



## Surrey Hills Historical Society Newsletter: February - March 2022

**Meetings of the Surrey Hills Historical Society are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month (February to November) at 8pm.**

**Venue: Maitland Room of The Cottage of the Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre at 1 Bedford Avenue, Surrey Hills.**

Entry is from the rear of the building, accessed from Zeplins Lane, which runs beside the building. There is plenty of parking in the adjacent railway car park, which is well-lit at night. Supper follows the presentation; a contribution of \$5.00 goes to the Neighbourhood Centre.

**COVID-19 restrictions re numbers apply. Please RSVP to Sue on 0417 368990.**

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Members of the Society and others are committed to documenting the history of the area of Mont Albert and Surrey Hills through the Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre Heritage Collection. We meet most Mondays, 10am-3pm. The collection is open to the public at this time. For further details email: [heritage@surreyhillsnc.org.au](mailto:heritage@surreyhillsnc.org.au)

Items and stories from the collection appear on the Surrey Hills History Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Surrey-Hills-History-887879524593056/> and on Victorian Collections at <https://victoriancollections.net.au>

**Surrey Hills Historical Society committee:**

President / newsletter: Sue Barnett

Vice-President: Euan Walmsley

Secretary: Max Beaton

Treasurer: Vacant

General Committee: Dorothy Duncan

Ex-Officio: Arthur Tonkin

Newsletter editor: Sue Barnett

Address for postage: C/o Surrey Hills

Neighbourhood Centre

157 Union Road, Surrey Hills, 3127

Our first meeting for 2022 will be by Zoom. In part this is because our speaker lives in Sydney! It also allows time for members to review how they are now feeling about face-to-face meetings. Neighbourhood Centre protocols do allow for small meetings to be held in the Maitland Room, provided all attendees are fully vaccinated.

Please email or ring Sue to let her know whether or not you would be happy to meet at the Centre for the March meeting. In the meantime ...

### **Next meeting - Tuesday 15 February at 8pm by Zoom with Mary Bell; her topic 'The Bell family of Surrey Hills'**



The Bell family lived in Surrey Hills from 1901 through to 2000 and contributed to the community and the broader society through their activities and involvement in school, local societies, community events, the development of the railway and the printing industry through the 1900s.

Bell family history enthusiast Mary Bell will

share the story through a family collection of photos, memoirs, historic records and digital recordings, highlighting interesting discoveries, as well as the personal triumphs and challenges of this family.

Photo: Jim and Norm Bell on the cannon in Surrey Gardens

### **March meeting – Graham O' Rourke will present 'The history of Foy and Gibson'**

All members would remember the iconic building on the corner of Bourke and Swanston Streets, but behind this is a remarkable story. The Foy and Gibson company was a pioneer in the history of retailing in Melbourne. Modelled on the trading principles of the "Bon Marche" of Paris and other

European and American stores, beyond the store facades were factories and warehouses, producing and delivering a remarkable range of goods, including soft furnishings and manchester goods, clothing, hats, hardware, leather goods, furniture and a range of foods.

It all dated back to 1870 when an Irish draper named Mark Foy set up in business on Smith Street, Collingwood. What began as a drapery went on to become one of Australia's first department stores and, ultimately, the focal point of Melbourne's manufacturing industry.

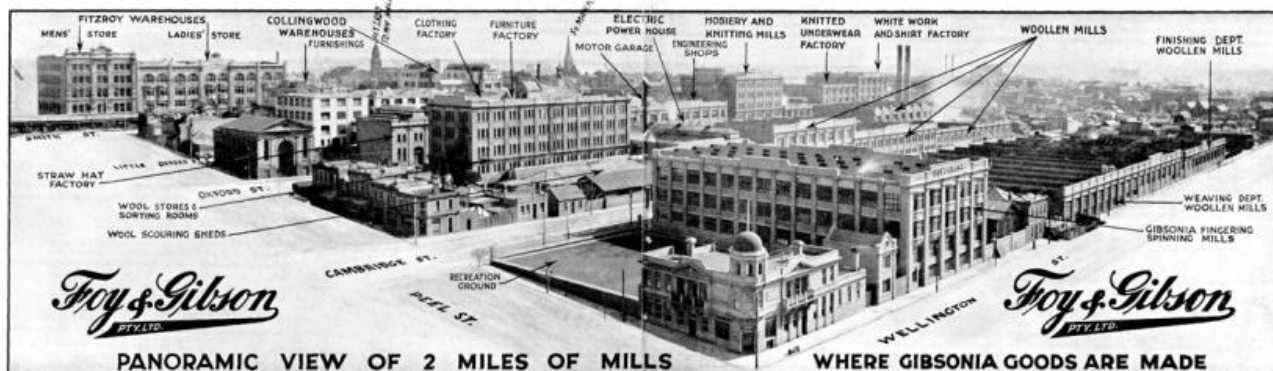


Image: State Library of Victoria collection.



Image: A 1906 catalogue from Foy & Gibson advertising Parisian hats. University of Melbourne Archives, Foy & Gibson Collection

## Committee news

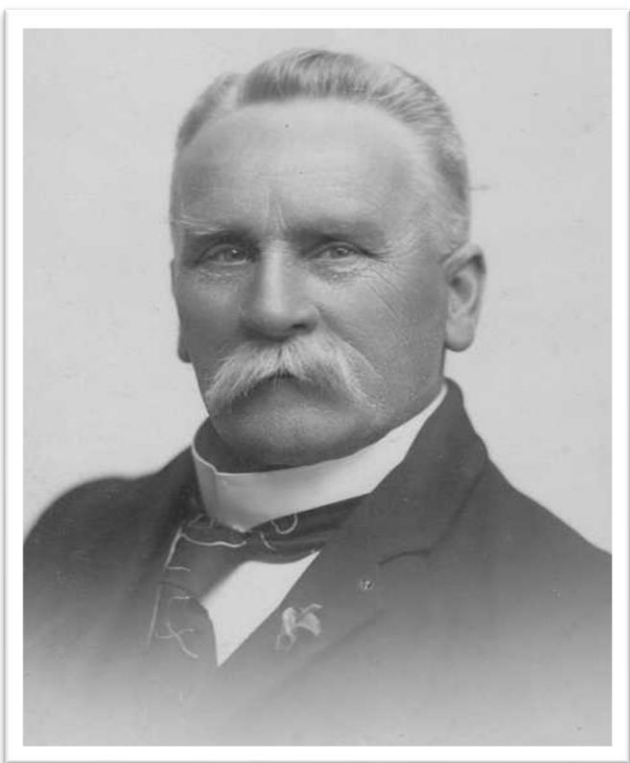
The last year has been trying for everyone. In our circle, it has been particularly challenging for our Treasurer Jon Agar and his wife Candy, whose son David died most unexpectedly. Subsequent to this, Jon learned that he too had inherited underlying heart problems and he is now awaiting major heart surgery. With a significant period of recovery anticipated, Jon has advised of the need to step back from the role of Treasurer, which he has ably held for seven years. Jon attended a committee meeting early this month and was presented with a token of appreciation on behalf of the Society. We wish him all the very best and hope to see him in the future when he is fully recovered.

In the light of Jon's resignation, and also because the move to the Heritage Facility in the Canterbury Gardens Precinct will involve many meetings over the next year, it will be necessary for our committee to meet more frequently.

At the February meeting, an election of a committee for 2022 will take place. Sue Barnett, Euan Walmsley, Max Beaton and Dorothy Duncan have indicated their willingness to stay on the committee. Member Keith Wilson has also agreed to be nominated and a 'new face' Alison Dews has also agreed to being recruited. Alison is a long-term resident of Surrey Hills with considerable experience in management including of associations and societies. She has also been a part-time member of the staff of the Neighbourhood Centre and has been assisting 'behind the scenes' with the heritage collection.

### **Profile of an early resident: James Jupe Hunt - 1858-1937**

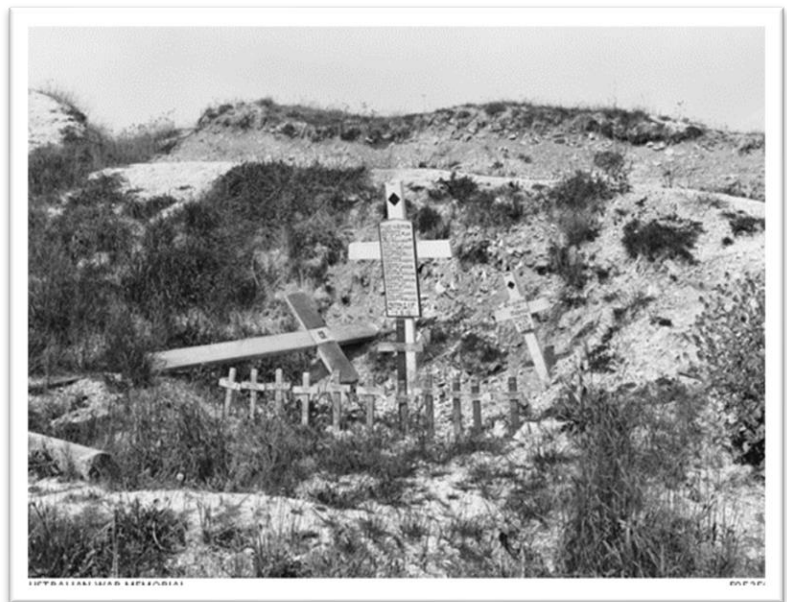
An enquiry from former resident Rhonda Newberry for information regarding an ancestor resulted in the following profile being compiled.



Left: James Jupe Hunt; right: Martha Hunt (nee Jamieson) courtesy of great-grandson, Phillip Hunt.

James Jupe Hunt and his wife Martha (nee Jamieson) married on 13 December 1883. They came to Surrey Hills with a family of 8 children, most of whom were born in Brighton. Electoral rolls give James' occupation as 'public servant'. Further enquiry showed that in c1904 he was electoral divisional returning officer for Melbourne. He was postmaster for Footscray from 1913 to 1918. Perhaps he travelled to Footscray from Surrey Hills as the family was resident at 'Wyuna', 7 The Avenue during World War 1. The house still stands today and was where both James and his wife died. The reason behind the move to Surrey Hills has not been found, however two of James' sisters, Selina Elvira Hunt and Kate Jupe Hunt, also lived nearby.

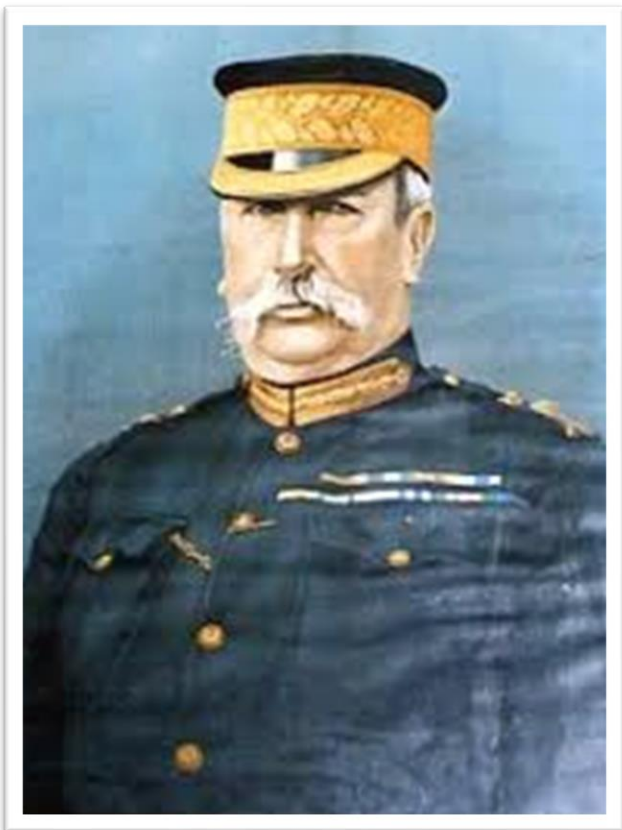
A son, Colin Edward Hunt, was killed in action during the attack on Mont St Quentin towards the end of in World War 1. His AIF record contains numerous letters written by James Jupe Hunt regarding his son's fate and his grave. Colin Hunt's name is recorded on the Shrine in the Surrey Gardens, but also on the Surrey Hills Bowling Club Roll of Honour, held in our local heritage collection, reflecting that in his later years James Jupe Hunt was an active member of the bowling club.



The burial ground of men of the 21st Battalion who fell in the attack at Mont St Quentin on 1 September 1918. The large cross in the centre lists men of the battalion killed in action: 6817A Sgt C E Hunt; 2116 L Cpl A Blackmore MM; 5413 L Cpl G W Staaf; 6833 Pte A E Kelly; 6874 Pte F Roberts; 6390 Pte A Smerdon; 6178 Pte W Thorburn; 664A Pte E Thompson; 6747 Pte W F Dowell; 6781 Pte D Chandler; 6398 Pte A Walker. Another cross on the right marks the grave of 7199 Pte W Bottomly, also killed in action. The wooden cross lying on the ground (left) is the original one erected by men of the battalion. It was collected by the Australian War Records section and now forms part of the National Collection at the Australian War Memorial. AWM E05256 4/6/1919 AWM E05256

## What lies behind street names – Redvers Street

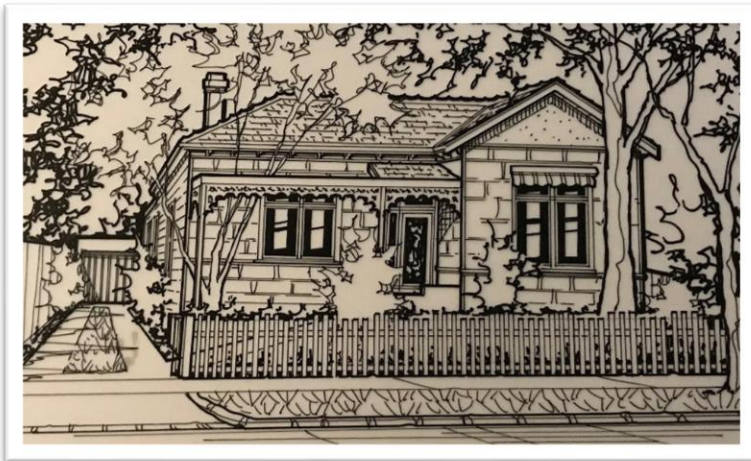
Redvers Street is a no-through road almost on the boundary of Surrey Hills and Canterbury. It is one of the 'hidden treasures' of Surrey Hills. The street was created in an 1889 subdivision and was originally known as Alma Street or Road and William Street. It is presumed that Alma was after the Battle of the Alma, in the Crimean War of 1854-56. It was renamed in 1901, almost certainly after Sir Redvers Buller.



Redvers Buller was educated at Eton and was commissioned an officer into the 60th Rifles of the British Army in 1858. He remained in the Army for over 40 years and his early military career was very successful. He served in multiple 'hot spots' of British Empire interests – these included in India in 1859, China in 1860, nine years in Canada as Company Commander, during which he took part in the expedition to put down a rebellion on the Red River, Manitoba. During the Zulu War of 1879, he was a Colonel in command of the Frontier Light Horse Cavalry in South Africa. This was probably a career highpoint. At the Battle of Hlobane, on March 28, 1879, he rescued 400 injured men, restored the morale of his force and beat off a four-hour attack by 20,000 Zulus. For gallantry in the face of the enemy, he was awarded the Victoria Cross on 17 June 1879. He was later promoted to Major General. He also served at the War Office as Adjutant General. He had a great regard for the well-being of ordinary soldiers and during this time set up the Army Service Corps. He was Commander in Chief in the Second Boer War, (1899-

1902), a position that rather tainted his earlier record. He retired from active service in 1903.

Redvers Street contains houses from both the late Victorian and Federation eras, built in the years following its subdivision. As elsewhere in Surrey Hills, the whole subdivision was not immediately taken up. With the crash of the 1890's the initial flurry of building was followed by a period of stagnation during which the number of houses in the street remained unchanged for nearly ten years. Almost all of these early houses were constructed of timber, sometimes with block-fronting, or with 'notched' boards, cut to emulate shingling. The intact nature of the houses and heritage value of the area was reflected in the protective overlay created under the Boroondara Planning Scheme.



In the Margaret Picken donation of real estate sketches, made in 2020, there are sketches of 3 Redvers Street houses.

Left: 15 Redvers Street (date 2000)

Below right: 23 Redvers Street (date 1989)

'Bona Vista' at 32 Redvers Street (c.1891) is one of the earliest houses constructed, along with 'Nene' at 19 Redvers Street (c. 1892); both have block-fronted facades. There is just one brick house dating from the first development period; it is a double-fronted brick Victorian villa at 17 Redvers Street, which has lost its verandah. There is also a Victorian timber house (c.1890) at 20 Redvers Street that was moved from an unknown location in 1949. (Ref: City of Boroondara Surrey Hills and Canterbury Hill Estate Heritage Study)<sup>1</sup>



During the first wave of COVID-19, residents of Redvers Street were among the many mini-communities around the world who joined the craze of creating their own mini spoon villages. These were especially popular in Melbourne and, like the earlier teddy bear hunts, helped to connect children – and adults – with a sense of community during the long weeks of lockdown when close contact with friends and neighbours was not possible.

Photo courtesy of Libby Wilson of Canterbury History Group.

<sup>1</sup> Alan Holt's records suggest that 20 Redvers Street was subdivided from part of a larger home - 'Duneira' in Highfield Road.

## Boroondara Citizen of the Year 2022



On Australia Day, local resident Greg Buchanan was announced as the Boroondara Citizen of the Year. He also received a Whitehorse Community Achievement Award. It is unusual for an individual to be acknowledged by both Boroondara and Whitehorse Councils in the same year, but in Greg's case this is entirely fitting. Greg's work on behalf of community straddles both municipalities. For over 12 months, his community involvement has been focused on advocacy for the best outcome for Surrey Hills and Mont Albert residents with respect to the contentious level crossing removal project. He has worked with both Councils, local politicians, the LXP and community stakeholders; such involvement demanding countless hours of his time. Greg's awards acknowledge the manner in which he respectfully approaches the role of community advocacy.

For many years Greg has been a quietly committed volunteer. He has assisted David Winter (of Bread Street, Mont Albert and the 2021 Whitehorse Citizen of the Year), in a number of David's charitable endeavours. He

has also been a long-time stalwart at the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, volunteering his time and expertise in heritage planning matters.

Looking back to 2010, following the demolition of the Surrey Hills Post Office, Greg played a pivotal role in re-establishing the Surrey Hills Progress Association, (now known as the Surrey Hills and Mont Albert Progress Association). Greg became its inaugural Secretary, served on the committee continuously and is currently the President. Through it, he played a vital role in working with Boroondara Council during the period of heritage review of Surrey Hills and the subsequent establishment of the heritage overlays now in place.

In 2015, with a long family association with Phillip Island and concern for protection of its heritage, Greg published 'Penguin Land', in which he documented the battle to save the land on what is now the penguin parade, and indeed the penguin colony itself, from developers. Also in 2015, Greg was a lead figure in establishing the Anzac Day Dawn Service in the Surrey Gardens. From 2015-2018, he and others in the then Surrey Hills Progress Association organised what has become a highly-valued annual community commemoration. His involvement has continued since 2019 as part of a more broadly-based community committee.

In announcing the 2022 Boroondara Citizen Awards, Mayor Jane Addis said: "The City of Boroondara is most fortunate to have in our community, many passionate and hardworking citizens. Citizens who are dedicated to assisting others and making a positive difference in our local and broader communities. We're proud to acknowledge these outstanding individuals as role models for the community."

In accepting the award Greg said that he: "sees this award as Council appreciating the value of community groups including planning and activist type groups like ours. I believe it is really important for such groups to act constructively and show respect while advocating strongly for what the group believes in and cares about". Greg dedicated this award to his mother whose compassion and commitment to others has always been an inspiration to him.

We congratulate Greg on these awards, which acknowledge his significant contribution to both Surrey Hills and Mont Albert. We thank him for all the voluntary work he has done, and continues to do, on behalf of the community.

### **Box Hill Cemetery tour – Monday 14 March, 10am - Noon**

March is Women’s History Month and, acknowledging this, the cemetery tour to be held on Labour Day will visit 12 graves, many focusing on the role and achievements of both known and unknown women in the local and broader community. The tour will be led by Sue Barnett and John Barnao (of Box Hill Historical Society).

Participants are advised to wear flat walking shoes, as some of the paths in the cemetery are uneven, to carry water for personal consumption, a hat for protection from the sun and must be fully vaccinated and able to show proof of this.

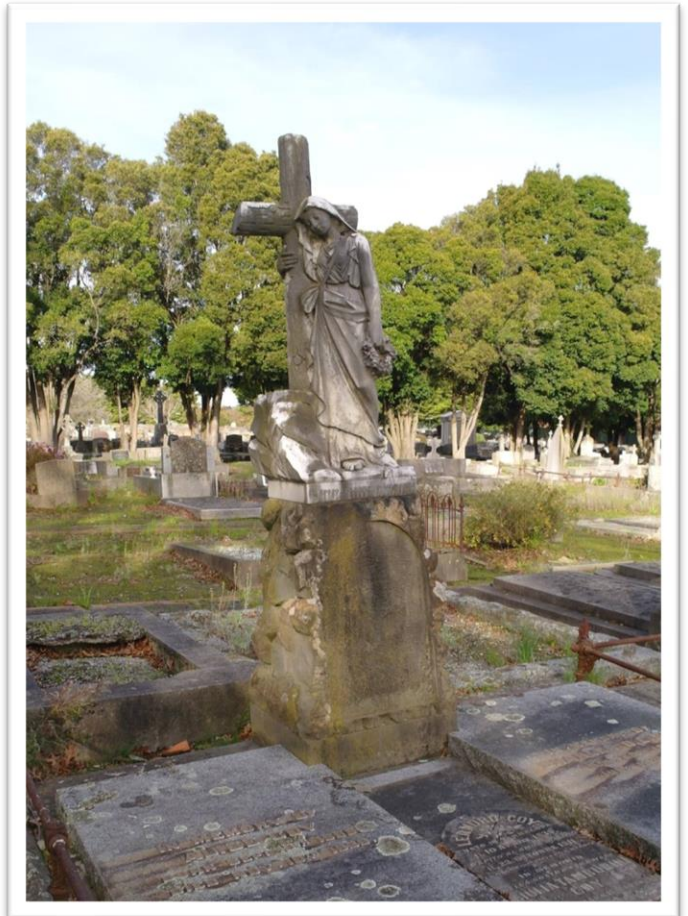
The cemetery office has advised that the pedestrian gates to the cemetery will be open and accessible, however vehicle access gates will be closed. Parking can be found on Reserve Road or Whitehorse Reserve and surrounds.

The meeting point is outside the cemetery office. Please arrive 10-15 minutes prior to the commencement of the tour, which will leave promptly at 10am.

**Cost: \$15.00 for members of Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre, Surrey Hills Historical Society and Box Hill Historical Society. \$20.00 for general public.**

**Your place can be secured by making payment through the Try Booking system (see the link below) or by contacting Sue on 0417 368990.**

<https://www.trybooking.com/BXJPF>



Above: Guilia Tamburini Coy’s grave – photo: Sue Barnett

This is one of several activities which we plan to hold during the year to raise funds for the Society in preparation for our move to the heritage facility in the Canterbury Gardens Precinct in early 2023. Box Hill Historical Society generously suggested that all proceeds from this tour will go to assist with our relocation costs.

So, come and find out about Susannah Sarovich, Kitty McEwan, Guilia Tamburini Coy, Merlyn Myer, Connie Dickens, Eleanor Pledger, Elizabeth Jefferies, Amy Castles – and more.

# Member Feedback

## 1. Meeting format:

Please indicate your response with a Y or N:

- I am unable to participate using Zoom
- I am able to participate using Zoom
- I am happy to attend meetings face-to-face at Surrey Hills Neighbourhood, provided that
  - Numbers are limited
  - All attendees are fully vaccinated.
- I would prefer not to attend face-to-face meetings for the time being.

## 2. Committee elections for 2022:

The following members have been nominated and accepted nomination for the 2022-2023 committee:

- Alison Dews for the position of Treasurer
- Dorothy Duncan as general committee member
- Euan Walmsley as Vice-President
- Keith Wilson as general committee member
- Max Beaton as Secretary
- Sue Barnett as President.

Additional nominations are welcome.

If you are not able to attend the February meeting by Zoom and wish to have your vote registered, please nominate a proxy, who will be attending, or contact Sue on 0417 368990.

## Any additional feedback comments:

## Your name and phone number:

Many thanks and here's hoping that we can 'normalise' activities very soon.  
Cheers.

Sue