



# History NEWS

Issue No. 316 Feb/March 2015  
Royal Historical Society of Victoria

## New exhibition steams into RHSV ...pages 4-5

A new date for Australia Day? –  
a personal perspective...  
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### From the Editor's Desk

Welcome to our first issue for 2015!

On our cover and on pages 4-5, a story about our first exhibition for 2015, *Postcards: Stories from the Mornington Peninsula*. The poster on the cover really takes one back to the Victorian and Edwardian modes of transport and holiday, even though it dates from World War I (see box on this page for details). Richard Barnden shows how eight different postcards each generated mini-exhibitions of great interest. And Keith White gives us the inside story of the making of the wonderful video shown with the exhibition, a video which greatly enriches the exhibition. Don't miss this show while it's here.



Readers will notice the absence of our much-cherished 'Books Received'. Fear not, Don Gibb, our intrepid reviewer, is taking a short holiday from his record-breaking pace of reading history. He'll be back, refreshed and reinvigorated, in our next issue.

In place of 'Books Received', President Don Garden and I each offer opinions, Don on the date of Australia Day (back cover), I on the planning and heritage issues that face Melbourne and Victoria (pp. 10-11). Heritage preservation is also the subject of an HVSG Seminar (see p. 3). We both hope our personal opinions will provoke and inspire you.

I hope you've had a wonderful holiday season.

*Chips Sowerwine*

### RHSV TRIVIA NIGHT

NOT TO BE MISSED.

SATURDAY 28 MARCH

7.00pm in the Officer's Mess, RHSV Drill Hall, 239 A'Beckett St.

More information coming soon on our website.

### RHSV Annual Book Sale



The Book Sale will be held on **SATURDAY 13 JUNE**.

We are now accepting donations of books. This year, please only **HISTORY BOOKS**, not necessarily Australian History; books on any and all areas.

Telephone 9326 9288 or email [office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au) to arrange for us to collect your books, or drop them in to the RHSV – there is 10 minute free parking at the front door.

Cover image: Health and Pleasure Trips on Port Phillip Bay: by the "Weeroona" "Hygeia" and "Ozone", c. 1912  
See page 4

### *Awards Presentation & Afternoon Tea*

Tuesday 24 February.

For details, see What's On, page 7.



## History NEWS



ESTABLISHED 1909

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE****LOOKING TO 2015 WITH OPTIMISM**

Happy New Year to all RHSV members and supporters. We are looking forward to another successful year. We have an excellent speakers' programme, a number of very interesting exhibitions and some special events. We are deeply indebted to our three staff (Kate Prinsley, Ged Horgan and Dr Jodie Boyd) and to our numerous volunteers and committee members.



A major reason for optimism about the future of the RHSV is the work undertaken by the six sub-committees of Council: Executive and Finance; Collections; Publications; Membership, Events and Outreach; RHSV Foundation; and History Victoria Support Group. Late last year we also established an Exhibition Working Party of volunteers. Together these committees bring together more than forty people with a diverse range of skills and experience. They undertake a significant proportion of the work of the RHSV and are a key to our success.

One of the special events we are organizing is an afternoon tea on 24 February, during which we will honour the memory of former RHSV librarian, Barbara Nixon, and thank her children for their generous donation. His Excellency the Hon Alex Chernov AC QC, the Governor of Victoria, has accepted an invitation to attend and he will be making two presentations on behalf of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies: an FAHS Fellowship to Professor Geoffrey Blainey; and a Merit Award to Joan Hunt, former RHSV Councillor and Vice President. All RHSV members are warmly invited, but please RSVP to the office.

When I wrote my report for the December *History News*, the Victorian election had not been held. The Labor Party had given the RHSV undertakings about our future at the Drill Hall. Now Labor is in office, we have written to the new Planning Minister, Richard Wynne, to present him with our extended tenure proposal (available on the RHSV homepage) and to seek a meeting. Unfortunately, the Minister has been ill, but we have been assured by his office that the matter is in hand. We are waiting with eager interest – and optimism.

The RHSV has also written to congratulate Ellen Sandell on her election to the seat of Melbourne. As she is the RHSV's 'local member', we will be seeking to work with her to influence government and to further the outreach of the RHSV into the CBD and adjacent areas.

More correspondence has been sent to Martin Foley whose Ministerial responsibilities include Creative Industries – formerly Arts. He was supportive of the RHSV when in Opposition and we are looking forward to a productive relationship. Most important in the short term, RHSV is concerned that there is no current budgetary allocation for the future of the Victorian Community History Awards and the Local History Grants. We are urging that a decision be made as soon as possible so that preliminary organization of the VCHA can get underway.

*Don Garden*  
President

**HISTORY VICTORIA SUPPORT GROUP****SEMINAR SATURDAY 21 MARCH**

RHSV 239 A'Beckett Street Melbourne

**THE ROLE OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES  
IN PLANNING**

10.00am – 1.00pm

*How often has your Society been phoned to be told a wreckers ball is about to demolish an historic building in your area?*

*How many calls do you receive from members of the public recommending certain houses be preserved?*

*What actions can be taken to protect heritage buildings?*

*What role can historical societies play in advocating for heritage?*

This seminar will look at examples of historical societies which have successfully worked with Councils to develop co-operative strategies to protect heritage in their area.

Experts and planners from local government, the National Trust (Victoria) and Heritage Victoria will bring attendees up to date with current policies and issues in heritage protection.

**YOUR PLACE IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD**

2.00pm – 3.15pm

Updates, options and techniques for your historical society to engage the community in local history using social media.

**Cost:** \$15.00 per head includes light lunch and morning & afternoon tea.

Please book through RHSV by notifying Ged by email [office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au), or phone 9326 9288 by Monday 17 March.

**Volunteering at the RHSV**

WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH

10.00am – 1.00pm

**NEW VOLUNTEER INFORMATION MORNING**

We need your help! Become involved with the RHSV. Activities include research, working with photographs and maps, exhibitions, digitizing, administration and library assistance. Volunteers receive inductions, training and support. Volunteering with the RHSV is an opportunity to meet like minded people, and become involved in the stimulating and fun programs at the RHSV.

Jodie Boyd, RHSV Collections & Volunteers Manager, will lead a tour of the RHSV's collections and highlight areas where you might become involved.

The RHSV gratefully acknowledges a 2014 grant from the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund to build capacity within our volunteer program.

A light lunch will be provided.

Please RSVP to Jodie Boyd 9326-9288 or [collections@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:collections@historyvictoria.org.au) by Friday 27 February.



# Steaming into A'Beckett Street

Our cover image—detail, bay paddle steamers' advertising poster, (c 1912), also shown below—is courtesy of the Nepean Historical Society at Sorrento, one of eight participants in the exhibition *Postcards: Stories from the Mornington Peninsula*, our first exhibition for 2015. It opens in the RHSV Gallery on Monday 2 February and closes on Friday 6 March.

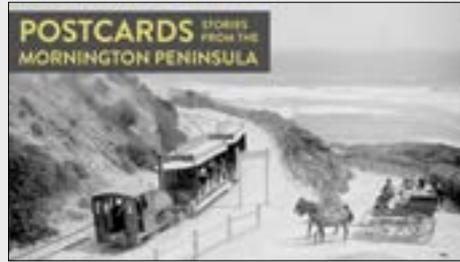
Here, the RHSV's Richard Barnden gives us background for the poster and the exhibition. RHSV members and friends are encouraged to visit the exhibition at the Drill Hall from Monday 2 February. See *What's On* for details.



The Nepean Historical Society was formed in March 1965. Active in preserving the history of the local area, the Society celebrates its significant 50th anniversary this year. The Society is widely respected for its work on heritage and planning issues, a demanding task in these days of development. The Society's MAP accredited Museum holds thousands of significant objects and important archival materials in the Sorrento Mechanics' Institute, built of local limestone (1876-1890) and now classified by the National Trust.

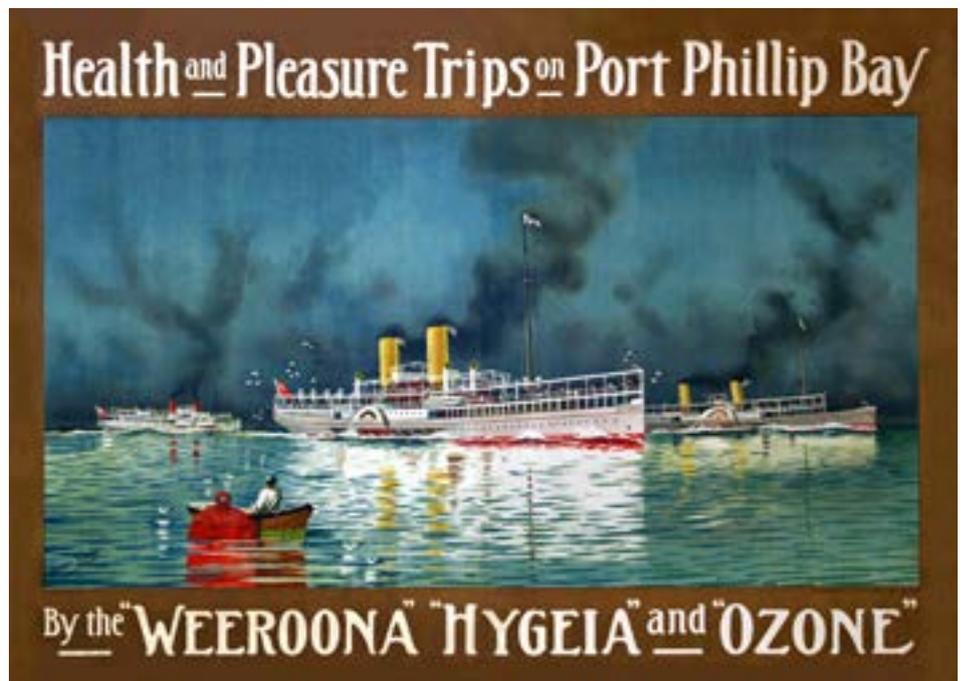
This poster is one of many items in the museum telling of the development of summer tourism in Sorrento in the 1890s by the amazing George Coppin, who, among other things, initiated the ferries from Melbourne and the steam tram rumbling along the main Ocean Beach Rd through Sorrento to the Back Beach's scenic walks and restaurant. Details of the tram are contained in the Society's 'suitcase' display. The exhibition's award winning video presentation shows archival footage of people on the ferries and tram. (See also the RHSV's Picture of the Month for February, 2015: <http://www.historyvictoria.org.au/collections/picture-of-the-month>.) The other 'suitcases' in this collaborative exhibition showcase different facets of the history of the Mornington Peninsula.

The exhibition was a collaboration of the eight historical societies on the peninsula coordinated by Mornington Peninsula Shire. The



RHSV GALLERY MONDAY 2 FEBRUARY – FRIDAY 6 MARCH

This exhibition explores a time in Victorian history when holidaying was a grand pastime, and when the special and unique locales of our relatively young country began to be appreciated, celebrated and shared in that iconic mode of communication: the picture postcard.



**Above & Cover Illustration: Health and Pleasure Trips on Port Phillip Bay: by the "Weeroona", "Hygeia" and "Ozone", c. 1912**

**Advertising poster / Deane Taylor, artist / - - - Wicks, lithographer / B R Gowan & Co. Printers / courtesy : Nepean Historical Society Inc., Sorrento. From left to right: paddle steamers Ozone, Weeroona and Hygeia. All three were under the management of Bay Steamers Ltd.**

project commenced in 2012 and was developed over a three-year period with the assistance of a series of grants from PROV, Museums Australia and Mornington Peninsula Shire. It was launched at the Sorrento Museum in June 2014 with record attendances.

In addition to the exhibition, there is a fascinating audiovisual and an on-line school education kit. The kit can be found at [http://ourlibrary.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Whats\\_On/News/Postcards\\_Travelling\\_Exhibition](http://ourlibrary.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Whats_On/News/Postcards_Travelling_Exhibition). The audiovisual brings to life the stories the postcards tell and the kit provides teachers and students with a unique history resource.

The exhibition has now been to five venues and at each venue there has been a wonderfully positive response

from the public. The exhibition and the stories that go with the displays in the accompanying audio visual obviously hold a wide appeal to both the older generation, some of whom still remember some of these earlier days, and younger school age children who are fascinated by an era which has now but all disappeared.

The exhibition explores a time in Victorian history when holidaying was a grand pastime, and when the special and unique locales of our relatively young country began to be appreciated and shared in that iconic mode of communication, the picture postcard.

*Richard Barnden*

# How video enhances the exhibition

Keith White, of Lavender Hill Multimedia, provided the video which accompanies and enhances the exhibition. Here he tells how Lavender Hill put together the exciting video from materials supplied by local societies. This story should inspire societies across Victoria to consider using such methods to reach new audiences.

Lavender Hill Multimedia, an independent multimedia production studio based in Red Hill South, has worked with societies in the Mornington Peninsula Local History Network over the last ten years. The resulting projects range from video documentaries to podcasts, audio tours and books. A number of these have featured in the Victorian Community History Awards. Last year, *Postcards: Stories from the Mornington Peninsula* won the Judges Special Award; Lavender Hill Multimedia's video presentation was included in the award.

The brief for the video was to 'supplement the touring *Postcards* exhibition, by expanding upon the eight thematic subjects.' The project was funded initially by Museums Australia

Victoria (MAV) as a collaborative enterprise between the members of the Local History Network to present their stories with heritage items arranged in portable display cases. It was later suggested that a video production consisting of eight short individual segments might complement the materials on display. Local History Co-ordinator Sally Robins managed the project, with the assistance of a professional curator.

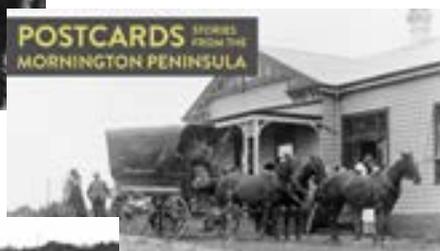
Each society prepared a narration script for a five-minute video and provided still images to Lavender Hill Multimedia. We then put the whole thing together. One society chose to tell its story through a video interview with a member of a pioneer family, which had been produced as part of an oral history project earlier in the year. Another society incorporated some similar material into its segment. The other segments contained narration by a society member accompanied by relevant images and, sometimes, by short video commentaries by other society members.

The individual societies represent eight quite different communities, which have evolved from villages settled on the Peninsula over 150 years ago. Naturally each society focused on its own history; this project was the first collaborative celebration of this diversity. The opening at Nepean Historical Society last June drew a full and appreciative house. The video was displayed in a separate area for people to watch as they chose. Most watched the whole production straight through rather than watch one or two segments and then return to watch others, as had been expected.

From a technical viewpoint, the whole video was put together on an iMac using Final Cut Pro X video editing software. Still images were cleaned up and enhanced in Photoshop and various audio programs were used for the narration and music soundtrack. The capability of these modern software programs meant that a professional 45-minute video was created in a few weeks on a budget of less than \$3000. This was of course also due in part to the generous contribution of each society in providing the narrations and other materials.

## Participating societies, representing eight different Peninsula communities and their Postcard stories:

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Balnarring and District Historical Society    | <i>Harley Club at Balnarring</i> |
| Dromana & District Historical Society         | <i>Arthurs Seat</i>              |
| Flinders District Historical Society          | <i>Guest Houses at Flinders</i>  |
| Hastings-Western Port Historical Society      | <i>Local Fishing Industry</i>    |
| Mornington & District Historical Society      | <i>Train to Mornington</i>       |
| Nepean Historical Society                     | <i>Paddle Steamers</i>           |
| Rye Historical Society                        | <i>Holidays in Rye</i>           |
| Somerville, Tyabb & District Heritage Society | <i>Local Fruit Industry</i>      |



*Keith White*



# EUREKA

## 160 years since the Eureka Treason Trials

### A calendar of events

In recognition of the 160 years that have passed since the Eureka Treason Trials took place in early 1855, the Supreme Court has organised a series of events to highlight the importance of these trials and their role in the formation of Australian democracy and jurisprudence.

#### January to end of March 2015

Exhibition in the Supreme Court library of rare Australian books about the gold rush and the gold fields. The highlight of the exhibition is a transcript of the trials.

#### February 24 2015

Twilight talk on the Eureka Trials by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria, Marilyn Warren and the prize winning author and historian Dr Clare Wright. Clare's account of the events at Eureka The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka was awarded the Stella prize in 2014.



#### March 18 & 19 2015

A Reading of one of the trial transcripts performed by the Bottled Snail Production Company. Members of the legal profession will re-enact parts of the Trial in one of the historic Supreme Court courtrooms.

All events are free, bookings are essential for the events in February and March through eventbrite. Access to the exhibition is during business hours.

**Inquiries: Joanne Boyd. email joanne.boyd@supremecourt.vic.gov.au or telephone 0417 526 258.**

## Holsworth Local Heritage Trust Grants

### APPLICATIONS OPEN 1 MARCH

The Holsworth Local Heritage Trust invites applications for grants from not-for-profit organisations, such as historical societies, clubs, schools and museums in regional and rural Victoria. The Trust aims to support heritage, preservation and appreciation, and the enhancement of community life.

Grants of up to \$2,000 are available for the publication of any specific or general local history or natural history of rural and regional Victoria. Grants are intended for small organisations interested in publishing works of historical value, even where the organisation has little or no experience of self-publishing work. Joint projects encompassing several groups or annual/special edited journals incorporating submitted historical articles from a wide community are encouraged.

#### Applications

Applicants are required to submit a proposal including details of the intended date of publication. It is expected that considerable research will already have been undertaken before applying. Applications open on 1 March and close on 31 July each year.

Read the Guidelines carefully before making a submission, and complete the application forms in full. These are available at <http://www.anz.com.au/personal/private-bank/products-services/philanthropy/granting/granting-programs/small-grants/>

Further information from RHSV website:

[www.historyvictoria.org.au/holsworth-local-heritage-trust](http://www.historyvictoria.org.au/holsworth-local-heritage-trust)

### RHSV FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS OF MERIT

Nominations for 2015 Fellowships and Awards of Merit are now being invited. The awards are a means of peer recognition within the RHSV for an outstanding contribution made to history in Victoria.

|                                     |                 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Closing Date for Fellows Nomination | Friday 20 March |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|

|                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Closing Date for Awards of Merit | Friday 17 April |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|

Guidelines are available by contacting Kate Prinsley on 9326 9288 or [kateprinsley@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:kateprinsley@historyvictoria.org.au)

Nominations should be sent to the Executive Officer, RHSV, 239 A'Beckett Street, Melbourne 3000.

**Announcements will be made at the RHSV AGM on Tuesday 19 May and published in our June newsletter.**

**TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY****Writing an engaging family history or memoir: who do you think you are?**

**Speaker:** Iola Mathews  
**Drinks:** 5.15pm  
**Lecture:** 5.45pm  
**Cost:** Free to RHSV members.  
 Non Members \$10.00

Journalist and author Iola Mathews will give tips on researching, writing and publishing family histories and personal memoirs, with reference to her recent book *Chequered Lives: John Barton Hack and Stephen Hack and the early days of South Australia*, and her memoir *My Mother, My Writing and Me*.

Iola will discuss genealogy, research and resources, the importance of accuracy, preservation of your material and tips on writing style. She will also cover different forms of publication from self-publishing to commercial publication. Iola believes everyone should leave behind something about themselves and their ancestors if they can, and there are now many different ways of doing this.

Iola Mathews OAM studied history at Melbourne University and worked as a journalist with *The Age* and later for the ACTU as an industrial officer and advocate. She is the author of *How to Use the Media in Australia*. More recently she established writers' studios at the National Trust property Glenfern in East St Kilda..

**EXHIBITION AT THE RHSV MONDAY 2 FEBRUARY – FRIDAY 6 MARCH****Postcards: Stories from the Mornington Peninsula**

The exhibition showcases aspects this region's unique history through eight postcards from the collections of local history organisations. Each is the vehicle for a local history story. Flinders tells of its renowned guesthouses; Sorrento, its 'back beach tram'; Mornington its early train transport; Rye, its 'activities on the foreshore'; Somerville, its apple orchards and industry; Hastings, its fishing industry; Balnarring, its Harley Davidson Club; Dromana, the Arthurs Seat lookout. See our cover story, p. 4-5, for more on this fascinating exhibition.

The exhibition has now been to four venues and at each venue the response has been very positive. The exhibition and the associated DVD won the Judges' Special Prize in the Victorian Community History Awards 2014.

**EVERY MONDAY****Tours of the Flagstaff Gardens every Monday**

Walk with expert tour guides from the RHSV through the beautiful Flagstaff Gardens, the historic heart of the City, every Monday at 11.00am & 2.00pm

Climb 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.

**Meet** at the Royal Historical Society of Victoria 239 A' Beckett Street at 11am & 2.00pm

**Duration:** 75 Minutes

**Free to Members;** Non-Members \$10.00. Children under 16 Free.

**Booking preferred:** 9326 9288  
 email: [office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au)

**TUESDAY 17 MARCH****Melbourne Heroines of World War One**

**Speaker:** Susanna de Vries  
**Drinks:** 5.15pm  
**Lecture:** 5.45pm  
**Cost:** Free to RHSV Members  
 Non Members \$10.00

Susanna de Vries will tell of eight heroic army nurses, five from Melbourne. Sister Samsung's story is only one of eight enthralling narratives which Susanna de Vries will present. Sister Hilda Samsung witnessed the bungled evacuation of wounded Anzacs, many of whom were left lying on the beach at Anzac Cove for days in burning sun due to shortage of hospital ships; her diary was read out to the British Parliament.

Susanna de Vries is a Churchill Fellow. She was awarded an OAM for services to art and literature. She is the author of fifteen books, including many biographies of Australian women. She is renowned as an engaging speaker.

**TUESDAY 24 FEBRUARY****Afternoon Tea to Mark Two Special Events**

2.30 – 3.45pm

**RHSV, 239 A'Beckett Street, Melbourne**

The Honourable Alex Chernov AC QC, Governor of Victoria and RHSV Patron, accompanied by Mrs Chernov, will make two presentations on behalf of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies: a Fellowship to Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Blainey FRHSV, and a Merit Award to former RHSV Councillor Mrs Joan Hunt FRHSV.

The RHSV will also honour the Nixon family, who have given a generous donation to the RHSV in honour of their late mother Barbara Nixon OAM FRHSV.

Barbara was the RHSV honorary librarian for more than forty years – a role that she undertook with strong leadership and distinction.

**RSVP Thursday 19 February to**

**Kate Prinsley 9326 9288 or [kateprinsley@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:kateprinsley@historyvictoria.org.au)**



**Barbara Nixon OAM FRHSV**

**AROUND THE SOCIETIES**

The column is compiled by volunteers Helen Boak and Lenore Frost on behalf of the History Victoria Support Group. For the 1st April 2015 issue please send forthcoming events and your Newsletters to office@historyvictoria.org.au by 10 March.

**DID YOU KNOW?** : The articles published here are from hard and emailed copies our member groups send to RHSV. Both versions are saved for the archives giving a central holding of newsletters. Our policy aims to give fair access to all the societies and we encourage you to send us your newsletters and event details. From over 340 affiliated societies we endeavour to publish an article of around 50 words for each society twice a year.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND FORUMS:** Advertise your events on the RHSV Calendar of Events. First click on Members Login at the top of our homepage, then, Register for Forums. To publish an event, log on to RHSV website and then post your Activity/Event. Or ask questions on the Forums. A regular emails of events and forum posts is sent to everyone registered for the forums.

**ADAM LINDSAY GORDON:** Gordon was posthumously inducted into the Australian Jumps Racing Association's "Gallery of Champions" at the RACV Club last year. This year our goal is setting up an ALG Poet's Trail from Melbourne to Adelaide. We will also commence an encyclopaedia of ALG and are keen to hear if you possess an item. Contact: info@adamlindsaygordon.org.

**ANDREW ROSS MUSEUM:** In the early days the Kangaroo Ground Store sold petrol in four gallon tins, and saucepans, billy-cans, water bags and rabbit traps hung from the ceiling. Butter, jellies and cheeses were kept in the cellar and bags of flour, chaff, bran and pollard were down the centre of the shop. Contact: wcleeson@primus.com.au.

**ANGLESEA:** A Community Precinct Open Day will be held on Sunday 22 March 10.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. We will be relaunching the restored museum, providing guided tours of the museum, have old fashioned children's activities and videos of the Anglesea District. Make History House a "must visit" place.

**BALLARAT:** The program for 2015 starts with the National Trust Walk Treasure Hunt from Dawson to Drummond on February 10. Meet at 7.00 pm at the Alexandra Bandstand. In March we have the popular member's night "Memories from Wartime". Contact via email: ballarathistoricalociety@gmail.com or phone: 4313 9610.

**BALNARRING:** Within months of the outbreak of war in 1914 the women of the district had organised themselves into a Red Cross unit to raise funds and supply goods to be sent to their soldiers overseas. They were an extremely active group for such a small population. The unit still exists today.

**BENDIGO:** Visit Bendigo for a 2pm Sunday tour 'Behind the public rooms' at the Shamrock hotel. Or visit Specimen Cottage, 178-180 Hargreaves Street, open every Tuesday and Thursday from 10am to 4pm. Our two adjoining sandstone cottages built in the 1850s are used for research and reading rooms and changing displays. Contact: specimencottage@gmail.com or 5441 3443.

**BOX HILL:** Coming up at our meetings this year will be Roger Murnane Town Hall Venue Manager speaking on "Box Hill Town Hall – 80 years" on March 19 and on Thursday April 16 our guest will be Tom Thorpe, OAM, speaking on "The Lone Pine at Wattle Park". To visit contact: 9285 4808 Email: boxhillhistory@gmail.com.

**BOROONDARA (KEW) CEMETERY:** The passing of former Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, brought a focus to our cemetery as his ancestors are buried here. Gough was born in Rowland Street, Kew in 1915 and died on the day the house he was born in was to be demolished. Fortunately an Interim Protection Order was issued under the Heritage Act on that day.

**BRIGHTON:** Our program to connect with local schools had the visiting children delighted with our program of games, civic precinct walk, living in the 50's talk and the school class. We also included a tour of the Art Gallery and some hands-on experience with old fashioned clothing including fastening stockings with a suspender!

**BRIGHTON ANTIQUES:** Look behind the scenes when a speaker gives a talk and you will find a volunteer who sets up the data projector, computer, sound system etcetera. If you have this expertise please don't hesitate to volunteer your services. Contact phone number: 9397 1043.

**BRIGHTON CEMETORIANS:** Dates for 2015: 15 February, 2pm, Women of Substance Walk; 19 April, 2pm, Anzac Walk; 17 May, 10am, Law Week Walk. The December newsletter relates an interesting history of Jewish people interred in Brighton. From the first fleet to today Jewish people have made strong contributions to the Australian community. Contact: info@brightoncemetorians.org.

**BRUNSWICK:** The Moonee Vale Mechanics' Institute in McColl Street, Moonee Vale, was established in 1904. We would love to find out more about it. Perhaps your parents, friends or relatives

told stories about the activities that took place there? Also please see if there is a photo in a family album you can share with us. Contact: 9387 1194.

**CASTLEMAINE:** The importance of Art, especially Colonial Art was the topic for our December meeting. How it accurately records details of places, buildings, people, costumes etc. Paintings provide a real picture of what it was like when the brush was applied to canvas, just as a photo does today.

**CIVIL AVIATION:** The group has received welcome donations of historical material and radio equipment. These include avionics manuals, Omega manuals that relate to Ansett's use of Omega, plus we have three pallets of flight inspection equipment to collect. Extra building space for our growing collection is needed from management at Essendon Airport.

**DAYLESFORD:** We are producing a book of letters written home by local soldiers. If anyone has photos, letters, postcards, diaries, medals, souvenirs and other memorabilia relating to WW1 that they are prepared to lend, donate or allow to be scanned or photographed please contact us. Contact: history@daylesford.net or 5348 1453 and leave a message.

**ESSENDON:** Our 1890 Courthouse restoration in underway with tender documents being prepared for restoration of the exterior and the internal plasterwork. Our application to the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund was successful with a grant of \$90,000 the funds will be used for repairs to guttering, cast iron downpipes and slate roof repairs.

**FLINDERS:** The Pioneer families listed on the plaques to the Memorial gateway to Flinders cemetery provide the starting point for the current project. It seeks to integrate the cemetery records and the biographical and historical data to produce an interesting and accessible electronic information base. Contact: flindersdhs@gmail.com.

**FOSTER:** Our newsletter has a section on visits to other museums and societies to see how they display their history and how the community supports them. One such museum in Wanneroo, Perth, supported by the local shire also runs pre-school and kindergarten programmes, introducing children to history at an early age.

**HAWTHORN:** Technology is here to stay so with assistance from Swinburne IT students we have upgraded our website. The quality of material has been widely complimented. We will expand on this and engage with schools and members of the wider community to learn our history through technology and alternative media. www.hawthornhistoricalsociety.com.au.

**KEILOR:** Join us at the ANZAC ceremony at Keilor Cenotaph on Monday April 20, 2015. Leading up to this event we have applied for funding for a book covering WW1, the Keilor region, the people who lived in this region, where they enlisted, where did they go overseas? If you have information email: [pward@cat.com](mailto:pward@cat.com).

**LANDSBOROUGH:** From a century ago we recall living standards compared to today and the simple pleasures which entertained a child. Some of which were handmade whistles, marbles from lemonade bottles, catching rabbits and many more creative activities. Today the children are glued to mobile electronic devices – what fond memories will this create?

**MALDON:** Several dozen items were returned to us from the National Trust when they sold the Penny School and Welsh Congregational Church. Items ranged from small paper items to the church lantern. Some had been donated to the National Trust by community members, including bibles and an englyn (a Welsh verse form) written by Joseph Jenkins.

**MINYIP:** Nine men of Light Horse Troop were given a send-off in Minyip. Phillips, Mate, Cowan, Burton and Stamp enlisted in Broadmeadows in August 1914 and were amongst the first troops sent to the Middle East. D Boyd was underage, but enlisted again under an assumed name. What happened to L. Duncan, C. Boyd and J. Beaton is unknown.

**MORWELL:** Morwell Fire Station opened in McDonald Street, Morwell on Saturday 5 February 2005. Do you have any recollections of this event? In the November Newsletter there are photos of two bands marching down McDonald Street, check out the website to see if you can name anyone. Send your memories or information to [research@morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au](mailto:research@morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au).

**MOUNT DANDENONG:** Part of the Exhibition Building was used by the Transport Regulation Board from late 1947, and included the Liquid Fuel Board for the management of petrol rationing. The premises were spacious but not grand, there were offices for executives but typists and lesser clerks had desks in an open area which in winter was very cold!

**NHILL:** The question of the origin of the town Nhill has several versions: the name was used by the local aboriginals and it signified white mist wreathing up from the swamp waters on an autumn morning. Another is that it was once called Northern Hill which was later shortened to Nhill. Contact: [nhillhistorical@gmail.com](mailto:nhillhistorical@gmail.com).

**PORT FAIRY:** Check out our Facebook page to see some interesting photos that have been shared with us. Facebook is another digital media where we can be in touch with our community and interact with the many people who now communicate using current technology. Contact: [pffs@port-fairy.com](mailto:pffs@port-fairy.com).

**PRAHRAN MECHANICS INSTITUTE:** We have now moved into our new premises at 39 St Edmonds Road, Prahran and are open Monday to Saturday 9.30 to 4.30pm. Also we have a monthly automated email that sends information on our 'Recent Additions' books to subscribe please email: [library@pmi.net.au](mailto:library@pmi.net.au).

**PRAHRAN HISTORICAL:** On Thursday 19 February at 7pm at Malvern Town Hall we and the Malvern Historical Society will host a presentation by the author and historian Dr. Ross McMullin. He will speak about Pompey Elliott, the famous Australian Boer War and World War 1 veteran. Bookings are essential 95297442 leave a message.

**RICHMOND & BURNLEY:** We are looking for the following items: Cremorne school photographs from the 1950s; photographs of the Richmond Tavern; and School Roll records and class photos from a number of local State Schools - Yarra Park, North Richmond, Burnley, Central, Cremorne, Brighton Street, Richmond Technical School and Richmond Girls School. Contact: [richmondhs@optusnet.com.au](mailto:richmondhs@optusnet.com.au).

**RINGWOOD:** Late last year we moved part of our archives out of the Fort Knox storage facility, to the old Parkwood Secondary College. We have also achieved a great addition to our database. Our volunteers catalogued 2,945 photos, 285 newspapers, 829 artefacts and 2015 documents, in just one month contributing 58 hours work.

**RYE:** The past year of challenges and achievements resulted in a great deal of satisfaction. Our success lies in the commitment and enthusiasm of our members who come together to work as a team. With differing skills and knowledge to contribute, our common goal and interest is the promotion and preservation of our local history.

**SALE:** The Wellington Cultural History Bibliography (748kb) is a document which provides a guide to local historical information. Local history collections are also held at Sale Library, Stratford Library and Yarram Library and include many reports, newspapers and books. We also use <http://www.communityheritage.net.au/> and <http://petergardner.info/publications> has some interesting information.

**SALVATION ARMY:** The Society presents "Hymns and High Tea" on Saturday 21 February at 2.00 pm at the Camberwell Citadel. Come to hear a songfest of Salvation Army Classics. Sing your heart out with your favourite Army songs, sup on some famous Hamodava Tea and high tea goodies. Information: 9653 3201.

**STAWELL:** As part of the Australian Heritage Recognition Program a ceremony was held late last year by "Engineers Australia" and "Engineering Heritage Victoria" to recognise the significance of the Stawell Water Supply. The Grampians-fed system that still exists today was started in 1869 and delivers up to 10 million gallons (28 megalitres) to Stawell's reservoirs through a gravity system.

**WANGARATTA:** Visit our museum at the Old Fire Station to view the Aboriginal Glass Cabinet, a recent acquisition after a successful funding application. At the opening Elder Freddie Dowling presented the museum with a stone axe made from stone in the Warby Ranges and handle made from Boree mulga. Elder Wally Cooper presented a shield a few days later. Contact: [wanghistoc@hotmail.com](mailto:wanghistoc@hotmail.com).

**WARRAGUL:** We received a grant from the National Library to have the museum's collection assessed, recommendations of the priorities to preserve and store those articles which have a national significance but to retain them locally. A new submission will then be lodged to hopefully receive more funds to carry out preservation works.

**WILLIAMSTOWN:** One of our members is restoring knowledge of past Williamstown residents collecting information on twenty Marine Engineers. He is seeking further information on engineers from the area and the work done by them on ships. If you can assist please address to "Williamstown Engineers" via email to: [historywilly@gmail.com](mailto:historywilly@gmail.com).





# Heritage and Preservation in a Neo-Liberal Society

Heritage, planning and transport are in crisis. As a new government takes the reins, let's consider how we got here and where we might go.

Chips Sowerwine reports.



**The Royal Saxon Hotel, built in 1858, under threat of demolition for a 49-storey skyscraper (411 Elizabeth Street). Photo courtesy Melbourne Heritage Action, royal-saxon-hotel-441elizabeth-st-1858-c-grade-rs.**

If all the planned projects are approved and built, Melbourne will have 73 skyscrapers. Little thought has been given to the streetscape and still less to heritage.

During much of the twentieth century, Melbourne evolved toward planning by a non-political statutory authority. In 1954 the MMBW (Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works) was made the chief planning authority for metropolitan Melbourne. But in 1974, the Hamer (Liberal) government transferred road responsibilities from the MMBW to the CRB (Country Roads Board, forerunner of VicRoads). In 1985, the Cain (Labor) government transferred the MMBW's remaining powers to the Ministry for Planning and then abolished the Board, leaving politicians to plan.

Preservation took a similar path. The Hamer Government—to its great credit—established Victoria's first Historic Buildings Preservation Council, but kept it distinct from the MMBW: heritage was understood as preserving individual buildings rather than as considering them in their precincts and neighbourhoods.

The 1980s saw the emergence of neo-liberalism: the market would determine everything and so everything would be put on the market, by privatization, out-sourcing and deregulation. But can the market take the place of urban planning? Docklands was an experiment in outsourcing planning to private developers and it was hardly a success!

With the Kennett (Liberal) government elected in 1992, Victoria embraced revolutionary neo-liberalism. In planning as in other areas, the Kennett government made far-reaching changes. The Heritage Act 1995 modified the Historic Buildings Council, subsuming it within a new body, Heritage Victoria, made up of ten members appointed on the Planning Minister's recommendation. And the new Act specified that economic viability was a criterion for retention or demolition as much as historic or aesthetic significance.

The Minister became the planning authority for major projects (over 25,000 square metres). These projects are not advertised, no objections heard, no appeals made. Where Councils are still the planning authority, developers can and do appeal, not to a planning authority but to VCAT (set up in 1998), a quasi-judicial body whose case by case approach restricts the grounds for objection, both by citizens and by Councils, and generally excludes considerations of neighbourhood character or heritage. Each victory by a developer sets the bar lower for future developers.

In office from 1999 to 2010, Labor did nothing to address the problems of the planning system. *Melbourne 2020* and Labor's hapless Planning Minister Justin Madden—infamous for the Windsor Hotel debacle—were factors in Labor's defeat in 2010.

The Coalition came to power promising to fix the planning system by creating an 'Urban Planning Unit' for the State of Victoria and, for the City of Melbourne, 'a central planning body ... for all developments that exceed 25,000 square metres' (see *The Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Plan for Planning*, 2010).

But once in office, Planning Minister Matthew Guy kept control of major developments, took control of all development in Fishermen's Bend, and called in many applications. He boasted last August, 'I have approved 90 buildings in the central city area since coming to government – nearly three times as many as Justin Madden'. As of Australia Day 2015, he had approved 28 projects for skyscrapers (defined as more than 150 metres, roughly 50 storeys). Richard Wynne, the new Planning Minister, faces deciding on another 14 applications.

Already, Melbourne has 31 skyscrapers, more than any other city in Australia. If all the above projects are approved and built, Melbourne will have 73. Little thought has been given to the streetscape and still less to heritage. Let's take the example of the Queen Victoria Market precinct in Melbourne. Planning guidelines for this area had limited the height of new buildings to 30 metres maximum in order to maintain Victorian character around the Market. But on Elizabeth Street near the Market, five residential towers more than 173 metres (55 storeys) have been approved, most by Minister Guy:

398 Elizabeth Street (southeast cnr A'Beckett): 55 storeys/178 metres;

410 Elizabeth Street (northeast cnr A'Beckett): 55 storeys /173 metres;

450 Elizabeth Street (southeast cnr Franklin): 67 storeys/218 metres;

452 Elizabeth Street (northeast cnr Franklin): 75 storeys/239 metres;

500 Elizabeth Street (southeast cnr Therry, site of Stork Hotel): 72 storeys/226 metres.

Across the city and indeed the state, out of control development threatens neighbourhood character, heritage, liveability, transport and traffic



**Stork Hotel in 2008. Built in 1855, it was demolished in 2010 to make way for the tower now under construction (see photo on right). Photo <http://www.anthonholmes.com/Blog.nsf/dx/stork-hotel.htm>. [opendocument&comments](#).**

**Right: Artist's impression of tower proposed for 500 Elizabeth Street currently under construction on site of Stork Hotel, opposite Queen Victoria Market. Photo: Vision Apartments.**



Melbourne City Council generally opposed these developments because of height, lack of setbacks, and effects on the street. The MCC objected, for example, to 452 Elizabeth Street, planned to sit across Franklin Street from a skyscraper just approved at 450 Elizabeth Street: 'to replicate this building form [450 Elizabeth Street] with a taller tower [452 Elizabeth Street] without any setbacks on the northern side of Franklin Street would result in a canyon-like effect that would create an oppressive pedestrian experience.' But Minister Guy approved this second tower.

Development of 500 Elizabeth Street, under Labor's Justin Madden, involved a significant heritage issue: demolition of the Stork Hotel, built in 1855, one of the City's oldest hotels. The exterior was intact but the Stork was delisted from the Heritage Register because of a 1925 Art Deco interior renovation, which many thought worth a heritage listing on its own. An indication of how the Historic Buildings Council had been gutted.

A similar heritage issue confronts the new Minister, with a proposed skyscraper at 441 Elizabeth Street (northeast cnr A'Beckett, 49 storeys). The original proposal involved demolishing a series of heritage listed double-storey shop buildings, the last remnant of the 19th-century around the Market. The only one of these buildings to be considered for preservation has been the former

Royal Saxon Hotel, built in 1858. The developer proposed retaining the facade and incorporating it into the new tower. Minister Guy knocked back this proposal, but refused to give any protection to the hotel: it is one of 99 buildings nominated by the City of Melbourne for heritage protection, nominations on which Mr Guy postponed a decision without granting interim approval. Thus none of these buildings, not even the Royal Saxon, enjoys any protection apart from ministerial discretion.

The developers are now proposing to retain the façade to a depth of six metres and cantilever the tower over it. There are both heritage and urbanism grounds for rejecting the new proposal. Demolishing the last remnants of 19th-century Melbourne facing the market, and the last remaining early hotel now that the Stork has been lost, would make the Market an island of Victoriana in an ocean of high-rise. Building a 71-storey skyscraper, the third skyscraper on this corner and the sixth on this stretch of Elizabeth Street, would make it a dark wind tunnel. What will Minister Wynne do?

Even more important, what will he do about the planning and heritage system as a whole. Across the city and indeed the state, out of control development threatens neighbourhood character, liveability, transport and traffic, and—not least to RHSV members—heritage. Our planning system needs a major restructure. At the least, Minister Wynne could do what the Liberals promised in 2010: set up 'a central planning body for the City' and restore power to renewed Historic Buildings Council. Even better, he could return Melbourne to a proactive planning regime overseen by a non-political statutory authority with heritage integrated into planning.

What can historical societies do to preserve heritage? This will be the topic of an important HVSG Seminar on Saturday 21 March. See page 3 for details.

*Chips Sowerwine*

# A new date for Australia Day?

A personal perspective, by Don Garden



**Illuminated invitation to centennial celebrations of Australian Settlement, 26 January 1888; issued to Aldn. T. O'Grady Esq., J.P.; designed and lithographed by John Sands [RHSV Collection : ART-0119]**

Australia Day has been celebrated on 26 January since 1888, the centenary of the First Fleet's arrival in Sydney, when the Australian Natives Association proposed it as a national day. In due course it was taken up by each of the colonies and has become a major summer holiday.

However, there have been reservations about and some strong opposition to the date. For states other than New South Wales it has less relevance, and many in the Indigenous community see it as Invasion Day, rather than something to be celebrated.

There has been talk about nominating a new date to celebrate our nationhood, one that might get away from the cultural and political overtones of 26 January, but each of the proposed dates has raised objections. The first day of January (declaration of the Commonwealth) is already a public holiday; 25 April (Anzac Day) has military overtones.

I am proposing 23 August. (NB this is my own idea, not RHSV policy.) It appears to be the first recorded date on which the term 'Australia' was written. It was proposed in a letter from Matthew Flinders to Joseph Banks written in 1804.

The year before, Flinders completed his circumnavigation of Australia. On his way back to England, he was taken prisoner by the French at Mauritius, where he was held for six and a half years. While a prisoner, he worked on his chart and in August 1804 he had it ready to send back to England. On it he named the continent 'Australia or Terra Australis'. In his letter of 23 August to accompany the chart, Flinders wrote:

*The propriety of the name Australia or Terra Australis, which I have applied to the whole body of what has generally been called New Holland must be submitted to the approbation of the Admiralty and the learned in geography. It seems to me an inconsistent thing that Captain Cook's New South Wales should be absorbed in the New Holland of the Dutch, and therefore I have reverted to the original name Terra Australis or the Great South Land, by which it was distinguished even by the Dutch ... but as it is required that the whole body should have one general name, since it is now known that it is certainly all one land, so I judge that one more acceptable to all parties and on all accounts cannot be found than that now applied.*

[Matthew Flinders, letter to Joseph Banks, 23 August 1804, enclosing a chart of 'New Holland' (Australia), Papers of the Board of Longitude Collection, <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk>. Quoted in Anthony Brown, "I call the whole island Australia": Matthew Flinders and the naming of Australia', *Australian Heritage*, Winter 2009, p. 40.]

Banks must have received the letter, but for unknown reasons did not unpack the chart to examine it.

On this evidence 23 August was the birthdate of our nation's name and its nominal conception as a single entity. It is an appealing date for a new Australia Day. It has no obvious problematic political or other overtones. It does not clash with other holidays. Based on place and inclusive of all Australian geographical areas, it is above politics. It offers a unifying identity with our land both for original Australians and for subsequent generations of immigrants.

What do you think?

Don Garden