



# History NEWS

Issue No. 313 Aug – Sept 2014  
Royal Historical Society of Victoria



Red Cross  
Exhibition opens  
August 8

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Notes from the Editor's Desk .....                              | 2 |
| History Week 2014 .....   | 2 |
| ANZAC Centenary .....   | 2 |
| Mystery of 'The Red Cross Nurse' .....                          | 3 |
| Red Cross Music Making and Fund<br>Raising during the War ..... | 4 |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Vera Deakin and the Red Cross<br>Enquiry Bureau ..... | 5 |
| Making an impact with Facebook .....                  | 6 |
| What makes an RHSV Councillor? .....                  | 7 |
| President's Report .....                              | 8 |
| Time to Rally for the Drill Hall!! .....              | 8 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| The Australian Red Cross in the Great War                            | 9  |
| What's On .....  | 9  |
| Around the Societies .....   | 10 |
| Recovering the West Melbourne<br>Literary Institute, 1864-1909 ..... | 12 |
| Books Received .....   | 13 |
| Mandeville Crescent Gates .....                                      | 15 |

## Notes from the Editor's Desk

Welcome to our bumper 16-page August issue, which kicks off what will be years of commemoration of the Great War.

The RHSV begins with a major exhibition, 'The Australian Red Cross in the Great War'. Curated by RHSV Councillor Carole Woods with assistance from RHSV Project Officer Jenny Coates, this exhibition helps us understand how Australia responded to the war and to the needs of its troops, sent across the world to fight for King and Empire.

On 8th August, at 5 for 5.30 pm, Mrs Elizabeth Chernov, continuing the Australian vice-regal tradition of support for the Red Cross, will launch the exhibition at the Drill Hall. Dr Bart Ziino of Deakin University will deliver the 2014 Augustus Wolskel lecture: 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life'.

The next day, the RHSV has organised a major conference to which all members and the public are cordially invited: 'The Other Face of War: Victorians and the Home Front'. Details for all these events are on our 'What's On' page.

This issue's cover features a highly sentimental, idealised portrait of a Red Cross nurse which appeared on the cover of a World War I song. I discuss the picture and the song on p. 3. On pp. 4-5 RHSV Cr Carole Woods presents two in-depth studies of aspects of the exhibition. One is on the Red Cross and music during the war; to complement it, we have put a striking poster for one of Melba's wartime concerts on our back cover. The other is on the involvement of Vera Deakin, daughter of Alfred Deakin, in the Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau in Cairo. Carole's fascinating studies will inspire you to come to this exhibition. Carole has managed to curate the exhibition, write two articles, and continue as Honorary Secretary of the RHSV. We are all grateful to her for her scholarship and support of the RHSV.

We don't just do the war. This issue also lists the launch of our major website of the Judge Willis Casebooks (p. 9). And we have articles on the West Melbourne Literary Institute, the Mortlake HS successful use of Facebook, and a piece about a curiosity: the gates at Loreto Mandeville Hall.

I hope we've conveyed something of the exciting things in store at the RHSV. I look forward to seeing you at our events.

Chips Sowerwine

History

**NEWS**



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## HISTORY WEEK 2014

### SEND US YOUR EVENTS!

Victoria's sixth History Week was a wonderful success thanks to the many fabulous events held during the week. We look forward to hosting another successful History Week and encouraging Victorians to travel back in time exploring our State's wide and wonderful past

This year, History Week is being held from Sunday 19th October through Sunday 26th October. We have a new mobile responsive website. Jump online (via computer, mobile phone or iPad!) and check it out at [www.historyweek.org.au](http://www.historyweek.org.au)

If you are holding a history-related event during that week, make sure you include it in the official online event calendar. You can do this by listing details of your event at [www.historyweek.org.au](http://www.historyweek.org.au).

## ANZAC CENTENARY COMMEMORATIVE WEEK

The Victorian Government invites you to take part in the following official events:

### 1. Wreath laying ceremony to mark the start of the First World War

When: 2pm-2:30pm, Monday 4 August 2014

Where: Shrine of Remembrance - Birdwood Ave, Melbourne

Registration: Not required

At 11pm on 4 August 1914, the British Empire declared war. As a result, Australia also entered the First World War, a conflict that would cost over 60,000 Australian lives and affect so many more.

### 2. Melbourne Town Hall WWI Commemoration

When: 6pm-7:30pm, Monday 4 August 2014

Where: Melbourne Town Hall - 90-120 Swanston St, Melbourne

Registration: [www.anzaccentenary.vic.gov.au/commemorativeweek](http://www.anzaccentenary.vic.gov.au/commemorativeweek)

Following the declaration of war, a meeting was held at the Melbourne Town Hall to garner support for the war and encourage men to enlist and others to support their enlistment.

### 3. First Shot Commemoration

When: 11:00am, Tuesday 5 August 2014

Where: Parade Ground, Quarantine Station,  
Point Nepean National Park

Registration: Not required

At 12:45pm on 5 August 1914, the first shot fired in anger in the British Empire in World War One was fired from Victoria's Point Nepean.

Many other official and community events will take place between 2014 and 2018 to mark the Anzac Centenary including a state-wide information program, the Shrine's Travelling Exhibition and commemoration of the departure of the first Victorian infantry by train and the first Victorian embarkation of Australian war ships.

For information visit: [www.anzaccentenary.vic.gov.au](http://www.anzaccentenary.vic.gov.au)



Follow us: [Anzac100Victoria](https://www.facebook.com/Anzac100Victoria)

[@Anzac100Vic](https://twitter.com/Anzac100Vic)



## THE AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS IN THE GREAT WAR EXHIBITION

# Mystery of 'The Red Cross Nurse'

Chips Sowerwine presents the song behind the picture on our cover, a song which is part of our next exhibition, 'The Australian Red Cross in the Great War'.

The doe-eyed nurse on our front cover appeared on the cover of a popular World War I song. The song is a catchy two-step with syncopation reminiscent of ragtime, which had been in vogue since the publication of Scott Joplin's 'Maple Leaf Rag' (1899) and 'The Entertainer' (1902). Ragtime was popularised in Australia by composer/performers such as Reginald Stoneham (known as R.A.A. Stoneham; Carlton 1879 – St Kilda 1942).

The nurse on the cover of the song and of this issue was featured in Red Cross publicity at the time. She may have been a real nurse, a model, or an idealised picture. Both Nellie Kolle and Lily Vockler had performed the song and both were featured on the cover to help sales, a common practice at a time when sheet music was the equivalent of records or iTunes, but Nellie was not pictured on the cover of this edition.

Nellie was a young British vaudeville artist who came to Australia in 1912, when she was 20. She was so successful that she settled here, performing as 'principal boy' in pantomimes. (Such roles showed off her beautiful legs!) In 1917, the year she sang 'The Red-Cross Nurse', she was a hit singing Vince Courtney's 'Back to Virginia'; her androgynous beauty has made her a gay icon.

Lily Vockler was also mentioned on the cover and she featured in a small photo. A true-blue Aussie, she had a successful vaudeville career with her husband, Ern Delavale, from 1916 through the 1920s. She featured alone on the cover of another edition of the same song, this one published in Sydney by Joe Slater—remember that name, there will be a quiz! Slater also published an edition with just the nurse picture on the cover; E.W. Cole's Melbourne edition our front cover appears to be the only edition including both images.

The mystery is the song. Who wrote it? It is certainly not by the American Harriet Beecher Stowe, famous for her 1852 novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which helped galvanise



opponents of slavery. Mrs Stowe died in 1896, long before World War I and before the founding of the Australian Red Cross in 1914. (Our exhibition celebrates its centenary.) To be sure, the American Red Cross was founded in 1881, when Mrs Stowe was alive, but by then she was suffering from dementia and, tragically, she had no time to write hymns: she was too busy writing *Uncle Tom's Cabin* all over again, forgetting that she had already written it. (To give her credit, she apparently wrote it over word for word!) While she did write a few hymns in the 1850s and 60s, she wrote the words, not the music. And they were pretty stodgy, even by Victorian standards, quite unlike this song.

What about 'John Porter', who is credited with the lyrics? Musicologists have found no trace of him. It therefore seems likely that John Porter and Harriet Beecher Stowe were pseudonyms, which were commonly used for popular songs.

So who did write this song? The same title was used for an American song, also of 1917, held in the Library of Congress, but both the music and words are quite different from our song. If we look closely at the whole of the cover of our version, we see that Cole published 'by arrangement with Joe Slater Publishing Co. Sydney', who published the other two editions.

Slater (c 1868-1926) was a Sydney song composer. He frequently used pseudonyms for his own publications. It's only a guess, and a guess which the musicologists who helped with research for this article would

not risk making, but there is good if circumstantial evidence that Joe Slater wrote the words and music and that 'The Red-Cross Nurse' is an Australian song.

Chips Sowerwine, based on research provided in large part by:

Georgina Binns, Music, Visual and Performing Arts Librarian, University of Melbourne

Jennifer Hill, Honorary Fellow, University of Melbourne Conservatorium of Music

For more information, see

Australian Variety Theatre Archive: <http://ozvta.com/> (go to practitioners, d: Delavale and Vockler, and practitioners, k: Kolle).

Clay Djubal, 'Harry Clay and Clay's Vaudeville Company', MA Thesis, U of Qld (1998).

## "The Red Cross Nurse"

Lyrics by John Porter  
By the Authors of "Uncle Tom's Cabin"  
Music by Mrs Harriet Beecher Stowe

*When we sing of our Soldiers and Sailors  
And of the gallant deeds they do;  
There's a girl that we all must remember,  
A word of praise to her is due.*

*It's not among Society and Fashion  
You'll find this heroine sublime;  
Midst the scenes of war, where the Cannons roar,  
Like an Angel she reigns divine.*

*She has left Home and Loved ones behind her  
To sail so far across the sea;  
Not a thought for the Fame or the Glory,  
See her toiling Loyally.*

*Some day when all this cruel War is over,  
And Honour to our boys is due,  
There's none will know, just how much we owe,  
To the Sister so brave and True.*

*Chorus  
She's only a Red Cross Sister,  
One of that Noble Band;  
There 'midst the angry Battle fray,  
Tending the wounded night and day,  
Just like an Angel of Mercy,  
Bravely she plays her part.  
She's only a Red Cross Sister  
But the pride of a soldier's heart.*

Sheet music *The Red Cross Nurse*, courtesy of the Red Cross Archives

# Red Cross Music Making and Fund Raising during the War

Carole Woods discusses another aspect of the Red Cross' activity, the use of music to support patriotism and raise funds for the Red Cross.

Several images in the RHSV exhibition show that music figured prominently in fund-raising campaigns by the Australian Red Cross during the Great War. Popular songs of the day included 'The Red Cross Nurse', 'Song of the Red Cross Corps' and 'The Empire Flag'. Laden with sentimentality, these songs fuelled patriotism and sugar-coated the grim realities of war.

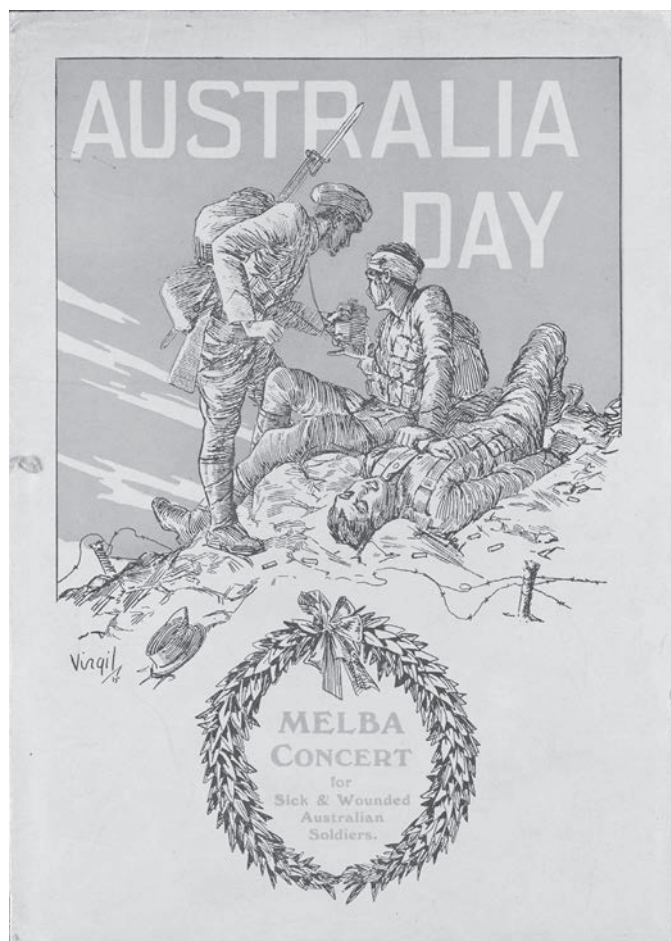
Music used for Red Cross fund raising in Victoria varied from a band in a local park rotunda to operatic arias performed in city town halls. Café Chantant (singing café) was a popular informal style of entertainment derived from France. Red Cross carnivals, pageants and auctions, all with musical accompaniment, abounded. The Camberwell Carnival of March 1916 encompassed 'performances by leading theatrical artists' such as Amy Castles. The Royal Victorian Liedertafel featured at one of St Kilda's numerous Red Cross fund raising events.

The Australian Red Cross supported many campaigns held to boost funds for allied societies. The focus of the Victorian Division's campaign in 1917 to assist the British Red Cross Society was an Old English Fair in the town hall and a massed bands performance on the Melbourne Cricket Ground. The Victorian Division also regularly supported fund-raising for the French Red Cross. The French soprano Antonia Dolores was a leading advocate for this cause. 'Torn with emotion at the desolation caused in her beloved France', she toured Australia and New Zealand, raising £17,000 from her concerts. Canterbury residents flocked to a concert in their Picture Theatre in August 1915 to raise money for both the Australian and Italian Red Cross societies.

Madame Melba was the star performer for the Red Cross in Australia and overseas. She supported the fledgling Australian Red Cross in September 1914 with a concert at the Auditorium in Melbourne. The event was awash with the imperial fervour that sustained Red Cross fund raising throughout the war. After the arrival of the vice-regal party to a venue draped in red, white and blue, the audience sang God Save the King and waved thousands of Union Jacks. Applause thundered after Melba's performance and flowers in the English national colours cascaded on to the platform. Then combined choirs sang 'The Empire Flag', 'Britons, Alert' and 'Rule Britannia'.

Melba performed in Sydney for the Polish Relief Fund, in Adelaide and other centres but constantly returned to her home Coombe Cottage in Lilydale and the city from which she drew her name. In Melbourne she alternated between the roles of grand diva and local Red Cross volunteer. As president of the Lilydale branch of Red Cross she participated in routine activities

Madame Melba was the star performer for the Red Cross in Australia and overseas.



and was photographed on the veranda of her home knitting for the society.

Melba's friendship with Lady Stanley, wife of the governor of Victoria and

president of the Victorian Division, involved her in a major fund-raising project in 1915. Theatrical and musical, Margaret Stanley privately railed against stifling protocol and provincialism. With open arms she welcomed visits from impulsive, generous, mercurial and entertaining Melba.

As the result of ghastly casualty lists from Gallipoli, Lady Stanley wrote a moving appeal to the people of Victoria to support her campaign for Sick and Wounded Australian Soldiers. The appeal raised over £350,000, an astonishing amount, and sustained several compassionate Red Cross services until 1918. The centrepiece of the appeal was Melba's Australia Day concert on 29 July (Australia Day was then celebrated in July), which raised £3000. The programme bore a sombre cover depicting wounded soldiers. Melba performed a series of operatic roles such as Violetta in *La Traviata* with 'impeccable artistry' and further endeared herself to the audience with the encores 'Annie Laurie' and 'Comin' Thro' the Rye'.

The musical underscoring of Red Cross fund raising is depicted in the exhibition through evocative programme covers drawn from the Theatre Programme Collection of the State Library of Victoria.

Other sources include:

Margaret Stanley Papers, MS 10668, State Library of Victoria

*Argus*, 28 April, 1915, p. 8 and 30 July 1915, p.7 for Melba's concerts

*Australasian*, 19 September 1914, p.40 for Melba's concert on 10 September 1914

# Vera Deakin and the Red Cross Enquiry Bureau

In this article, RHSV Councillor Carole Woods, an expert on the Deakin family, tells us about Vera Deakin's role in the Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau in Cairo, 1915-1919. This seems to me an intriguing foretaste of the new paths women would begin to take after the war. Many aspects of this bureau and of Vera Deakin are featured in our exhibition.

**I**mage and text in the RHSV exhibition highlight the work of Vera Deakin and her colleagues in developing the Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau in Cairo and London. The bureau assisted many thousands of distressed soldiers' relatives in Australia, and was the forerunner of Australian Red Cross tracing services.

Vera Deakin, born in 1891, grew up in South Yarra with interludes at Point Lonsdale. Service to country and empire were inculcated in her from childhood by her father Alfred, thrice prime minister of Australia, and her mother Pattie, a community welfare leader.

Strong-willed and adventurous, Vera longed to enlist with the young men of her neighbourhood when war broke out but the Australian government, apart from employing nurses, rejected the notion of paid women's auxiliary defence services. The fledgling Australian Red Cross offered some alternatives, albeit in a volunteer capacity. Initially Vera sorted consignments of clothing on rows of trestle tables in the former ball-room at Federal Government House, which is pictured in the exhibition.

In 1915 Vera received assurance of a position in Cairo from her relative Norman Brookes, former Wimbledon tennis champion, who was now one of the first two Red Cross Commissioners in Egypt. Despite strong opposition from her father, Vera sailed to Cairo with her friend Winifred Johnson. A member of the Syme family of the *Age* newspaper fame, Winifred did not want to languish at home with her widowed mother while three of her four brothers enlisted.



Winifred Johnson, date unknown.

Vera and Winifred opened the Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau in Cairo on 21 October 1915. After thwarting an attempt by the Red Cross to replace her with a man, Vera remained honorary secretary until 1919 and was awarded the OBE for outstanding humanitarian service. The Australian bureau co-operated closely with the British Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau and similarly had the threefold task of obtaining

information about the missing, ascertaining details about the death and burial of those killed or who had died from wounds, and keeping relatives informed about sick and wounded soldiers in hospitals.

The Australian bureau attached lists of missing men, obtained from Australian Defence records, to the monthly British Enquiry List so as to

ensure wide circulation. Searchers then fanned out to camps and hospitals, seeking information. Reports received were sometimes contradictory and difficult to secure if the man had disappeared in the turmoil of a battle that inflicted huge casualties. Most of the missing were found to have died but relatives craved details. The greatest joy for a Red Cross searcher was to hear a man indignantly declare from a hospital bed: 'I am not missing. Who says I am?'

Most enquiries to the Australian bureau were channelled through Information Bureaux financed and managed by the legal profession in each state. The solicitor J. Beacham Kiddle, father of historian Margaret Kiddle, was the dedicated honorary secretary of the Information Bureau in Melbourne.

Vera Deakin moved the Australian Enquiry Bureau to London in 1916 and co-ordinated her work with that of Mary Chomley, head of the new Red Cross prisoners of war department. Vera gained an invaluable assistant when Lilian Whybrow (later Scantlebury) from Melbourne joined her mostly Australian staff of about thirty. The Enquiry Bureau became widely known in the AIF as the fount of knowledge on missing and wounded soldiers and also, owing to the kind assistance of staff, as a home away from home.

The great legacy of the Australian Enquiry Bureau is the archive of 32,000 files on the website of the Australian War Memorial: these eyewitness accounts reveal the sad fate of individual soldiers and attest to the endless suffering caused by war.

The protagonists of the Enquiry Bureau story may all be seen at the RHSV gallery. Already they are welcoming descendants to the exhibition such as Mrs Judith Harley, daughter of Vera Deakin.

Carole Woods



Vera Deakin in 1918. Courtesy of Australian War Memorial.

# Making an impact with Facebook

Craige Proctor, of the Mortlake and District Historical Society, has been active in developing Facebook as a tool for the Society. Craige has spoken at HVSG Seminars and many of our members have become interested in this new possibility. We thought all members would like to know more.

The Mortlake and District Historical Society created its Facebook page in 2011. Since last March, we've been exploring new ways to use it. It has proved much more engaging, user-friendly and profile enhancing than a website. Indeed, it's been so successful that we have ceased to maintain our website and plan to rely on Facebook. We currently have around 700 'Likes' and our page 'reaches' several thousand people weekly.

People love photos from our archive: historic streetscapes, properties, people, churches and events. Football and other sporting photos, Deb Ball photos, and school photos are also popular. So are recent photos, like those of Mortlake's Buskers' Festival from the 1990s, which strike a chord even if the images aren't 'old'. Our 'Then and Now' series juxtaposes a scene in an old photo with the same scene today, which has the added advantage of encouraging us to photograph local sites today.

Posting photos helps build our photographic archive, as people respond to postings by sending us photos we don't hold. And people also respond with recollections, which sometimes include useful information and are always fascinating.

Potted biographies are also popular, such as those of the district's women. So are short quizzes about the district. Occasionally a 'did you know....?' item is posted, in which a little-known fact is presented.

The Facebook page is a cost-effective forum for promoting special events such as our Open Days, Cemetery Tours, Town Tours, and Antiques Fair. We convert a flyer or poster to a jpg image and upload it. MDHS is fortunate to have the support of the journalist at the *Mortlake Dispatch*, who often produces items with a heritage focus. These published items are then scanned and posted to the Facebook page. This has the added benefit of keeping those who no longer live locally – and who don't read the local newspaper – informed about aspects of the district's history.

MDHS's increased membership is due largely to our Facebook profile. Past membership peaked at around 95 members. Now we have 130 and more young people are joining. Our youngest is seventeen and a significant number of



## Readers Respond to Mortlake Facebook Page

*What a great site. Thanks. My family were Thompsons from East Framlingham.*

*This page is a highlight in an otherwise fast-paced world.*

*How exciting that you have done this. My Aunt went to school in the village.*

"Our Facebook page has been so successful that we have ceased to maintain our website and plan to rely on Facebook. We currently have around 700 'Likes' and our page 'reaches' several thousand people weekly."

new members are in their forties. While these younger members cannot be said to be active participants in the running of our group, they nevertheless provide us with additional support and we look to their taking leadership roles in the future.

The majority of our followers are women in their fifties and sixties, but,

overall, followers range in age from their twenties to their eighties; indeed, we have a considerable following among octogenarians. We have people whose grandparents once lived in the area following us internationally. A significant number of followers have never been to Mortlake and some have now made the trip—usually from interstate—to see where their forebears once lived. This has obviously had financial benefit to the local community.

The residents of Abbeyfield Aged Care in Mortlake are particular fans. Once a week the Lifestyle Coordinator takes them through our postings using a large screen, not a computer. They induce laughter and nostalgia, which the coordinator feels has proven to be a great asset in engaging residents. Quite a few eagerly await our latest postings and get a thrill out of seeing themselves many decades ago or perhaps their friends or parents or perhaps a deceased spouse.

There are some issues. Not everyone is *au fait* with Facebook (nor with other social media). Thus it becomes the responsibility of the Facebook page administrators within MDHS to educate members about how it functions, how we use it and the benefits we derive from having this form of online profile.

MDHS has three Facebook page Administrators. They are essential for monitoring postings in the event that a potentially insensitive comment or unacceptable language is used. Such postings are hidden from public view almost as soon as they appear – assuming the principal Administrator is vigilant. Having a set of guidelines or policies is therefore highly desirable. Only one person has been banned from accessing and thus being able to post comments on our page.

The benefits of a Facebook profile outweigh any limitations. During the past year we have received many thousands of comments and postings by our followers, overwhelmingly positive. To date not one negative comment has been posted.

Facebook is a tool, a resource, to enhance what Historical Societies can do. It does not replace our activity. Using Facebook has linked us to the community and raised our profile. Other historical societies should consider using Facebook.



# What makes an RHSV Councillor?

## A Portrait of Lenore Frost

Beginning our series to help members understand the workings of the RHSV, the last issue of *History News* featured a piece on the Publications Committee. Here is the first portrait of a councillor. I interviewed Lenore over coffee one day when we were both at the RHSV.

Lenore had then, as she does now, a quick insight, a penetrating gaze, and an impatience for action.

Last month the RHSV conferred on her an RHSV Fellowship, an honour reserved for those who make an outstanding contribution to the RHSV over a long period.

Lenore got into family history with a question: 'Why', she asked herself, 'am I living in Melbourne and not in Edmonton?' She had the answer before the question! As early as fourth-form history, she was intrigued by the ways that people came to Australia: convicts, the gold rush, chain migration.

After studying history at La Trobe, Lenore worked at the Australian Bureau of Statistics in their publications section. She remembers indexing the 1977 yearbook. She undertook library studies while raising two children.

She continued to think about how people came to Australia, how her family came to Australia. That question led her to local history. Living in Essendon, she joined the Essendon Historical Society, of which she was later President. The closure of some smaller historical societies attracted Lenore's attention. Looking for ways for the RHSV to support societies more effectively, Lenore began discussions with Liz Rushen, then RHSV Executive Officer, and with Joan Hunt, President of the State Committee of Affiliated Societies,

The RHSV had set up regional groups of historical societies back in the 1960s. These sent delegates to the State Committee. Representatives from the State Committee served on Council. However, over the years, other types of regional groups had been established which were not covered by State Committee. Some of the original regional groups were no longer meeting. Many societies were not members of any regional group. Distribution of information to societies had thus become very patchy.

Lenore had then, as she does now, a quick insight, a penetrating gaze, and an impatience for action.

After lengthy discussions, the RHSV Council decided to go for a simpler structure and turned the State Committee into the History Victoria Support Group (HVSF), whose aim was and is to provide practical support for local historical societies directly to societies rather than indirectly through delegates. Joan was the first Convenor. Lenore was Convenor of the HVSF from 2009 through 2013. In this position, she developed supports to local historical societies across Victoria through constant monitoring of the social media 'My Connected Community' (mc2) and later through RHSV Forums, which the HVSF is continuing energetically.

Lenore has worked tirelessly on the Council of the RHSV and is now running the annual book sale. Last month the RHSV conferred on her an RHSV Fellowship, an honour reserved for those who make an outstanding contribution to the RHSV over a long period.

When Lenore isn't organising things at the Drill Hall, she pursues her abiding interest in Essendon social history. Among her publications are *Bandsman Vosti's Diaries: war and peace in Essendon 1917-1920* (2012), *Murder and Misfortune on the Mount Alexander Road* (1995), *Dating family photos 1850-1920* (1991), *Essendon and the Boer War: with letters from the Veldt, 1899-1902* (2002). Her current project is to discover how locals coped when the Melbourne and Essendon Railway Company Railway Company went broke in 1864 and trains stopped for years! Lenore is also developing an online database of Essendon and Flemington volunteers in the Great War.

Chips Sowerwine

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The most important issue I wish to share with members this month is the ongoing saga of the future of the Drill Hall, which has been the RHSV's home for fourteen years; see 'Time To Rally For The Drill Hall!' to the right. I urge you to read and act.

In this newsletter, let me focus on the History Victoria Support Group (HVSG) and the Commonwealth's draft Australian Heritage Strategy (AHS).

Under its new Convenor, George Fernando, the HVSG has held three very successful seminars for member societies, in Melbourne, Warrnambool and St Arnaud; another is to be held at Sale on 26 July. About fifty people attended each of the first three. They responded enthusiastically to excellent speakers on two main themes: digital technologies and social media in the work of societies; and how to increase and maintain membership.

### Some reactions to recent HVSG Seminars

*I have come away with some great ideas from each one and we are already looking at introducing a couple of them.*

*I thought yesterday was a great seminar with lots of discussion and issues raised by those there.*

*You really have struck a chord with the societies.*

Earlier this year the Commonwealth distributed a draft of its Australian Heritage Strategy. The Federation of Australian Historical Societies (FAHS) responded, welcoming this initiative and the draft's many positive proposals, but arguing that it would benefit from further attention and development.

The draft paper addresses only matters that are the responsibility of the Commonwealth under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, and not the wider range of heritage issues that are the responsibility of state and local government and which are critical in Australian heritage regimes. We of FAHS recommended the development of a truly 'National Heritage Strategy' that would set out a coherent strategy for heritage across the nation at all levels of government.

The draft refers to the need for 'greater heritage policy and alignment across all levels of government', and identifies the 'complexity, confusion and inconsistency' of the various laws, regulations and regimes across the country. However, the only 'strategy' suggested for dealing with this failing is the Commonwealth's 'one stop shop' policy, which hands responsibility for administering Commonwealth responsibilities to the states. This has been widely questioned and challenged across the community. Are state regimes suited to carry out such responsibilities? Does the Commonwealth have the staff and resources for appropriate monitoring of the states? It is critical that Commonwealth Ministers resist political and commercial pressures from states that lobby to have heritage values set aside.

FAHS argued that the most important thing the Australian government should be doing to offer leadership in heritage is to work with state and local government to ensure the development of coherent regimes, national standards and best practice guidelines. The Commonwealth has largely withdrawn from the leadership role it played for two decades from the mid-1970s. This needs to be reversed before it causes irreparable damage to our heritage.

Don Garden  
President



# TIME TO RALLY FOR THE DRILL HALL!!



As the RHSV headquarters, the Drill Hall on Flagstaff Gardens is the major centre for local and community history and heritage in Victoria, housing the Society's offices and its many thousands of books, images and historical records. The Drill Hall is a heritage registered 1938 building recognised for its 'colonial revival, art deco, classical and Moderne elements'.

As Melbourne's main history centre, the Drill Hall services Victoria's 340 community history and heritage societies and their 15,000 members, and is the venue for regular lectures and exhibitions. It also houses a number of other history and performing arts groups and the National Council of Women of Victoria.

## It is a building for all Victorians!

The RHSV has been a tenant of the government in the Drill Hall for fourteen years, but for the last four years we have been unable to gain security of tenure. Our attempts to negotiate with the current government have received little response.

Finally, we have been granted another year's lease at the Drill Hall, until 30 June 2015. However, we have still had no specific response to a request we made last February for a twenty-one year lease. Worse, the letter informing us of the one year lease implies that the government will be seeking a 'new owner'.

As the election approaches, the RHSV will ask each of the main parties for its position on history and heritage in Victoria and on the future of the Drill Hall. We are asking for assistance to stop the proposed sale of the Drill Hall and to grant the RHSV a 21-year lease to ensure that this historic icon remains a building for all Victorians! We will keep you informed of the result.

To assist us with our campaign, we ask members and affiliated societies to rally for us: speak and/or write to your local MP and other candidates. Explain the importance of the RHSV for Victoria's history and heritage and the role of the Drill Hall in our providing these services. Request his or her assistance in shaping their party's stance on the Drill Hall.

To find your MP see <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/members/>

Friday 8 August & Saturday 9 August

## Exhibition Opening & Conference Weekend

### FRIDAY 8 AUGUST – EXHIBITION OPENING & LECTURE

#### The Australian Red Cross in the Great War

**Time:** 5.00pm

All members are invited to the official launch of the exhibition.

An exhibition by the Royal Historical Society of Victoria

To be opened by Mrs Elizabeth Chernov, continuing the Australian vice-regal tradition of support for the Red Cross.

Special guest Mr Adam Bandt MP, Federal Member for Melbourne

To be followed at 6.15 by the lecture:

#### At Home With The War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life

To be delivered by Dr Bart Ziino.

RSVP: Monday 28 July by (ph) 9326 9288 or [office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au)

There is no charge to attend the opening but a charge of \$20.00 for members & \$30.00 for non-members applies to attend the lecture.

### SATURDAY 9 AUGUST: CONFERENCE

#### The Other Face of War: Victorians and the Home Front

**Time:** 9.00am – 5.00pm

A full day conference to be opened by the Hon Ted Baillieu MLA, featuring twelve academic and public historians will offer intriguing new research perspectives on the Victorian home front.

Lectures include: *Doing it Tough: Life on the Rural Home Front*; *Class or Nation? Worker Loyalties in Melbourne during the Great War*; *Soul of the Battalion*; *the role of Brass Bands during the Great War*

For a full Conference Program go to:

<http://historyvictoria.org.au/rhsv-conference-2014>

(ph) 93269288 email [office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au)

Members \$60. Non-Members \$90. Students \$30

### MONDAY 25 AUGUST – WALKING TOURS

Join the RHSV as it takes part in the Melbourne Day Committee's **The Founding of Melbourne** Celebrations:

#### Walking tours of the Flagstaff Gardens

**Times:** 10 am & 1 pm. Please meet at the RHSV.

Expert guides will lead a tour through the Flagstaff Gardens – the historic heart of Melbourne. The tour will climb to the highest point on Flagstaff Hill to consider its place in Melbourne's topography and pre-European history as well as its early role as a burial ground, flagstaff signalling station, and magnetic and meteorological observatory.

Walking tour will take 1½ hours approx.

Bookings advisable: 9326 9288 No charge

### FRIDAY 29 AUGUST – TALK

The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council & RHSV present

#### "Mapping Melbourne"

**Time:** 1.00– 2.15 pm.

What images come into your mind's eye when we talk about Melbourne? What is your personal cultural map of Melbourne, how did you compose that map and how has it changed over time? In this forum, a number of prominent speakers will share their ways of understanding Melbourne across time and space, through their explorations of land, built environment, art and stories.

A conversation with Reuben Berg, Director Indigenous Architecture and Design Victoria; Genevieve Grieves, film maker & media artist and recently lead curator of the First Peoples exhibition Bunjilka Aboriginal Cultural Centre Melbourne Museum; and Richard Broome Emeritus Professor of History, La Trobe University, FAHA and Vice President RHSV.

For a full range of Melbourne Day events on Saturday 30 August go to <http://melbourneday.com.au/events.html>

### THURSDAY 28 AUGUST – TALK

Royal Society of Victoria

#### Matthew Flinders – The Man behind the Map

Please note venue: 8 La Trobe Street – (corner Exhibition & La Trobe Streets)

To honour the 200th anniversary of his death, Dr Gillian Dooley will look to primary sources to build a portrait of Matthew Flinders.

**Time:** 7pm Cost: Free

Pre-dinner light meal, 6.15pm – \$20.

RSVP: 9663 5259 or [rsv@sciencevictoria.org.au](mailto:rsv@sciencevictoria.org.au)

More information [www.royalsocietyvictoria.org.au](http://www.royalsocietyvictoria.org.au)

### TUESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER – LAUNCH

#### Official launch of Judge Walpole Willis' Port Phillip Casebooks on the Web (An invaluable record of early Port Phillip)

**Launched by:**

The Honourable Chief Justice Marilyn Warren

**And featuring**

**His Honour Paul R Mullaly QC:**

*My Long Journey with Judge Willis*

**Janine Rizzetti (La Trobe University):**

*Judge Willis' Transnational Career*

**Where:** At the RHSV, 239 A'Beckett St. Melbourne

**When:** Tuesday 16 September 2014,  
5.45 for 6.15pm

**Entry:** Free for RHSV members \$30 for non-members

Refreshments included

RSVP: 12 September

[office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au) 9326 9288

## AROUND THE SOCIETIES

This column is compiled by Helen Boak and Lenore Frost on behalf of the History Victoria Support Group using information provided by societies, either by email or contained in their newsletters. For the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014 issue, please send forthcoming events to office@historyvictoria.org.au by 10 September.

**ANDREW ROSS MUSEUM:** Take a visit to the museum at Kangaroo Ground, then take the opportunity to see magnificent views of the city of Melbourne from the tower. The museum is open every Thursday 10 am to 12 noon and the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month 2pm to 4pm. Enquiries: www.andrewrossmuseum.org.au.

**ANGLESEA:** The Victorian Collection website is a central portal to the cultural treasures held by museums and galleries across Victoria. We need volunteers to assist with cataloguing the contents of our museum. This involves the completion of a worksheet for each item and tagging/labelling of the item. Email: susanclarke3230@hotmail.com or phone 0438 070 560.

**AUSTRALIAN GARDEN:** On Saturday 30 August join a self-drive visit to Smith's Nursery, Riddell's Creek, 721 Kilmore Road. Listed by Heritage Victoria and of historical and archaeological significance, it is one of Victoria's earliest plant nurseries. Arrive by 10.30 am and BYO picnic lunch or purchase lunch locally. Enquiries: chris.long@internode.on.net.

**BALLARAT:** An unusual item has been presented to the society: a cast iron branding tool used by Foorde's Ballarat bacon factory. The brander is 600 mm in length and very heavy. It, along with other interesting items can be viewed as part of our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary exhibition at the Gold Museum. Contact: 5344 8294 or ballarathistoricalsociety@gmail.com.

**BALWYN:** David Jellie will speak on "The History of VicRoads" on Thursday 14 August. On Thursday 14 September Robin Grow, President of the Art Deco and Moderne Society, will talk on "Dairies of Boroondara". Meetings are held at the Balwyn Library, 336 Whitehorse Road, Balwyn, starting at 8 pm. Enquiries: balwynhistory@gmail.com.

**BENALLA:** The Canberra history touring exhibition "A Capital Collection" includes items on loan from our society. It visits Williamstown in August 2014. Our contribution includes ladies' apparel used for the 1927 opening of Parliament, the 1963 'opening' of lake Burley Griffin and for the Bicentennial Celebrations and Queens visit in 1988. http://home.vicnet.net.au/~benmus.

**BENDIGO:** A local builder with a thought for history has saved the old newspapers

from under the linoleum in an old home and donated them to our society. Bendigo newspapers are in trove digitised only up to 1918 so we were delighted to find some Observer pages from 1949 and 1950. www.bendigohistory.com.

**BOOLARA:** The fence has been erected by the members in front of the museum, and looks wonderful. The July newsletter includes two football club photos: Boolarra, circa 1905 and Mirboo, pre 1914. The museum is open on the first Sunday of each month from 2-4 pm, or by appointment on 5169 6210.

**BOROONDARA (KEW) CEMETERY:** Our next walk will be titled "Good Sport" and will take place on Sunday 7 September at the cemetery. Enquiries: info@fobkc.org or 9817 3717.

**BRIGHTON:** The Winter issue of the *Journal* commemorates the centenary of St Leonard's College, which began with seven students in 1914. Its first class was taught by Rebecca Cullen on the stage of the St Leonard's Church Hall in Wolseley Grove, Brighton Beach. Enquiries: brightonhs@gmail.com or phone 9553 8650.

**BRIGHTON CEMETORIANS:** The Annual General Meeting, to be held at the cemetery on Sunday 10 August at 2pm, will feature guest speaker Jane Carolan, the author of *Visionary Lives – 500 biographies from the Brighton Cemetery*. Enquiries: info@brightoncemetorians.org.

**BRUNSWICK:** An open invitation to a presentation of "Edwardian Emails during WW1", images and story by Richard Breckon, Team leader Philatelic Archives of Australia Post. The venue is Bridie O'Reilly's Irish Pub on Saturday 6 September from 1.30 to 4.00 pm. Meals and drinks from noon at pub prices. Enquiries: 9387 1194.

**CAMBERWELL:** On September 23 Anne Barton will present "Edmund Barton: the one man for the job". Anne has researched Edmund Barton, a major figure in the founding of Australia; his role in the Federation movement, his time as Australia's first Prime Minister and, from 1903, as a justice of Australia's newly formed High Court. enquiries@chs.org.au.

**CASTLEMAINE:** In 2013 the Scouts celebrated 100 years in Castlemaine. We acknowledged their contribution and history in our May 2014 *Newsletter*. Details from the archives include photos, visits by dignitaries, camps in and around the district and a timeline of scouting events through the years. Enquiries: chsi@castlemainehistoricalsociety.com.

**CHELSEA:** "The Rotary Building", donated by the Chelsea Rotary Club, is a new feature at the Courthouse Museum, replacing the "back shed" for storage and

workspace for the society. The next step is to sort, review and store the society's items. Enquiries: chelseahistorical@bigpond.com or phone 9772 2875.

**COLAC:** The President's report published in the June newsletter raised the matter of the future of the society and the Colac History Centre, and suggested that amalgamation with the co-occupants, the Colac Family History Group ought to be considered in view of the duplication of records, research, and cross-over of membership. Enquiries: flowerfield140@bigpond.com or phone 5234 6351.

**EAST GIPPSLAND:** The East Gippsland Family History Group and the East Gippsland Historical Society produces a combined journal called *The Black Sheep*. In the May 2014 issue they produced good articles about people and places and warn about accepting other peoples' research at face value, in particular the submitted data to genealogical websites.

**EAST MELBOURNE:** Do you know the Fairies' Tree in The Fitzroy Gardens? Ola Cohn was the sculptor and a pioneer modernist sculptor in Australia. Dr Barbara Lemon has enhanced Cohn's original autobiographical manuscript and will give insight and new information on this remarkable woman on Wednesday 20 August at 8.00 pm. Details: 9416 0445.

**ELTHAM:** The July *Newsletter* describes the process in naming a place to commemorate the former market gardens that were once common along the waterways of Eltham from the 1860s. "Fabbro Fields" recognises the contribution of the Fabbro family, which farmed along the Diamond Creek from the 1930s. Enquiries: edhs1@bigpond.com.

**GEELONG:** Congratulations to the Geelong society. This year they celebrate 70 years of promoting local history. Meetings are now at St Georges Church Hall, Latrobe Terrace on the first Wednesday of the month at 8pm. Visit on September 3 to hear Brian Latter talk on "The Wreck of the Earl of Charlemont off Barwon Heads Bluff". Enquiries: 5278 3530.

**KEILOR:** After a successful project and exhibition earlier this year *Keilor Shire Honour Roll 1914 – 1919* a booklet covering the Roll of Honour, Who were the Men and the Women, Enlistments, Training, Embarkation, Campaigns and Gallipoli, is available from the Society for \$3 including postage. PO Box 263, Keilor 3036.

**KEW:** "Kew from Above" is the current exhibition at the Kew Court House, featuring aerial photographs of Kew from the Airspy Collection at the State Library, as well as photographs from their own collection. The Exhibition runs until 31 October. On Wednesday 13 August Ron

Killeen will speak on the "Outer Circle Railway".

**KILMORE:** Another society celebrating a milestone – 50 years, congratulations! Look out for celebrations in October combining with Heritage Month and History Week. There will be a street walk and a cemetery tour. Keep these in mind for a visit to Kilmore. Pick up a copy of *Past & Present* at the Kilmore Bookstore. Email: [kilmorehistory@yahoo.com.au](mailto:kilmorehistory@yahoo.com.au).

**KORUMBURRA:** To keep in touch and relevant to our local community we hosted the students from St. Joseph's Primary School for a very successful "Then and Now" themed day. Members were pleased to be able to display historical photos and answer the many questions that arose. Enquiries: 5657 2267.

**LINTON:** Support for country towns by city folk helps to keep them viable. The next open day of the Linton Society will be on Sunday 14 September. Take a drive to Linton to view their collection and visit the excellent antiques shop, a craft shop and a collectables shop. [enquiries@lintonhistory.org.au](mailto:enquiries@lintonhistory.org.au).

**LIGHT RAILWAYS:** For some fascinating history of Light Rail in Victoria and its associated industries go to the website [www.lrrsa.org.au](http://www.lrrsa.org.au). You will find also books available on the subject including *Victorian Tramways maps, The Narrow Gauge - Crowes, Gembrook, Whitfield, Walhalla and The Phoenix Foundry Locomotive Builder of Ballarat*.

**MALDON:** In conjunction with La Trobe University we are looking for descendants from Baringhup district who bought farmland before 1890. The project aims at widening knowledge of the farmers' lives and their farms. Information will be stored at the Maldon Museum & Archives Association. To assist contact: 5443 5856 or 5475 2973.

**MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM LIBRARY:** On Monday 1 September at 2.30 pm historian Ken James will reveal remarkable information in his book on the West Melbourne Literary Institute. The book will be launched at 188 Collins Street by Associate Professor Don Garden, RVHS President, FFAHS, FRHSV. Light refreshments provided. Please RSVP for catering purposes to [library@melbourneathenaeum.org.au](mailto:library@melbourneathenaeum.org.au) or 9650 3100 by 25 August.

**NEWSTEAD:** The June newsletter reports the donation of eight small black and white photos showing the building of the Cairn Curran and Tullaroop reservoirs. An earlier request for identification of the pupils of a Strangways school photo brought forth two people who were able to provide names for all. Enquiries: [a.dawn@bigpond.com](mailto:a.dawn@bigpond.com) or phone 5476 2006.

**PYRAMID HILL:** The book *Remember, Respect, Rejoice Our Soldiers we Salute you 1914-1919*, was launched at a gathering of about 200 people. Dr Stone laid a wreath under the WW1 Honour Board. Dr Stone said that this is a book that needs to be read in every local home and school. Contact: [pyhhist@bigpond.com](mailto:pyhhist@bigpond.com).

**RICHMOND AND BURNLEY:** Can you add to our list of men born, lived, worked or had an involvement with our area? On Sunday 17 August the WW1 project "Answering the Call" will be launched at the Richmond Library. Guest Speaker: David Howell Development Officer, Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne "Heroes before Gallipoli". Phone: 9428 6231 e-mail: [richmondhs@optusnet.com.au](mailto:richmondhs@optusnet.com.au).

**STAWELL:** RHSV member Greg Cameron has compiled a book: *History of Gold Mines in Stawell*. It contains 300 photographs, paintings, diagrams and maps depicting how Stawell looked in the early years. For further information email: [stawhist@bigpond.com](mailto:stawhist@bigpond.com).

**ST KILDA CEMETERY:** On Sunday 17 August at 2 pm we are repeating our popular "Artists' Tour", featuring Australian War Artists from both the First and Second World wars, including James Peter Quinn, engaged as an official war artist for the AIF in France, and Sybil Craig, commissioned during WW1. Bookings: 9531 6832 or [www.foskc.org](http://www.foskc.org).

**TRAFALGAR:** Trafalgar newspapers from 1904 to 1924 are now available on Trove. Congratulations on a successful project. The next big undertaking is to catalogue and mount the photographic collection on acid free card. Exciting news: the new Holden Museum in the Trafalgar Milk Factory will open on Saturday 18 October. Contact: [www.traralgonhistory.asn.au](http://www.traralgonhistory.asn.au).

**WANGARATTA:** Our society is custodian of a collection of glass plate negatives taken by Andrew Vine, who was a photographer in Wangaratta and

district from 1898 to 1940. Most of the negatives have been scanned and can be viewed on computer by appointment at the museum. Contact: [www.wanghistsoc.org.au/contact\\_us.php](http://www.wanghistsoc.org.au/contact_us.php).

**WHITEHORSE:** Wanted – a slouch hat! In preparation for a display commemorating the centenary of Gallipoli, we are trying to find a digger's slouch hat for our collection – preferably one connected to the Whitehorse area. Any other military memorabilia would be gratefully received. Contact: 9873 4946 or email: [whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com](mailto:whitehorsehistory@hotmail.com).

**WHITTLESEA:** An 1888 church built in South Yan Yean and first used as a Wesleyan Methodist Church, then a Sunday school, was finally sold at auction in Mernda. It was moved to Young's farm where it functioned as a shearing shed for many years. You can still visit this historic building in Yarrambat Park. Enquiries: [www.whittleseahistoricalociety.org.au](http://www.whittleseahistoricalociety.org.au).

**YACKANDANDAH:** At the recent Indigo Shire Heritage Awards in the Open Heritage Section we received recognition for the Museum's extensions to the storage facility. In The Junior Section Brendan Hogan received the award for films made by his groups of Yackandandah Primary School children, which are played in the Museum. Contact: [museum@yackandandah.com](mailto:museum@yackandandah.com).



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# Recovering the West Melbourne Literary Institute, 1864-1909

In this article, Ken James tells how he managed to write the history of the Institute despite a lack of original sources.

Ken's book – *West Melbourne Literary Institute: A History* – will be launched by RHSV President Don Garden on 1st September, 2.30 pm, at the Athenaeum Library, 188 Collins Street, Melbourne.

If you would like to attend, RSVP to:

library@melbourneathenaeum.org.au or

telephone 03 9650 3100 by

Monday 25 August 2014.

Located on the corner of William and Little Lonsdale Streets, The West Melbourne Literary Institute opened in 1864 and became a major institution in the civic life of Melbourne.

This book began when I commenced work with Pam Baragwanath on a second edition of her book, *If The Walls Could Speak: A Social History of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria* (see *History News*, 1st June 2014). Pam had found hints about the existence of the City of Melbourne's unknown mechanics' institute – the known one is the Melbourne Athenaeum, founded in 1839 as the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution – but its story had eluded her.

That story remained elusive. I was unable to find original records despite an intensive search. I hope that the launch of the book may bring to light surviving records, perhaps held by descendants of office bearers. I was forced to rely heavily on the *Argus*, which proved a treasure trove, at least for the first ten years. After this, it has fewer items, though I did find the names of secretaries and caretakers as well as a range of activities and uses.

The 'West Melbourne Literary Institute, Circulating Library and Reading Rooms' was listed in the Sands and McDougall Melbourne directory for many years. Located on the corner of William and Little Lonsdale Streets, it opened in 1864 and became a major institution in the civic life of Melbourne. I was able to track down its founders, supporters, early committee members and 20th century trustees, among them many Victorian and Melbourne politicians, including seven Lord Mayors

as well as prominent businessmen. The membership had close links with the West Melbourne Bowls Club. The Institute hosted company and union meetings as well as public meetings. I was able to find references to a number of activities based there, including City of Melbourne electoral campaigns, a Swedish Church and a Temperance Lodge. One of the purposes of mechanics' institutes was to inform and educate its members and members of the public and one of the ways this was achieved at the West Melbourne Literary Institute was through regular lectures. Speakers at West Melbourne ranged from leading city churchmen to state politicians, historians and others.

The Institute operated until the 1890s. In 1900, part of its land was given to the Queen Victoria Hospital, which established a pharmacy and outpatients section on the site. In 1909, the Government gave the entire site to the hospital and the building was turned into nurses' quarters.

The Institute appears to have ceased functioning before then, possibly as early as 1900. Perhaps its reduced functions led to the transfer of the land. The Trustees were given a new site on the corner of William and Rosslyn Streets, West Melbourne, but they were unable to raise the money for a new building. The Institute finally wound up in 1934. The trustees distributed £1,000 to the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital, £100

each to the Melbourne Hospital, the Women's Hospital, the Children's Hospital, and the St Paul's Training Home for Boys, and £50 to the Travellers' Aid Society. In 1934, the original building was demolished and replaced by the Mabel Brooks Wing of the Queen Victoria Hospital, which housed a new Outpatients Department and nurses' home. Today the site is part of the County Court of Victoria complex located at 250 William Street.

Ken James



## Books Received:

*Authors, publishers and Historical Societies are invited to contribute books to the RSHV for the library and for consideration for inclusion in this column.*

**Night Games, Sex, Power and Sport**

Anna Krien, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2013, pp. 270. ISBN 9781863956017.

Deservedly one of the shortlisted book for this year's Stella Prize, this is a serious examination of aspects of footy culture told in an analytical narrative that focuses on the rape trial of an unnamed young footballer in Melbourne in 2011 that the author sets in a wide-ranging discussion of the ways in which the law handles issues of power and consent in relation to sex; the grey areas that can result; and the dark side of footy culture on a global scale. In many ways her writing can be likened to Helen Garner's *The First Stone* in terms of its close observations of the trial, its participants and commentators. An important work that should be widely read.

**Australian Settler Colonialism and the Cummeragunja Aboriginal Station, Redrawing Boundaries**

Fiona Davis, Sussex Academic Press, Eastbourne, 2014, pp. 224, \$89-95. ISBN 9781845196080.

Cummeragunja is on the Murray in New South Wales but close to Echuca and very close to Barmah across the river. It operated as a government station from 1888 until the 1960s when its Aboriginal residents took over management. The book is a case study of the complex interactions between Aboriginal people and settlers in times of change in government policies, missionary endeavours and economic outcomes. The study draws on oral material from residents with Cummeragunja and Barmah connections. It materially adds to our understandings of settler colonial history. The extent to which the story follows some of the patterns of other stations like Coranderrk is significant and so are the differences in the experience. While colonial society set limits, Aboriginal people also had some agency.

**Bearbrass, Imagining Early Melbourne**

Robyn Annear, Black Inc. Melbourne, 2014, 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1995, pp. xiii + 255. ISBN 9781863956550.

**A City Lost & Found, Whelan the Wrecker's Melbourne**

Robyn Annear, Black. Inc., Melbourne, 2014, 1<sup>st</sup> published 2005, pp. xii + 303. ISBN 9781863956505.

**1835, The Founding of Melbourne & the Conquest of Australia**

James Boyce, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2013, 1<sup>st</sup> published 2011, pp. xv + 256. ISBN 9781863956000.

Many very worthwhile history books go out of print and are not republished. These three imprints of recent classics go against that trend and the publisher deserves to be commended for keeping these popular, well-written and well-researched texts in active circulation. Hopefully these three are the forerunners of more. All three works have been extensively and favourably reviewed. They are republished without change except that *Bearbrass* now has an index.

**Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust, Melbourne's Foremost Municipal Tramway**

Ian A Brady, Transit Australia Publishing, Sydney, 2011, pp. 96 \$59-95. ISBN 9780909459239.

Trams not only have an iconic place in Melbourne's history but they have played an important part in Melbourne suburban development since the 1880s. The Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust opened its first line in 1910, an electric tram that ran along High Street. They rapidly expanded with lines serving the south-eastern suburbs as well as Hawthorn, Camberwell and Kew, pioneering much of the current tram network. This well-illustrated and researched history details how the electric system of today evolved; the problems of construction, the individuals involved in promotion, the technical details of the trams; the demise of the Trust with the formation of the Tramways Board in 1920; the problems of amalgamation of the previous unconnected tramways systems including the cable trams that mostly served the inner city. A valuable contribution to Melbourne's transport history.

**Destination Waterfront City, A Guide to Melbourne's Trams**

Randall Wilson and Dale Budd, Transit Australia Publishing, Sydney, 2014, pp. \$59-95. ISBN 9780909459253.

A comprehensive guide to current routes, trams used, changed facilities, ticketing technologies, privatisation, and much more. Beautifully illustrated, clear maps and diagrams, and designed to appeal to tram enthusiasts.

**A History of the Redesdale Railway Line 1891-1954**

Ken James, Noel Davis and David Langley, Ken James, 18 Lofty Avenue, Camberwell, 3124, 2014, pp. 238, \$43. ISBN 9780992308735.

Another comprehensive compilation put

together by James and Davis collaborating with Langley who is a railway historian. The Redesdale line was a branch from Redesdale Junction north of Kyneton on the Bendigo line with stations at Redesdale Junction, Edgecombe, Green Hill, East Metcalfe, Emberton, Barfold and Redesdale. The book comprises material mainly drawn from the local papers and railways reports with many photos of trains and stations. There were daily services except on Sundays with a mix of goods and passengers. The line never really paid and was closed in 1954. A boon for railways enthusiasts, those with an interest in the district served and for genealogists who benefit from an index of surnames.

**An Accidental Success, The Charles Coulson Story**

Tom Valenta, Lothian, Melbourne, 2014, pp. viii + 143. ISBN 978192 1737121.

Few family businesses survive and thrive to the fifth generation. The Coulson business began when Charles, a bricklayer by trade and a builder by practice acquired a small horse-and-cart operation in 1886. This was important in his survival when he suffered severe setbacks to his building and development business in 1892. The carrying business linked to the wharves developed a sideline in the supply of imported granite and marble and it was these two elements that were carried on by Charles's sons, Edwin and Ern. Management problems beset the next generation in the 1950s. Resolved by the 1960s the firm was innovative and successful in its carrying business that was eventually sold to Rockes in 1995. The family company became dependent on its tile import business and property investments. This is a very solid company history especially covering the years since World War 2. It is also a tribute to the part played by George Limb a great-grandson of Charles in remaking the company from the 1950s.

**A History of Hamilton and Surrounding District**

Hamilton History Centre Inc., 43 Gray Street, Hamilton 3300, 2014, pp. 52.

A booklet reprinting a history of four chapters that was published by the *Hamilton Spectator Directory and Almanac* in 1876. Photos have been added as well as an index. The republication makes accessible a contemporary history that is a good example of the rich nuggets that can easily be hidden in local papers. A worthy project.

### Hastings – People and Places Vol. IV

Shirley Davies, Beryl Stockton and Rita Cooper (eds), Hastings-Westernport Historical Society Inc., PO Box 223, Hastings, 3915, 2013, pp. 135. ISBN 9780959065275.

A worthy publication which showcases photos of people, places and objects that contributed to the local heritage. Another volume is projected in the series. Well-arranged with image and text produced in generous two page spreads. A project that has had considerable community input.

### Sledge to Studebaker, The Story of the Gorge Road, Glen Forbes

Jan Harper, Glen Forbes History Group, Pindari, Jones Road, Glen Forbes 3900, 2009, pp. iv + 133. ISBN 9780646522494.

Glen Forbes is partly in the rich flats along the Bass River and partly in the rugged Strzeleckis. The former supported farms and had a village's infrastructure – railway station, store and hall. The latter where the local school was could only be reached along difficult tracks. The Gorge Road was a small project of the recently constituted Country Roads Board that joined the two parts in 1920 but it required heavy manual labour much of it from ex-servicemen on the Great Ocean Road. The book focuses on the road but conveys much about them people and the district it served, including the overseas service of young men in the Great War. Good photos, index and engagingly written.

### Three Stops on the Line. A History of Kernot, Almurta and Woodleigh

Kernot Hall and Reserve Committee, c/- Lisa Huitson, Campbell's Roads, Kernot, 3979, 2003, pp. 243. ISBN 0646421867.

This book traces the history of change in the south Gippsland community served for a time by the Nyora-Wonthaggi railway, Forestry, mixed farming, dairy farming and the accompanying infrastructure and community institutions are all dealt with as are the families of the area. It has a comprehensive index, many photos and a chart showing marriages between families in the three stops on the railway.

### Australian History in 7 Questions

John Hirst, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2014, pp. 218, \$24-99. ISBN 9781863956703.

This book grew from questions raised by the author in a series run by Stonnington U3A. They were a very fortunate group! In a series of stimulating essays Hirst deals with Aborigines as farmers; the peaceful transition from penal colony to democracy; the earliness of Australia's prosperity; the reasons for federation; the impact of convict origins on national identity; the success of post-war migration; and the

reasons why Australia is not a republic. These questions are mostly ones that he has explored more substantially elsewhere but they are presented here in ways that fully justify the comments in the media release that he is 'the gadfly of Australian history, stinging and provocative' as well as 'independent' and 'original'.

### Two Squatters, The Lives of George Playne and David Jennings

Martin Playne, 1 Lorraine Street, Hampton, 3188, 2013, pp. xvi + 408, \$35-85. ISBN 9780992334109.

George Playne and Daniel Jennings migrated to the Port Phillip District from Gloucester in 1839. They jointly occupied the Campaspe Plains Station in 1840. They were presumably attracted to the colony by the rise of wool growing and the favourable reports on land especially by Mitchell. Playne left the Campaspe for Melbourne in 1844 where he established himself as secretary of the Melbourne Club and as a surgeon. He returned to England in 1854; Jennings had returned in 1851. Based on considerable genealogical and other research in England and Victoria, this book places the lives of two gentleman squatters in the context of colonial development and society. Jennings was a substantial investor in property as well as in wool production. Playne also invested in property after the Campaspe venture but his life was tied to Melbourne as a surgeon with a part in the establishment of the Melbourne Hospital and a medical association as well as involvement in the town's affairs during the time of separation and the Gold Rushes. This is a mostly careful reconstruction of two lives. Copiously illustrated with helpful appendices and index.

### Plaster and Paint, John Colquhoun, orthopaedic surgeon and his patient, Joyce McGrath, portrait painter

Jan Harper, Australian Scholarly Publishing, Melbourne, 2007, pp. xii + 342. ISBN 9781740971720.

The lives of John Colquhoun, notable orthopaedic surgeon and Joyce McGrath, portrait painter, first intersected in the 1930s when Joyce was diagnosed with TB in her bones and joints and came under the care of John at the Frankston Hospital where she remained in plaster and largely cut off from her family for four years. In 1961, their lives intersected again when Joyce, now an established portrait painter, worked on a painting for the Royal Children's Hospital. The close and caring relationship that developed when Colquhoun struggled to give relief and a return to normality for a very sick girl remained and influenced both painter and subject. The author uses the relationship

to enter the lives of two interesting and talented people and to write in some depth about the medical practices and procedures that influenced each. She also provides substantial biographies for each of her subjects. Two interesting intersecting stories.

### A Funny Course For A Woman

Rosemary Balmford, Arcadia, Melbourne, 2013, pp. x + 336. ISBN 9781925003321.

The author was the first female judge on the Supreme Court of Victoria. These are acutely observed memoirs not only of her diverse contributions to the law but of Melbourne life and society from the 1940s onwards. At one level, a grandmother's story for her grandchildren, but with many rich pickings of social history, educational history, the history of gender roles, technological change and much more. Written simply and well illustrated, readers will find much of lasting interest in the remembered life of Rosemary Balmford (nee Norris), daughter of formidable parents, Dame Ada Norris (a leading figure in the National Council of Women and much else) and Sir John Norris (a judge of the County Court and later Supreme Court). This autobiography provides a substantial documentary and commentary about the last 80 or so years seen through the eyes and memory of a perceptive participant.

### Audacious Adventures of Louis Lawrence Smith

John Poynter, Australian Scholarly Press, Melbourne, 2014, 2 vols, pp. xx + 365, pp. xi + 329. ISBN 9781925003239.

This beautifully produced boxed set two-volume biography of LL Smith is a triumph in book publishing. Its publishing standards are fitting testimony to the quality of the scholarship and excellence in writing that characterise this study of the many strands in Smith's adventurous life in Victoria from the 1850s until his death in 1910. The many strands include 'medico, writer, publisher, politician, litigant, showman, speculator, collector, vigneron, farmer, breeder and rider of racehorses' and guiding hand for Melbourne's exhibition space. Always controversial and colourful, Smith's biography along with others written by Poynter provides views through many windows into Victorian colonial society. Superbly illustrated, this is a most interesting book about an interesting man and his society.



# Mandeville Crescent Gates

This piece gives us a little glimpse into history thanks to the research of our own Councillor Jane Carolan and to Steve Stefanopoulos, Heritage Collection and Records Manager, Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak.

In September 1924, the Loreto Sisters purchased the mansion *Mandeville Hall* in Mandeville Crescent, Toorak, and established a school for girls. The original mansion on the estate, known as *St George's*, had been erected in 1867 for Alfred Watson and enlarged in 1877/8 to the designs of architect Charles Webb for Joseph Clarke and renamed *Mandeville Hall*.

In 1926, the City of Melbourne decided to remove the majority of the gates, gate posts and fencing surrounding the Carlton Gardens to open up the park. The iron palisade fence with ornamental gates, were possibly designed by the Public Works Department Architect, John James Clark, as the designs were registered in 1882 in Clark's name.

In 1928, James Whelan, later known as Whelan the Wrecker, was appointed to remove all the fences and gates surrounding the Carlton Gardens, except for those near the curator's cottage on the corner of Rathdowne Street and Carlton Street, which were retained for security purposes. When Whelan carted a portion

of the fences and gates to *Genazzano Convent FCJ*, Cotham Road, Kew, he only charged the nuns cartage. It is presumed that the same generous terms were also offered to the Loreto Sisters, as the main gates to Loreto Toorak, in Mandeville Crescent, were also originally part of the Carlton Gardens.

Gates and fences from the Carlton Gardens were also relocated to Melbourne High School, Alexandra Avenue, South Yarra; Gate 'F' Royal Botanical Gardens next to the National Herbarium on Birdwood Avenue and to *Montsalvat* in Eltham.

In 2011, Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak undertook a detailed investigation into the paint color of their gates, which at the time were painted black. Contact was made with the City of Melbourne parks & gardens department; Heritage Victoria; and architectural historians – Lovell Chen, all of whom were involved in the restoration of the remaining gates and fences at the Carlton Gardens to determine what color should be used to repaint the gates at

Loreto Toorak. The first color ever used on the gates was Brunswick Green and a later color Imperial Ivy Green was applied. During this investigation, Loreto Toorak discovered that the spear heads atop their gates were painted gold, and this was news to the City of Melbourne, Heritage Victoria and everyone else involved. Although the school did not re-apply the gold, the gates were painted in Imperial Ivy Green to emphasise the connection of the gates to their original location – the World Heritage Site, Royal Exhibition Building, Carlton Gardens.

A comprehensive history of the Loreto in Melbourne from 1889-2014 by historian, Jane Mayo Carolan, published by Allen & Unwin, will be launched later this year.

Steve Stefanopoulos

TOWN HALL.

*Tuesday, 27th April, 1915.*

# MELBA

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