

Lost in transliteration: Melbourne suburbs with two different spellings



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What's in a name?

A bit, it turns out. Especially if that name is incorrectly merged, slapped on a sign and left languishing at a Melbourne train station for almost a century.

Such a circumstance prompted Public Transport Users Association campaigner Daniel Bowen, a former Glen Huntly resident, to write to the government in 2021 seeking a change to one of Melbourne's oldest spelling errors.



Public Transport Users Association campaigner Daniel Bowen at Glen Huntly station. DARRIAN TRAYNOR

Two weeks ago, Bowen and the local historical society succeeded. Glenhuntly station will become Glen Huntly station when it reopens after level crossing removal works, bringing it in line with the surrounding suburb in the inner south-east.

“It always puzzled me that the suburb name and the road name had a space, but the station name was just one word,” Bowen said. “It’s no big deal, I suppose. But, it can be potentially confusing to people that aren’t familiar with the area.”

However, Glenhuntly might not be the only Victorian naming anomaly.

In the outer east, Ferntree Gully was created as the Shire of Fern Tree Gully in 1889. The local Rotary Club still uses the latter spelling, while others have largely adopted the former.

Closer to the CBD, the City of Stonnington added an extra “n” compared with its namesake, Stonington Mansion.

The Borough of Queenscliffe council area has an extra “e” at the end, unlike the name for the small coastal town on the Bellarine Peninsula.

Wattle Glen station on the Hurstbridge line in Melbourne’s north-east was first known as Balee, before becoming Wattle Glen in 1922. The railway station signage now uses two words.

Train station East Malvern is in Malvern East.

“Obscure naming, I think, is just part of a growing city, I suppose. You’re bound to see these quirky things,” Bowen said. “But, at least in some cases, it can be corrected.”

Earlier this month, Premier Daniel Andrews said at the announcement of the renamed Glen Huntly station that the previous one-word name was a historical mistake, made in the late 1930s.

“It’s taken us nearly a century to fix that, but the local historical society and others who have an eye for detail will be very pleased to see us remedying that error,” he said.

While there may be some other naming discrepancies across Melbourne, Bowen won’t be campaigning for other name changes.

“This took my interest because I was a local and used to use that station every day,” he said. “I’m more focused now back on better public transport services.”

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