



NOMINATION FOR THE 2019 RHSV FELLOWSHIP

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## Elizabeth O'Callaghan

Born at Colac, Elizabeth O'Callaghan taught in primary and secondary schools throughout Victoria and in England. Upon retiring from her position as principal of Derrinallum Secondary College in 1991, she moved to Warrnambool and has since that time immersed herself in researching and writing about the history of the local area. She became a volunteer at Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum, where she instigated short guided tours and researched and wrote her first local history book, *Leading Lights*, a history of the Warrnambool lighthouses and lighthouse keepers. Elizabeth is a life member of Flagstaff Hill and maintains her interest in that institution through volunteer work.

Elizabeth joined the W&DHS in 1997 and married the long serving president and local historical luminary, Les O'Callaghan, the following year. She has been involved in the full gamut of the work of the Society over the past 22 years. She was research officer for 12 years, newsletter editor and correspondence secretary for 10 years, committee member, and currently heads up the cataloguing team.

During her time as newsletter editor, Elizabeth began researching and writing extended articles for inclusion each month, considerably enhancing the quality of that publication. These were then expanded and to date have become 45 booklets, produced in-house at our Society. These are published under the copyright of W&DHS and sales provide valuable income. Fifteen of these popular booklets document early hotels in the local area, and two other titles were awarded the Prahran Mechanics' Institute Prize for Short History Writing: *Alien to Us* (2010) and *Second to None* (2012).

There are many other strings to Elizabeth's bow. The citation which accompanied her 2012 National Volunteer Award (Wannon electorate), listed many other community groups to which she has volunteered time over the years. She is an engaging and popular guest speaker around the area, always prepared to give her time to speak to community and school groups about her passion for local history.

In 2017 the W&DHS won the Cataloguing Award at the then Museums Australia (Vic) museums awards. No prizes for guessing who leads that team. She has written statements of significance for all the artefacts so far catalogued – over 2000 items- and her enthusiasm for this ongoing task inspires the volunteers in her team to continue the seemingly endless task of documenting the collection and translating a mish-mash of old handwritten databases to digital format.

Last year Elizabeth was honoured and quite astounded to be the recipient of a Community History Award for her most recent book, *Silent Lives*. The publication of this book in late 2017 resulted in sales to many parts of Australia and abroad, also attracting the attention of the BBC who recorded an interview on women's cricket teams which existed in the Warrnambool district in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Elizabeth's active involvement in the day to day running of W&DHS sees her on duty at our research centre on two full days per week, as well as many more hours at home spent on research and writing. Last Friday she spent five and a half hours on a complete overhaul of the stationery cupboards and their contents, now a sight to behold. A life member since 2012, Elizabeth could more accurately be called the lifeblood of our Society.

List of booklets & books currently in print at W&DHS written or compiled by Elizabeth O'Callaghan

A Cultured Man (Archibald)  
A Lucrative Business (Hotels 13)  
A Well Managed House (Hotels bk 15)  
Alien to Us (19th Century Indian labour in Warrnambool)  
An Artistic Triumph (Hotels bk 14)  
An Excellent Remunerative Trade (Hotels bk 10)  
An Ornament to the Town (Wbool Mechanics' Institute)  
A Share of Public Patronage (Hotels bk1)  
Aboard the 'Beagle' (Capt Helpman) ed.  
Bank Notes (Early banks in Wbool)  
BBM One (Bruce Morris articles) ed.  
BBM Two (Bruce Morris articles) ed.  
Bravo! (Wbool & the Boer War)  
Carte de Visite (Photographers)  
Captain Helpman- His years in Warrnambool.  
Charges Strictly Moderate (Hotels bk 6)  
Civility to Customers (Hotels bk 4)  
Colourful Characters (People who passed this way bk4)  
Commodious Premises (Hotel bk 7)  
Days of Their Lives (ed.)  
Every Convenience for Visitors (Hotels bk 8)  
Every Attention Paid (Hotels bk 5)  
First Class Accommodation and Stabling (Hotels bk 3)  
Good Cuisine (Hotels bk 9)  
The Lance Pan letterbook  
**Leading Lights (lighthouses & lighthousekeepers)**  
Men of Yesteryear (People Who Passed this Way Bk2)  
Nobby - WFG Nettleton  
Pioneer Parade ( People who passed this way bk5)  
Port Personalities (People who passed this way Bk 1)  
Pride of the South (Warrnambool in verse)  
Second to None ( Wbool National School)  
Shake, Rattle and Roll (Wbool earthquakes) ed.  
**Silent Lives (Women of Wbool & district)**  
**Streets Ahead (Wbool street names & origins)**  
The Best Ales, Wines and Spirits (Hotels bk 2)  
**The Great Warrnambool Exhibition**  
The Wreck of the Loch Ard (ed.)  
Trips and Treks (Heytesbury and Otways) ed.  
Warnimble - Bk One - 5 articles  
Warnimble - Bk Two - 5 articles  
Warrnambool and Federation  
Warrnambool's Historians and Historical Societies  
Women of the West (People who passed this way bk 3)  
Worland on Warrnambool (ed.)  
Worland Writes (ed.)