

MARYSVILLE TRIANGLE Heritage Walking Trail

Rendezvous

The Ross Family

I had a grandstand view of the disaster from the Kerami balcony without fully realising the calamity of it all, I can vividly recall in the afternoon when checking the remains, turning on a tap and getting scalded with what should have been cold water! **Sam Ross**



Rendezvous guesthouse, 1931 Courtesy Ross family

FIVE GENERATIONS OF THE ROSS FAMILY

1ST GENERATION



Albert (Nipper) Ross

2ND GENERATION



Marjorie Allison Ross

3RD GENERATION



Terry, Rodney and Sandra Ross

4TH GENERATION



Stephen and Terri-Ann Ross



Trevor Ross, who passed away at the age of two

4TH & 5TH GENERATION



Terry and Grace Ross



Terri-Ann, Tiana & Teaya Ross

Photographs courtesy of the Ross family

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The Rendezvous was one of many Marysville guesthouses to prosper in the 1920s. According to owner Ernest Ross, the Rendezvous lived up to its name, which meant 'meeting place'. Many families who visited Marysville had a favourite guesthouse, which they would book out a year in advance. The Rendezvous was no exception.

The Rendezvous was built of fibro cement and had 14 bedrooms and at least three open log fires—resulting in many hours spent chopping wood by Ernest Ross. The guesthouse also had a septic toilet whose tank was a 60-foot mine shaft, but nevertheless worked well for many years. But its most unusual feature was an amazing electric light system known as the 'Gloria Light System'. The System was run by Methylated Spirits pressurised with air via a car tyre pump to create gas; from there, the gas travelled through copper pipes to mantle lights in the house. This innovative but risky system enabled the Ross family to offer guests a hot water service in addition to home-cooked meals and roaring log fires.



Albert Ernest (Nipper) Ross

Courtesy Ross family

ALBERT ROSS WAS A MEMBER OF THE AUSTRALIAN LIGHT HORSE BRIGADE BUT WAS STRUCK DOWN BY RHEUMATIC FEVER SO DID NOT SEE ACTIVE SERVICE. HE OWNED AND TRAINED MANY RACEHORSES IN MENTONE BEFORE MOVING TO NARBETHONG AND LATER MARYSVILLE. HE WORKED AS THE LOCAL BAILIFF FOR THE MARYSVILLE TOURIST ASSOCIATION AND ALSO UNDERTOOK TOURIST TRACK MAINTENANCE FOR MANY YEARS. ERNEST DIED IN 1956.

The *Rendezvous*
Marysville

A new and thoroughly up-to-date House, where the comfort and convenience of patrons is the first consideration. Individual tastes studied.
HOT WATER SERVICE
Tariff: £2/10/- per week. Holidays, £3/3/-
Mrs. E. ROSS - Proprietress



Sam Ross at Rendezvous guesthouse, 1932

Courtesy Ross family

THE RENDEZVOUS ALSO HAD A PROLIFIC VEGETABLE GARDEN AND 'EVER-POPULAR' STRAWBERRY PATCH, WHICH WAS FEATURED IN **MAJESTIC MARYSVILLE**, A SILENT PROMOTIONAL FILM FROM THE 1920S. THE FILM SHOWS 5-YEAR-OLD SAM ROSS EATING A BOWL OF STRAWBERRIES FROM THE GARDEN.



The cause of the fire that burnt the Rendezvous down in 1934 is unknown, but the gas that escaped from the pipes as the inferno raged sounded like a scream. Thinking his wife and son were trapped inside, Ernest Ross refused to leave the guesthouse and had to be forcibly removed. Nearby residents worked tirelessly in a 'bucket brigade' to douse the flames, but the guesthouse could not be saved.

The Ross family lived in temporary accommodation of sapling and burnt recoverable roofing iron while a new house was built. This remained the family home until it was burnt down in the fires of Black Saturday, 7 February 2009.

