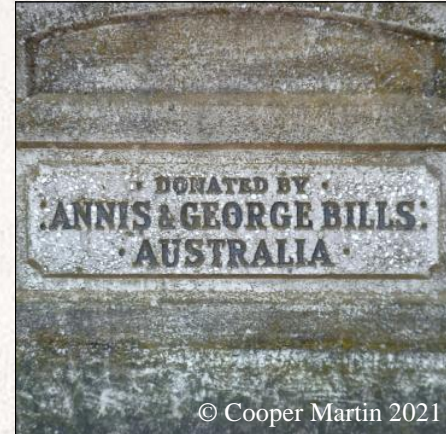


Rainbow, Vic

Site: Rainbow
Address: Junction of Federal Street & Railway Street
Condition: Good
GPS: S35.898072, E141.993393
Sighted: 23 September 2021
Notes: Small reserve at the end of Federal St



The small reserve where the trough is located is known locally as the 'Pioneer Reserve'. It is a narrow strip of land running parallel to the railway line along Railway Street. The site is easily located and accessed at the western end of the main street (Federal Street). It isn't known if the recent plaque to the south is connected to the trough history.



© Cooper Martin 2021



© Cooper Martin 2021

Lismore

Site: Lismore
Address: Corner Hamilton Hwy and Heriot Street
Condition: Fair
GPS: S37.953679, E143.343476
Sighted: 30 April 2022
Notes: In median strip beside the war memorial



A small Western District town originally named Brown's Water Holes and settled in 1840 it was renamed Lismore in 1853. The trough is part of a well maintained median strip complex that features a war memorial, toilets and an historical sculpture. The trough is in reasonable condition but missing some components.



Malmsbury

Site: Malmsbury
Address: Calder Highway near CFA
Condition: Good
GPS: S37.188667, E144.383750
Sighted: 1 April 2022
Notes: Opposite Malmsbury Bakery in roadside reserve



This trough is in good condition, is 95 km north west of Melbourne and has a population of just over 1000 people. The large picturesque masonry arch Malmsbury Viaduct is over the Coliban River and is a popular attraction for the town. Edwards Davy who invented the electric relay was mayor three times.



© Robert Wilson



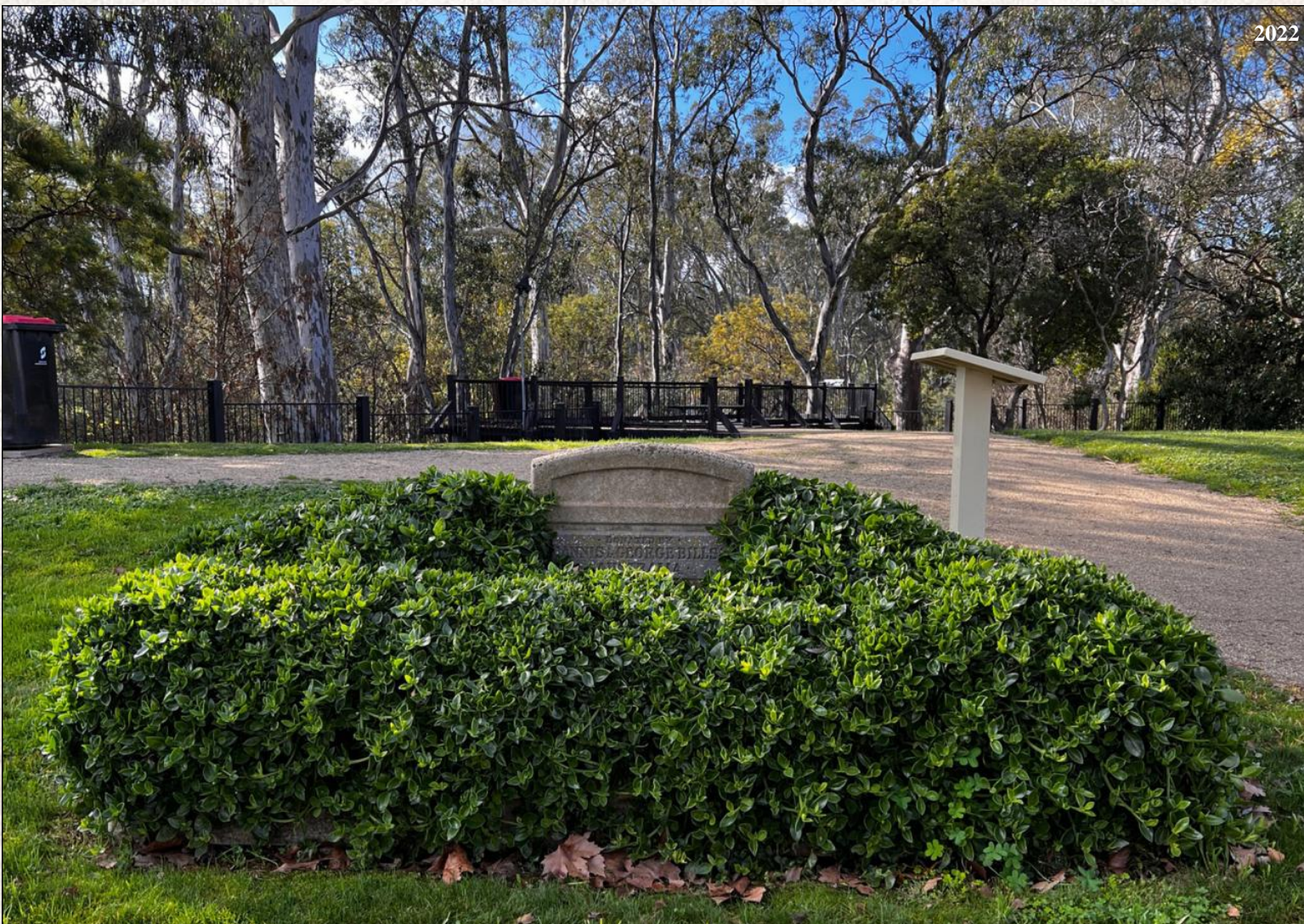
© Robert Wilson

Murchison

Site: Murchison
Address: Stevenson Street
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.616963, E145.218625
Sighted: 29 July 2022
Notes: Open to public



This trough is located at the eastern end of the Murchison Sports Reserve, near the High Road Bridge over the Goulburn River. This trough was first placed near this site, but removed in the 1950s to serve on a farm before Doug McKinley donated it back. The Murchison & District Historical Society restored it to this location in 1988. It includes interpretative signage.



Ultima

Site: Ultima
Address: Breen Street
Condition: Good
GPS: S35.469436, E143.267869
Sighted: 3 August 2022
Notes: Open to public



This trough is located near the corner of Breen and Dillon Streets and beside the concrete water tower. Ultima is a small rural town in the Swan Hill local government area and is 35 km south of Swan Hill. Ultima has a population of just under 200 people. The Ultima Post Office opened on 27 July 1899. Trough improvements earlier this year can be seen below.



Winchelsea

Site: Winchelsea
Address: Park near Palmer Street and shops
Condition: Good
GPS: S38.242935, E143.990514
Sighted: 26 April 2022
Notes: Open to public



This trough is in good condition and is located in the Barwon River Reserve near the small rotunda and near the shops. It was moved recently 80 m to its current location in the same reserve. Winchelsea is in the Surf Coast Shire 37 km from Geelong and was originally called Austin Ford. The Post Office opened in 1848 and the town was renamed Winchelsea in 1854.



© Robert Wilson



© Robert Wilson

Eskdale

Site: Eskdale
Address: Main Street plantation
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.464736, E147.250685
Sighted: 26 September 2022
Notes: Between service road and Omeo Hwy opposite 3781



Located in roadside plantation separating the highway and service road. Site is well maintained and the trough includes the dog bowl. A chain fence surrounds the trough on three sides. Access and parking is easy. It is best to park in service road off the highway. While here check out the Beaufort Bomber story at the nearby Information Centre.



Warrnambool

Site:	<u>Warrnambool Flagstaff Museum</u>
Address:	89 Merri Street, Warrnambool
Condition:	Good
GPS:	S38.389376, E142.485122
Sighted:	27 April 2022
Notes:	Visit museum website for hours and pricing



This trough is in good condition and is located within the Flagstaff Museum, built on Flagstaff Hill in Warrnambool. The museum is presented like a period village from the 1870s and is the most visited Maritime Museum in Victoria. It includes a significant collection of shipwreck artefacts. The trough is found inside the museum.



Henty, NSW

Site: Henty, NSW
Address: Bicentennial Park, Railway Parade
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S35.518997, E147.036086
Sighted: 18 June 2022
Notes: Roadside outside Headlie Taylor Header Museum



Located on the roadside outside the Headlie Taylor Header Museum. The trough is in excellent condition and has a metal cover over the trough, making it rare. Henty is located between Albury and Wagga Wagga and has a population of just over 600 people. Henty was originally called Doodle Cooma after a nearby swamp. It was renamed in 1886 after the Henty family of Portland.



MacArthur

Site: MacArthur
Address: High Street, MacArthur
Condition: Good
GPS: S38.034119, E142.000594
Sighted: 29 April 2022
Notes: Outside Historical Society building



This trough is in good condition and has been moved to this location more recently as old imagery on Google Maps does not show it here. It is not currently known where this has been moved from. MacArthur is a small town of just over 500 people near the spectacular Bidj Bim National Park. The post office opened in 1862.



© Robert Wilson



© Robert Wilson

Echuca

Site: Echuca
Address: Roundabout at Dickson and Warren Streets
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.119442, E144.745422
Sighted: 14 April 2022
Notes: Be careful of traffic when inspecting this trough



This trough is in good condition though it is dangerous to photograph and view as you need to stand beside the street. Echuca is a very popular tourist destination on the south side of the Murray River with a population of just over 15,000 people. It was originally named Hopwood's Ferry by ex-convict Hopwood who ran a punt at the location.



Cootamundra, NSW

Site: Cootamundra, NSW
Address: Corner Campbell and Sutton Street
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S34.650694, E148.017511
Sighted: 19 June 2022
Notes: In parkland with bench seats



This trough is in excellent condition and is presented perfectly in parkland under a lovely tree with a picnic table just metres away. Cootamundra is a rural NSW town with a population of just over 6,700 people. It is well known as the birthplace of Australian cricketer Sir Donald Bradman who is recognised worldwide as the greatest cricket batsman of all time.



Red Cliffs

Site: Red Cliffs
Address: Jamieson Ave (Calder Hwy)
Condition: Good
GPS: S34.308639, E142.186162
Sighted: 3 August 2022
Notes: At the site of the old railway station



This trough is in good condition and is accessed via the roadside reserve. It is diagonally opposite Barclay Square where Big Lizzy and the Soldiers Memorial are located. Red Cliffs is located in prime agricultural country thanks to a well established irrigation system. It was officially opened in 1921.



© Allan Layton



North Bendigo

Site: Bendigo Showgrounds
Address: Off Holmes Road, North Bendigo
Condition: Good
GPS: S36.739194, E144.270767
Sighted: 3 March 2023
Notes: Just inside gate at Showgrounds complex



One of the approximate 18 troughs listed as being in Bendigo and its surrounding suburbs. A number are still to be sighted in recent times. This trough is in very good condition, but not operational, the dog trough is intact. The trough is set near a small garden area and with a windmill backdrop.



Birchip

Site: Birchip
Address: 97 Cumming Avenue, opposite the Birchip RSL
Condition: Good
GPS: S35.979528, E142.918083
Sighted: 10 March 2023
Notes: On the median strip



This trough is in good condition and access is via the median strip. Care should be taken when crossing the road. Birchip is a small town of around 700 people found in the Mallee, 72 km southwest of Swan Hill. Originally named Wirmbirchip, the town was surveyed and renamed Birchip in 1887.



© Kathie Maynes 2023



© Kathie Maynes 2023

Holbrook, NSW

Site: Holbrook
Address: 83 Albury St (Old Hume Highway)
Condition: Good
GPS: S35.726686, E147.311706
Sighted: 1 April 2023
Notes: Located on footpath outside Woolpack Inn Museum



The trough is in good condition and has been painted at some stage. The dog bowl is intact although the trough is not in working order. The old museum where it is located provides another source of interest to visitors who may linger longer. The museum hours are irregular. The back of the trough has five panels.



Neutral Bay, NSW

Site: Montpelier Street, Neutral Bay
Address: Opposite 5 Montpelier Street
Condition: Poor (dog trough intact)
GPS: S33.834358, E151.215552
Sighted: 4 April 2023
Notes: On footpath adjacent to Forsyth Park



This trough can makes an appearance in the 1974 Australian outlaw biker movie Stone, when a motorcycle gang drive down this street. The trough is vulnerable to being hit by parking vehicles and has recently been damaged this way. It can be easily missed when trying to locate it as the parked vehicles obscure it from view.



© Denis Martin



© Denis Martin

Warrimoo, NSW

Site: Adrill Park, Warrimoo
Address: Eley Hawkins Drive (north of Great Western Hwy)
Condition: Fair
GPS: S33.721021, E150.599360
Sighted: 4 April 2023
Notes: Access via service road (Eley Hawkins Drive)



Situated in a small well-kept park alongside the Great Western Hwy with access via the service road. An interesting historical marker found in the park is dedicated to George William Evans, who conducted the first survey over the Blue Mountains. A pathway also leads from the park to the Warrimoo Station.



Emerald

Site: Public Park, Emerald, Victoria
Address: Corner Kilvington Drive and Benson Street
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S37.934554, E 145.440041
Sighted: 17 May 2023
Notes: Beside fence line of No 2 Benson Street



Located in the park of the greater Puffing Billy Emerald Station complex towards the railway road crossing. The trough is complete, includes the dog trough, holds water, and can be filled from a contemporary hose fitting from the property nearby at No 2. Take time to enjoy the trains.



Mitcham

Site: Schwerkolt Cottage Reserve
Address: Deep Creek Road, Mitcham
Condition: Poor
GPS: S37.810532, E145.211062
Sighted: 10 June 2023
Notes: Outside the Schwerkolt Cottage orchard shed



A trough located outside the orchard shed, within the Schwerkolt Cottage Reserve. This historic reserve includes a pioneer cottage, sheds and grounds built circa 1880. August Schwerkolt and his wife Paulina emigrated from Świebodzin in Prussia arriving at Hobson's Bay on 20 December 1849.



Avenel

Site: Harvest & Home Hotel, Avenel, Victoria
Address: Cnr Bank St and Saleyard Rd
Condition: Fair
GPS: S36.892209, E145.229920
Sighted: 20 July 2023
Notes: Against the eastern wall of the Hotel



The trough is situated in the Beer Garden complex against the wall at the Hotel Harvest & Home Hotel. It is difficult to see as it has been filled with garden plants, and the dog trough is missing. The Hotel is adjacent the Avenel Railway Station and across the Railway line from the Post Office.



Mooroopna

Site: Mooroopna
Address: Beside the public toilet on Midland Highway
Condition: Poor
GPS: S36.395247, E145.353744
Sighted: 11 December 2023
Notes: Parking available on service road



This trough is in poor condition due in part to it being overrun by plants. It is positioned on the side of the service road for easy access and is just near the Mooroopna public toilets. It is under a large river red gum and on the edge of the Mooroopna Racecourse Recreation Reserve near the skatepark.



Rochester

Site: Rochester
Address: Corner Gillies and Moore Streets
Condition: Excellent
GPS: S36.360547, E144.700052
Sighted: 11 December 2023
Notes: Street parking available nearby



This trough has been recently restored and is in excellent condition. It is positioned on the corner of two streets and is easily accessible. It is also at a very nice and modern playground and only a few minutes walk from the main street and beautiful silo art. It is opposite the iconic Rochester Shamrock Hotel.



Fish Creek

Site: Fish Creek
Address: 7 Falls Road, Fish Creek
Condition: Good
GPS: -38.693568, 146.081498
Sighted: 8 January 2024
Notes: Street parking available nearby



This trough is in good condition and is under the popular Fish Sculpture in the dairy farming community of Fish Creek. The densely forested area was first settled in 1886 and farms quickly cleared for grazing. The town is home to the iconic Fish Creek Hotel and the Big Mullet which lies on a buildings upper edge.



Cootamundra, NSW

Site: Cootamundra, NSW
Address: 30 Yass Road (Olympic Highway)
Condition: Good
GPS: -34.631100, 148.038972
Sighted: 20 January 2024
Notes: Roadside parking



This trough is in good condition and is located on the roadside. As is common with troughs in NSW, it has five panels on the back. Cootamundra is a rural NSW town with a population of just over 6,700 people. It is well known as the birthplace of Australian cricketer Sir Donald Bradman who is recognised worldwide as the greatest cricket batsman of all time.



Bunyip

Site: Bunyip
Address: 21–27 High Street, Bunyip
Condition: Good
GPS: -38.096975, 145.719157
Sighted: 5 July 2024
Notes: Parking on street. Just near the main street.



ANNIS &
GEORGE



BILLS
TROUGHS

This trough is found on the High Street median strip and is in good condition. It is at the shopping centre, just behind the public toilets and opposite the Post Office. Bunyip is in Gippsland and named after Bunyip Creek, which in turn was named after the mythical bunyip creature reported in Aboriginal culture.



NEWSPAPERS

RELATED NEWSPAPER ARTICLES



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY

NOTICE is hereby given that the Business hitherto carried on by **HENRY BILLS** and **GEORGE BILLS**, at 62 Harbour-street, Sydney, as Wire Mattress Manufacturers, trading as "Henry Bills," will from and after this date be carried on by the said Henry Bills and George Bills under the name or style of "**BILLS BROTHERS.**"

Dated this first day of March, 1898.

**HENRY BILLS
GEORGE BILLS.**

Witness :
F. R. COWPER, Solicitor.

Sydney Morning Herald
Tuesday 1 March 1898
Courtesy National Library Australia

Mattress business name change

Sydney Morning Herald
Tuesday 1 March 1898
Courtesy National Library Australia

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY

LATE MR. GEORGE BILLS

An Unusual Will

The Launceston Business

MELBOURNE, Wednesday

Some unusual provisions are contained in the will of Mr. George Bills, formerly of Kent-street, Sydney, but late of Broadway, Camberwell, wire mattress manufacturer.

Mr. Bills died on December 14, and by his will dated October 16, 1925, he provided for the distribution of his estate in Victoria, consisting of £4864 realty, and £2602 personally. He provided for the payment of two annuities, one of £52 to be paid in England, and one of £260 to be paid in Victoria. He gave to his "good friend, William Henry Brown, now in the employ of Bills Bros., Kent-street, Sydney, the sum of £2000," and to various "good and faithful servants now in the employ of the firm in Sydney," legacies of £500, £250, £200, three of £150, and five of £100 each.

He provided that interest in his partnership share in the business of Bills Bros., of Launceston, manufacturers, at the rate of £5 per cent. a year, should be computed and paid to his trustees.

PROVISION OF HORSE TROUGHS

He directed his trustees "to invest the money representing his personal estate, and the proceeds of his real estate when converted into money, at their discretion in such stocks, funds, or securities as the executors or trustees might for the time being be lawfully permitted to invest in Victoria or New South Wales, for the construction of horse troughs wherever they might be of opinion that such horse troughs were necessary or desirable for the relief of horses or other dumb animals either in Australasia, in the British Isles, or in any other part of the world, subject to the consent of the proper authorities being obtained, and to pay such sum or sums of money as they might in their absolute discretion think fit to any society or societies for the protection of animals or for the alleviation of cruelty to animals either in Australasia, in the British Isles, or in any other part of the world."

Mr. Bills empowered his trustees, at the expense of his estate, to have each such horse trough suitably inscribed with the names of Annie and George Bills, Australia.

George's will consisted of over 4,800 pound reality and 2,600 pound personal. Instructions for his estate included that each horse trough produced was to be suitably inscribed with 'Annis and George Bills' (note Annis is misspelt Annie).

Launceston Examiner
Thursday 15 March 1928
National Library Australia

Launceston Examiner
Thursday 15 March 1928
Courtesy National Library Australia



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY

ANIMALS BENEFIT FROM BEQUEST

More Drinking Troughs

The humane work of the Purple Cross Society in providing drinking troughs for horses, especially in outlying districts, has received impetus through a bequest from the trustees of the late Mr George Bills' estate.

The expenses of erecting the next 12 troughs will be met from the bequest. Each one will bear the names of the donor and his wife, "Annis and George Bills, Australia."

A handsome granite trough with a dog dish and drinking fountain will be erected in Barton street, Hawthorn, as a tribute to the memory of Mr Bills.

The Herald
Saturday 19 January 1929
Courtesy National Library Australia

**A granite trough with a dog dish and drinking fountain was erected in Barton Street,
Hawthorn in memory of Mr Bills**

The Herald, Saturday 19 January 1929, National Library Australia

GALLERY

The "Bills" Trough.

The Broadford "Courier" : —
The "Bills" water trough, which has been distributed to hundreds of municipalities in the State for erection in some suitable site, is causing a good deal of press and public criticism at Alexandra because of the decision of the council to erect it at the saleyards, "after laying on the roadside for two years," as one writer puts it. The feeling is that it should be erected in a more central position. Certainly, the trough is a monument to the Bills Bros., who left all their wealth for the benefit of dumb animals. Broadford councillors erected their gift of a trough in front of the municipal offices, and it has proved a boon to many a thirsty and tired horse passing by.

Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 5 March 1937
Courtesy National Library Australia

Sometimes Bills Troughs have caused controversy!

In 1937 the Alexandra Shire came under fire for its less-than-appropriate placement of a Bills Trough.

Ironically, there are some in the community today who feel the trough's current location is not befitting of its historical significance, or it being a gift. Maybe it could be moved from its current obscure location in a back street, to the site of the prominent Red Gate Heritage Memorial, where horses once forded the creek as they entered the early township from the north.

Alexandra & Yea Standard, Friday 5 March 1937, National Library Australia

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY

GOOD WORK OF GEORGE BILLS TRUST

Large Sum Left For Benefit Of Animals

SYDNEY, November 4.

Memories of one of the most remarkable wills ever made in Australia have been revived by a visit to New South Wales of a representative of the George Bills Trust which is responsible for the administration of a large sum in the interests of animals throughout the world.

The testator was the late Mr. George Bills, a wire mattress manufacturer, of Kent street Sydney, who died on December 14, 1927. After providing for many personal bequests on a generous scale, Mr. Bills stipulated that the income from the residue of his estate, as invested by his trustees, should be spent on providing troughs for horses and on donations to societies constituted in any country for the purpose of preventing cruelty to and alleviating the sufferings of animals. The total amount realised for investment, it is said, was about £86,000, but the trustees may disperse the capital at their discretion for the objects specified.

According to a statement made in Sydney today, the trust set up more than 400 horse troughs in Victoria, and is about to extend its activities to New South Wales. In co-operation with the local authorities, it also makes a regular annual contribution to the funds of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Sydney and other places.

Each trough is manufactured to a standard design and bears the inscription, "Annie and George Bills, Australia." Not only does it supply water for thirsty horses, but there is a fountain for thirsty human beings at one end and a small trough for thirsty dogs beneath.

Adelaide Advertiser
Friday 5 November 1937
Courtesy National Library Australia

Mattress manufacturer of Kent Street, Sydney.

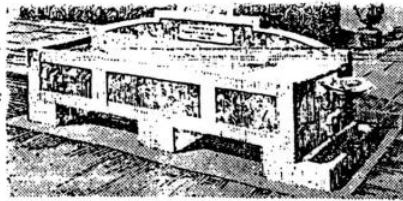
The amount set aside for the construction of horse troughs was just over 85,000 pound.

In 1937 the Alexandra Shire came under fire for its less-than-appropriate placement of a Bills Trough.

Adelaide Advertiser, Friday November 1937, Courtesy National Library Australia

OTHER

OTHER RELATED ITEMS



REGISTERED DESIGN

Contractor to the Annis and George Bills Estate

J. B. PHILLIPS

*Designer and Manufacturer of
All Types of Pre-Cast Concrete Work*

442 Auburn Road, Hawthorn, Melbourne, E.2.

PHONE HAW. 205

The Executors of the late George Bills.

in a/c with J.B. Phillips.

To the supply and erection of five (5) troughs as under:

CLUNES (2)

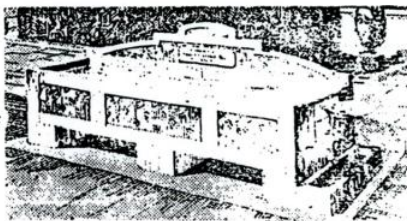
CRESWICK (2)

BALLAN (1) = 5 troughs & fittings @ £13.0.0. £65.0.0

Freight, erecting, & plumbing charges on above. 60.0.0

Total £125.0.0

*received with
drawings
7th July*



REGISTERED DESIGN

Contractor to the Annis and George Bills Estate

J. B. PHILLIPS

*Designer and Manufacturer of
All Types of Pre-Cast Concrete Work*

442 Auburn Road, Hawthorn, Melbourne, E.2.

PHONE HAW. 205

1st Nov. 1931.

The Executors of the late George Bills

In a/c with J.B. Phillips.

To the supply of 10 troughs as under:

KANGAROO FLAT.

MARONG.

BRIDGEWATER.

HAWTHORN. (2)

ESSENDON.

BIRCHIP. (2)

WYCHEPROOF.

INGLEWOOD. Ten troughs @ £13.0.0

£130.0.0

Freight, erecting, & plumbing charges on above.

120.0.0

£250.0.0

*Received by
The Executors
of the late George Bills
1st Nov. 1931
J.B. Phillips*

I, GEORGE BILLS of 541-543 Kent Street Sydney in -
the State of New South Wales Wire Mattress Manufacturer HEREBY
REVOKE all former Wills and Codicils made by me and DECLARE
this is my last Will I A p p o i n t Daisy Clara Crook
of 201 Auburn Road Auburn in the State of Victoria Married ---
Woman and William Henry Crook of the same address Gentleman to
be Executors and Trustees of this my Will (hereinafter called
my said Trustees) AND I GIVE to my said Trustees full powers
of sale and full discretion to postpone the sale of all or any
part of my estate real or personal I GIVE to Daisy Murrell of
75 Abinger Road Portslade Sussex England during her life an --
annuity of £52 to be paid by equal half-yearly payments the --
first whereof shall be made six calendar months after my death
I GIVE to Minnie Store of 84 Robinsons Road Hawthorn Widow dur-
ing her life an annuity of £260 to be paid by equal half-yearly
payments the first whereof shall be made six calendar months -
after my death I EMPOWER my Trustees if they shall think fit
to appropriate sums sufficient in their opinion at the period
of appropriation as funds for answering the said annuities by
investing the same in the manner and upon the securities herein-
after prescribed A n d I DECLARE that from and after such
appropriation the residue of my estate shall be liberated from
the trust for payment of the said annuities I GIVE and BEQUEATH
to my good friend William Henry Brown now in the employ of ---
Bills Bros. of 541 Kent Street Sydney aforesaid the sum of ---
£2,000 I GIVE and BEQUEATH to my good and faithful servants now
in the employ of the said Firm in Sydney aforesaid the follow-
ing legacies : To William John Fuller £500 To Alexander Dale
Mood £250 To Harry O'Keefe £200 To Alexander John Brook £150
To Herbert William Kennedy £150 To William Henry Thomas £150
To Oswald William Samuels £100 To Alfred Tomlinson Whiteley
£100 To Louis James Bailey £100 To Thomas James Patterson -
£100 and to William James McGrath £100 I DEVISE and BEQUEATH
to the said Minnie Store my freehold property situate at 84 -

the Gordon Hospital Vauxhall Bridge Road London S.W. England
the sum of £100 to be paid to the credit of the Old Patients
Guild And I DIRECT that the receipt of the Treasurer
or other proper Officer of the said Hospital shall be a good -
receipt and discharge to my said Trustees for the due payment
of such sum As to all my shares in the Mutual Life and --
Citizens Assurance Company Limited of Sydney and Melbourne I
DIRECT that these shall be transferred into the names of the
Trustees for the time being of this my Will but shall not be
sold for a period of two years after my decease and the pro-
ceeds thereof shall then be treated as part of the residue of
my estate NEVERTHELESS I EMPOWER my said Trustees in their
absolute discretion to retain such shares for such longer ---
period as they shall think fit I DEVISE to my said Trustees
all the residue of my real and personal estate UPON TRUST to
sell and convert the same into money as and when they shall -
think fit and the proceeds of such sale and conversion shall
form part of the residue of my estate As to my partnership
interest or share in the business of Bills Brothers of 541-543
Kent Street Sydney aforesaid carried on by me in partnership
with Henry Bills of Launceston in the State of Tasmania Manu-
facturer which by an Agreement dated the 23rd day of April 1919
between me and the said Henry Bills is not to be sold but in-
terest on the amount thereof at the rate of £5 p.c. p.a. from
the date of my death computed as in the said Agreement provided
is to be paid to the Trustees of my estate appointed by my --
Will I DIRECT that the whole or any part or parts of the --
principal amount of my said partnership interest or share as
well as all interest which may be payable on the same until -
such principal is paid off under the terms of the said Agree-
ment shall be paid to and received by my said Trustees and --
dealt with by them in the manner hereinafter provided for the
disposal of the residue of my estate As to all such rest ---
residue and remainder of my estate I DEVISE and BEQUEATH the

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shall invest all moneys representing my personal estate and -
the proceeds of my real estate when converted into money at -
their discretion in such Stocks Funds or Securities as Executors
and Trustees may for the time being be lawfully permitted to
invest in the State of Victoria or the State of New South Wales
and shall stand possessed of the investments from time to time
representing my said residuary estate (hereinafter called the
Trust Fund) and of the income therefrom in the following way
that is to say : TO construct and erect and pay for Horse -
Troughs wherever they may be of opinion that such horse troughs
are necessary or desirable for the relief of horses or other
dumb animals either in Australasia in the British Islands or
in any other part of the World subject to the consent of the
proper authorities being obtained and to pay such sum or sums
of money as they may in their absolute discretion think fit to
any Society or Societies for the Protection of Animals or for
the alleviation of Cruelty to Animals either in Australasia in
the British Islands or in any other part of the World and for
the purposes aforesaid I DIRECT that my said Trustees may -
apply the principal or any part thereof of my Trust Fund as -
well as the income therefrom and that the receipt of the ----
Treasurer or other proper Officer of any such Society shall be
a good receipt and discharge to my said Trustees for the due
payment of such moneys it being my wish and desire but not so
as to create a Trust that the moneys to be received by any such
Societies under the terms of this my Will shall so far as prac-
-ticable be used by each of such Societies for the maintenance
and extension of the number of their Officers engaged in the
prevention detection and prosecution of cases of cruelty to -
animals I EMPOWER my said Trustees at the expense of my ---
estate to have each of such Horse Troughs wherever erected --
suitably inscribed with the names of Annis and George Bills -
Australia / A n d I D e s i r e my said Trustees at the
expense of my estate to advertise in the Public Press such

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donations as may be made to any Society or Societies under the powers hereinbefore vested in my said Trustees I DECLARE that if the said Trustees hereinbefore named or either of them --- shall disclaim or if they or either of them or any trustees or trustee to be appointed under this clause shall die or decline or become incompetent to act as trustees or trustee of my Will it shall be lawful for the trustee for the time being of my Will competent to act by any instrument to appoint any person to be a trustee in place of the trustee disclaiming dying or declining or becoming incompetent to act I FURTHER DECLARE - that if the surviving or continuing trustee for the time being shall fail or neglect within a reasonable time to appoint a new trustee then I REVOKE the appointment of such surviving or continuing trustee or if there shall at any time be no trustee of my Will and in either of such cases I APPOINT the Equity Trustees Executors and Agency Company Limited of 85 Queen --- Street Melbourne as Executors and Trustees of this my Will -- A n d I DIRECT that the whole of the Trust Fund under the control of my said Trustees shall vest in the said Equity --- Trustees Executors and Agency Company Limited as if the whole of such Trust Fund had originally been devised and bequeathed to the said Company as Trustee A n d I DIRECT that the - said Equity Trustees Executors and Agency Company Limited --- shall stand possessed of my said Trust Funds and of the income thereof UPON TRUST to divide the annual income therefrom as follows that is to say : As to one-third of such income to - the Society for the prevention of cruelty to Animals in Sydney New South Wales As to one-third of such income to the Society for the prevention of cruelty to Animals in London England and as to the remaining one-third of such income to The British - Union for abolition of Vivisection to be divided between the Headquarters and the Melbourne Branch A n d I DIRECT -- that the receipt of the Treasurer or other proper Officer of such Societies shall be a good receipt to the Equity Trustees

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*Executors and Agency Company Limited for the due
payment of*
such income I DIRECT that the said Company shall at the ex-
pense of my estate advertise in the Press the amount of each
division of Income whenever and to whichever of such Societies
paid and shall be entitled to the commission ordinarily charged
by the said Company on corpus and income handled by the said
Company I BEQUEATH to each Trustee for the time being of my
Will except the said Equity Trustees Executors and Agency Com-
pany Limited the sum of £150 per annum during such period as
she or he shall act in lieu of commission I N WITNESS --
whereof I the said George Bills have to this and the two pre-
ceding pages of typewriting set my hand this Sixteenth day of
October 1925.

S I G N E D by the said George Bills 0
as and for his last Will in the - 0
presence of us both present at -- 0
the same time who at his request 0
in his presence and in the presence 0
of each other have hereunto sub- 0
scribed our names as witnesses : 0

GEORGE BILLS.

E. P. Wynne,
Solr., Melbourne.

Percy H. Spence,
Clerk to Hamilton, Wynne & Riddell,
Solicitors, Melbourne.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

DID YOU KNOW?

Currently there are no known Annis & George Bills Horse Troughs known to exist in South Australia. If you find one, please let us know.

There are subtle changes between Bills Horse Troughs found in Victoria and New South Wales. Victorian made troughs have three panels at the front and no panels on the rear, while troughs made in NSW have four panels on the front and five panels on the back..

A granite horse trough with a drinking fountain and dog dish attached was produced as a memorial to Annis and George and was first erected at Hawthorn in 1929. Its present location is not currently known.

It is uncertain just how any Bills Horse Troughs were eventually made, however it is thought that the total number may be around 750.



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