

Max Taylor RemembersApsley

Jacky Whites Waterhole

From a collection of local history stories told to Barry and Maureen Reader by Max Taylor in 1990's. ©

From what was told to me by my father, Jacky White was an aboriginal who used to wander the South East of South Australia and the western part of Victoria. The same name crops up in various places in the area.

In my school days there were Mens and Ladies change sheds at Jacky Whites and the Apsley school children were taught to swim there. To my knowledge there has never been any person drowned there. The small hole on the south-western side was only formed when the hole was deepened. The committee, who was to turn the site into a swimming pool, put the bore that is on the western side there. The area was a recreation reserve but its present control is probably with the Council and no longer under a Committee of Management.

In any case it is a well known fact that it was usually permanent water until a committee was formed in more recent times to turn it into a swimming lake. They succeeded in deepening the hole by scraping out the more or less stable bottom. Alas that was the end of the permanent water and proved once again that it took only minutes to destroy that which nature had taken centuries to achieve. To interfere with permanent water holes in an area famed for its runaway holes is very hard to justify.

It was one of the watering holes for the legendary bullock drivers of the era.

Two other permanent holes used by the bullockies were one situated behind the saleyard and known by locals as the "Muddy Hole". Sadly it has gone the way of Jacky Whites as after it was deepened it is also a dry hole. It was a permanent spring and many a feed of yabbies was dragged from it. It also yielded many water rat skins when it was legal to take them.

The other permanent water hole was known as "The Church Water Hole". It was also permanent water and well stocked with red fin and perch. Sadly an overzealous person on trying to free up a drainage bore at the adjacent recreation reserve dropped a charge of 'gellie' down the bore. All it succeeded in doing was to completely block the bore, cracked the nearby RSL building and sadly opened up a soak in the Church Waterhole. It also has not held water since.

A mention is made in the Apsley Football Club Centenary Book 1890 – 1990, that during 1938 a local football team called the Jacky White Wanderers took part in several games.