

HISTORY NEWS

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President's Report

Our affiliated societies are very important to the RHSV. Since 2004 we have had a History of Victoria Support Group, which has done excellent work in bringing ideas and resources to various regions through seminars and presentations, and it has also provided another way for societies to network, apart from the regional support networks that many areas of the state enjoy.

Alleyne Hockley has just stepped down as Coordinator of the HVSG after many years of fine service and Pauline Hitchins, a recent addition to this group, has taken on that role. Pauline has been a communications officer with both the National Trust and Heritage Council of Victoria, giving her a deep knowledge of our state. Pauline's influence will

already be felt in this issue of *History News*, which will feature more local stories of our affiliated societies. Also 'Around the Societies' will be enlarged and its presentation revamped. Being now largely digital, *History News* can accommodate this by, at times, expanding to twenty pages without a significant financial cost.

I have recently had occasion to read several dozen newsletters from our societies and I will continue to do so throughout the year. I am often moved to write to an individual society congratulating them on their newsletter, and again, will continue to do so as the year unfolds.

The newsletters of affiliated societies of course vary in size and quality depending

on the current strength of the society or the availability of the right personnel to produce it. I am currently pondering how we can share the best examples of our newsletters so that all can see these to boost the quality of their own publications. A page on our website will soon host examples considered to be of high quality.

Also, this page can share ideas for newsletter articles to give harried editors more assistance. The RHSV Publications Committee in recent years had used innovative ideas to strengthen *History News*. We instituted new article series, including: 'Murders in Melbourne', 'Halls of Fame', 'If Trees Could Talk' and 'Windows on History', which have provided many fine articles.

The newsletter of any society is key to its activities. It not only informs the outside world about the society, its executive and its events, but also binds the society to the local community and to the wider history movement.

The local historical society informs a community of its past and strengthens its identity by telling stories of where it has been. This in turn helps inform where the community is going. The newsletter is key to the support given to the society by the local shire or council. You must make sure each Councillor receives a copy of your newsletter. The RHSV receives and files all your newsletters, but now with a site to display the best of the best or ideas for new ways to enliven newsletters, societies can inform and enrich the community history movement as never before.

So, if you have skills and get the chance to edit a newsletter, grasp the nettle!

Richard Broome AM



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History News

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What's On

'May you live in interesting times'

Well, that old curse has gained potency recently. It seems that being part of large-scale history-in-the-making is quite uncomfortable and alarming.

Nearly all our planned events up to and including July have been cancelled or postponed. All ticket buyers can get a full refund when their event is cancelled.

Some events will move to Zoom, including the History Writing Group and the History Bookclub. Our AGM in May will also be a virtual meeting to which we will invite our members to attend through their computer.

One group of our volunteers is developing a series of simple history-based activities for all ages that are designed to bridge our social isolation.

AWARDS OF MERIT

Awards of Merit closing date: 5pm Thursday 9 April

Every historical society has dedicated volunteers who deliver exceptional work for their society, year in, year out. This is your opportunity to nominate those volunteers for an RHSV Award of Merit or Fellowship and make sure they know they are appreciated.

The presentation of these awards usually takes place at our AGM, however, this year it would be better if the presentations took place later in the year.

2020 COMMUNITY HERITAGE GRANTS NOW OPEN

Closing Date: 4 May 2020

'Community Heritage Grants' is a federally funded grants program, operating since 1994, which offers grants of up to \$15,000 to assist in preserving cultural heritage collections of national significance.

Not-for-profit organisations, such as historical societies, regional museums, public libraries and Indigenous and migrant community groups throughout Australia, are encouraged to apply.

As an example, the RHSV has just completed the three stages of this grant program which started with a Significance Assessment, then a Preservation Needs Assessment followed, finally, by new archival quality shelving and storage materials for our manuscript collection.

VICTORIAN COMMUNITY HISTORY AWARDS

NOW OPEN

Closing date: 5pm, Wednesday 8 July

The Victorian Community History Awards are now open for entry. From our website you can download an entry form or you can complete an online entry. Or you can request a hard copy entry form be mailed out.

Please pass the word on to any friends, colleagues or members who might have published or created a Victorian history project between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2020.

TRANSURBAN GRANTS OPEN

A silver lining to the COVID-19 shut-down is that we will have time on our hands to complete all those niggly back-burner projects including lodging grant applications. Get cracking!

Transurban will open their Community Grant applications on April 1, 2020 for the month and close April 30, 2020.

Grants of up to \$5,000 will be awarded for projects bringing social and environmental benefits to communities in Melbourne near Transurban's roads. Projects in the following local government areas are geographically eligible:

- Moreland City Council
- Moonee Valley City Council
- City of Port Phillip
- City of Melbourne
- Boroondara City Council
- Stonnington City Council
- City of Yarra Council

Please see our website for application criteria.

BOOKCLUB:

Our new bookclub meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the RHSV. We ponder the big and the small issues over a glass of wine and some cheese.

And we are not going to be vanquished by COVID-19! Our bookclub will meet through ZOOM. We can't pour you a glass of red so you'll have to do that at home but we can have a lively charged discussion.

Our next three books are:

14 Apr 5:30pm - 7pm

Truganini: Journey through the apocalypse by Cassandra Pybus.

The haunting story of the extraordinary Aboriginal woman behind the myth of 'the last Tasmanian Aborigine'. Truganini also spent a large part of her life in Victoria and early Melbourne.

12 May 5:30pm - 7pm

The Maddest Place on Earth by Jill Giese

9 Jun 5:30pm - 7pm

Mannix by Brenda Niall

Please check our website for updates and further information on the activities listed on this page.

Also, please be aware - We continue to work in the Drill Hall and if you wish to contact us, please do so through our website, by email or by telephone.

We thank all the historical societies which have let us know that they have closed their museums and cancelled events. We are looking forward to Spring and its gifts of rebirth and renewal.



Aerial view of Chadstone shopping complex and car parking with the Convent of the Good Shepherd in the background, on Dandenong Road (Princes Highway), Chadstone.

Pratt, Charles Daniel, 1892-1968, photographer.

<http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/386104>

Chadstone: a new era in suburban shopping

Chadstone, *The Fashion Capital*, was Melbourne's first shopping centre and was the largest in Australia. Chadstone Shopping Centre, located at 1341 Dandenong Road, Malvern East, stands on the former site of the Convent of the Good Shepherd, built in 1883. Kenneth Myer, of the Myer Emporium, purchased 30 acres of their land in 1958 and although Myer had plans to build a shopping centre in Burwood East, the plan was dropped in favour of the prosperous south-eastern suburb of Malvern East. Chadstone Shopping Centre was built at a cost of six million pounds and was opened by Victorian Premier Henry Bolte, on 3 October 1960. Its attractions were ample parking near the shops and shoppers' freedom to walk from shop to shop without conflict with cars.

The post-war years brought numerous changes to Melbourne with the arrival of a million immigrants over a twenty-year period. The small business which had served inner city neighbourhoods, was increasingly being replaced by sprawling shopping centres. In 1953, Kenneth Myer returned from a visit to the USA, where he'd met with a number of architects involved with the design of shopping malls. In 1958, the American firm of Welton Beckett and Associates was appointed as the design architect, with Tompkins and Shaw Architects as the production architect. During the project, the senior board of Myer was concerned that the architects didn't fully understand the Australian concept and were adopting the American shopping mall model.

Initially Chadstone Shopping Centre included 72 shops, a three-level Myer department store, a supermarket, an upper and lower mall, 3UZ radio station, exhibition hall, medical centre and child-minding facilities. In 1963, Myer added a new floor to its store, but there were no further developments until the Gandel Group acquired Chadstone in 1983. The shopping centre has had several major expansions since that time, continuing its reputation as the largest shopping centre in Australia.

Rose Raymen



Heritage Report

Covid-19 has eclipsed the bushfires, but people are still suffering and significant community assets have been lost forever. It is appropriate now to consider how to safeguard collections against an increasingly uncertain future.

To this end, the Federation of Australian Historical Societies has announced the Local History Backup. Local historical societies will create real time capsules, of five to ten objects, and share photos of the objects and of the burial ceremony. Societies can also create virtual time capsules for the Federation's Digital Time Capsule. If fire or other disaster were to destroy part of your local historical society's collection, what would you most wish subsequent generations to remember about the history of their community? Clear instructions can be found on the Federation's web site: look for 'Local History Backup' on the Federation home page or go straight to: <https://www.history.org.au/local-history-backup/>.

This is also a good time for local societies to review emergency plans, safe storage protection and insurance policies; remember that the RHSV offers member societies insurance tailored to the special needs of historical organisations.

The Heritage Committee fights for assets threatened by fire, but also those threatened by human 'improvements'.

Fawkner Park is a classic nineteenth-century Melbourne park characterised by tree-lined avenues and on the Victorian Heritage Register. The City of Melbourne proposes to improve it with a new multi-use court, much bulkier than the current basketball court, and located on a prominent site where it will intrude on the traditional layout and replace a significant grassed area.

Heritage Victoria refused a permit because the multi-use court would require a network of new paths running counter to the historic avenues and would intrude visually on them. The City argues that relocating the court would solve a drainage problem!

Surprisingly, instead of altering its proposal, the City appealed to the Heritage Council to overrule Heritage Victoria's ruling. Is that because, as we have heard, some councillors are driven by anger against Heritage Victoria for its refusal to grant a permit for the now discredited Doyle Plan to rebuild the Queen Victoria Market?

The Doyle Plan lives on as a zombie in the Council's current improvement, sorry, 'renewal' plan—'Option A'—which, like the Doyle Plan but with different strategies, aims to refashion and sanitise the market with uniform permanent stalls, more events and more 'hospitality' (read fast food).

The permanent stalls, that are technically

removable via forklift, called 'Point of Sale storage', would be refrigerated storage cabinets with sales counters on top to replace the current jumble of trestle table stalls set up by traders. These cabinets would replace existing storage at Franklin Street, enabling conversion of the existing car park into an events space called 'Market Square'. Traders would no longer bring their own vehicles to their stalls and trade from them, as they have done for 140 years, but would drop their goods at loading docks and then somehow transport them to their fixed stalls. These drastic changes would destroy the market. Council asserts that they will increase profit—presumably because they think the clean, modern look would attract more customers! But Council's own projections show revenue steadily increasing, with profit 'projected to average around \$0.5 million per annum'. (Economic Justification Submission to Heritage Victoria, 3.4).

The issue now before Heritage Victoria is the construction of two major structures, 'Trader Shed' and 'Northern Shed'. These would both contain loading docks and extensive waste management facilities. Trader Shed would contain more storage, as well as toilets, showers, lunchroom, meeting rooms and lockers for traders, plus public toilets and a parents' room. To squeeze all this in, six levels are required (three underground). As a result,



Proposed 'Trader Shed', Rear View from Shed H Looking West, with the 1869 Meat Market to the Right (City of Melbourne/ NH Architecture, Planning Submission to Heritage Victoria, p. 11).

the proposed Trader Shed is much too bulky for the site, as well as being totally unsympathetic to its Victorian surrounds.

We do not oppose a new facility, but it must fit the space as infill. The current proposal, as the architect's elevation shows, is brutally out of character with the existing roof lines.

The proposed Northern Shed is to cover the northern, Victoria Street, end of Queen Street, between the meat market, the Victoria Street shops and the sheds. It would be a single-story structure with a slightly futuristic sloped canopy constituting a major visual intrusion totally out of character with the surrounding structures.

Neither of these structures will revive the market. Making the market more hygienic will not increase custom. Loading docks won't be needed if traders continue to use their own vans. The People's Panel opposed 'the gold plating of infrastructure' and expressed 'concern that increasing infrastructure to the proposed scale could result in a larger redevelopment than what is needed'. That is precisely what we see in the Council's current proposals. Will the zombie Doyle Plan walk again?

Charles Sowerwine
Chair, Heritage Committee.

Ardent Supporter of Regional Historical Associations dies.

Long time and past members of historical societies throughout Victoria will note with sadness the death of Christine Evelyn Gray on 30 January 2020 at the age of 94 years.

Christine will long be remembered for her strong and dedicated support of the foundation of the Victorian Committee of Affiliated Historical Societies (V.C.A.H.S), which was the fore runner of the very active History Support Group.

Based upon her work as Ringwood Society delegate to the newly formed Eastern Region, Christine travelled widely across Victoria speaking at meetings, seminars and workshops on the benefits of Regional Association development as focus points for the RHSV involvement in and support for local society projects.

Her work in co-ordinating Museums Victoria workshops and arranging indexing workshops involving member late John Adams, RMIT lecturer, provided the basis for museum indexing and cataloguing, much appreciated by small historical groups. She gave unstinting support to local societies

seeking assistance in the preparation of submissions for National Trust and local classification drawing upon her talent as the author of historical notes on Lilydale historical features.

Christine served as Chair of State Committee, proving most capable bringing to consensus the differing opinions of delegates; yes, there were certainly differences not easily navigated.

Christine was elected as a Councillor of the RHSV from 1985-1990 and served as Vice President 1989-1990. She was awarded Life Membership of the Lilydale Society in 1989 and the RHSV Award of Merit in 2018 when President Don Garden and Councillor Carole Woods spoke sincerely and meaningfully of Christine's great service to the History Movement throughout the State of Victoria.

In one of my last conversations with Christine, whilst then on a trip to England, Christine told me of publications she had viewed in local museums in Essex. "You know Judith, you cannot put off publishing our local history material. You need to do it now."

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Judith A. Bilszta F.R.H.S.V.

January 2020

A postscript from the RHSV

Sue Thompson, president of Lilydale & District Historical Society, nominated Christine Gray for the RHSV Award of Merit in 2018. Sue organised, and was present at, the award presentation at Christine's retirement home in Geelong on 21 March 2019. Christine was a foundation member of the Lilydale & DHS in 1971.

How the Yarra got its name

It has recently been suggested that the Yarra River should be renamed 'Birrarrung' as this was its original Woiwurung name. This indeed was its name and means 'River of Mists and Shadows'.

However, there is a lot of confusion and urban myth about how the name 'Yarra' actually came about. This is made all the more complicated by the fact that the principal characters in the story were all practiced liars. This included the warring co-founders of Melbourne, John Batman and John Pascoe Fawkner, plus the surveyor for the Port Phillip Syndicate, John Helder Wedge.

The story begins in May 1835, when John Batman made his historic journey to Port Phillip, bringing with him seven Aboriginal people from Sydney as guides and interpreters. Although Batman scarcely mentions them in his diary when in Melbourne, these Sydney men did their required job. They made contact with the Woiwurung people and organised the historic meeting with Batman on the Plenty River at Greensborough.

This Plenty River meeting site was confirmed by William Barak in 1888, but the myth promoted by Fawkner that it was on Merri Creek, still persists.

After this meeting, Batman returned to Tasmania on 9 June 1835, leaving five of the seven guides from Sydney at Geelong, together with the other three colonists in his party. The surveyor in the Port Phillip Syndicate John Helder Wedge then came over from Tasmania with Henry Batman and his family and they were dropped off at Geelong on 7 August 1835.

Wedge surveyed today's Geelong region for four weeks accompanied by William Buckley the escaped convict, who had come into the camp on 6 July 1835. After

this, two Sydney men, two Wathurong men and one of the colonists took Wedge to Melbourne in a whaleboat, arriving there on 2 September 1835. The two Wathurong men and the colonist then returned to Geelong by boat, whilst the two Sydney men accompanied Wedge on his survey work.

Back on 2 September though, as the boat came up the river and approached the Queen Street falls, a Sydney man exclaimed Yarra! Yarra! This meant 'waterfall' in their Sydney tongue, but Wedge misunderstood. He thought they were telling him it was the name of the river.

Wedge was at that time probably a bit distracted, because John Pascoe Fawkner's ship *Enterprise*, with a party led by Captain Lancey, was already moored at the falls. Wedge subsequently got into an argument with Lancey and said they had no right to be there on the land claimed by Batman. He then gave Lancey a written order to leave.

According to John Pascoe Fawkner, Lancey handed the paper back to Wedge and informed him that he '*...might want it for some necessary occasion, which would be the full worth of such a notice*'. In the flowery language of the day Lancey was of course telling Wedge to wipe his bum with it.

This clearly demonstrated the rivalry and ill-will between Batman and Fawkner that continued unabated for the rest of their lives. Batman died disfigured by syphilis in 1839, but for the following twenty years Fawkner continued to give public lectures on what a liar and degenerate Batman was.

However back in 1835 Wedge told everyone the name of the river was Yarra, and it stuck. Myths have now become

entrenched around the history and meaning of the name, making it difficult to correct. This started when it was wrongly assumed that the natives with Wedge were locals. Building on this, it was then assumed that 'Yarra' was a Woiwurung word. It is, but Yarra in Woiwurung means 'hair' and Yarra-Yarra means 'fur'. The many Woiwurung words with 'yarra' in them have since been conveniently ignored. All these words refer to specific types of hair such as eyebrows, eyelashes, beards, moustaches, pubic hair and even baldness.

The situation was further confused fifty years later by Hugh McCrae, the grandson of Georgina McCrae, an early settler on the Mornington Peninsula. In his grandmother's Boonwurrung language notes, one word containing 'yarra' referred to tidal flows. Hugh noted he thought it meant 'ever flowing' and once more the idea stuck. One Boonwurrung word about tidal flow has now been misapplied to wrongly claim that Yarra-Yarra means 'ever-flowing'.

This error on how the Yarra was named continues to this day, despite Wedge having later publicly corrected his mistake. In correspondence to Batman's biographer, John Bonwick on 23 February 1856, Wedge wrote that after finishing his survey work in Melbourne in late September 1835, he and the Sydney men began walking back to Geelong. On reaching the ford at the Werribee River, the Sydney men again pointed to the rapids and said 'Yarra'.

Wedge wrote it was then he realised he had been mistaken in the name of the river. But it was already too late and the myth is today still firmly entrenched as fact.

Jim Poulter



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Wheatlands Warracknabeal Vintage Machinery Rally

Before the COVID-19 restrictions, Warracknabeal and District Historical Society was all ready to stage its 53rd annual vintage machinery rally at its Agricultural Museum on the Henty Highway at Easter.

A Victorian wheatbelt town, Warracknabeal is situated on the banks of the Yarriambiack Creek, 330 km north-west of Melbourne. It is the business and services centre of the northern Wimmera and southern Mallee districts, and is the base for local government offices for the Shire of Yarriambiack.

Warracknabeal's museums and historical collections reflect the region's strong farming base and showcase its development and the innovation of local residents. The rally has its roots in a parade held as part of the town's 1967 centenary celebrations.

The Warracknabeal and District Historical Society began five years earlier. As the society's collecting began, initially largely stored in members' homes, some of the local farmers led a push to collect and restore the old machinery that was 'lying about under trees on farms'. These were kept in a shed behind the showgrounds. Following a street parade for the centenary, the machines were taken to the showgrounds and this became the first rally.

In 1970 when the town's historical 1907 State Savings Bank of Victoria closed, it was purchased by the Shire Council and leased to the Historical Society. This became the Historical Centre, providing a formal base for the Society after a decade of meeting at the Mechanics Institute. And

the collection had a home at last.

The banking chamber has been retained as it was, featuring beautiful wooden panelling. Part of the downstairs is used as a sitting room containing historical items as well for storage of collections: records, photos, maps and books. The upstairs manager's residence has been set up with collections of kitchen, bedroom, nursery and other household items.

In 1971 a committee of representatives from surrounding local towns in the Wimmera was formed with the aim of establishing a machinery museum. The site of Warracknabeal was chosen because of its central position.

By 1973, with the aid of government grants, the museum building had been erected, and the machinery collection moved to the new facility. A wonderful tarmac in front of the building to display and parade items has now become the site for the Easter Rally. A 2014 bequest enabled construction of a new foyer containing an office, archive room, meeting room, kitchenette and toilets. This was officially opened in 2017.

Showcasing and preserving Australia's agricultural history, the complex includes a replica of the log 'Smithy' hut where Hugh McKay produced the world's first Sunshine stripper-harvester in 1884. There's also a permanent display of more than 1000 samples of grain from 40 countries. The collection focuses on the invention and modification of machinery designed from necessity to suit farming conditions locally and Australia-wide.

Another branch of the Society is Wheatlands Warehouse, which is a

second-hand shop. It started from humble beginnings in 1998, selling off excess parts and tools, that were no longer needed. Other people wanted to sell their items and it snowballed from there. Today the shop is staffed by volunteers and is open seven days a week. There are about 1600 active vendors and a commission is received from goods sold.

There are five committees or divisions that run these activities, with the Warracknabeal and District Historical Society being the umbrella organisation. The Historical Centre has a committee that meets every three months. Wheatlands Warracknabeal Agricultural Machinery Museum has three committees or divisions. The Machinery division meets monthly and handles the restoration program, other rallies to attend and business to do with machinery. The Management Committee manages the Museum, particularly building and maintenance and future planning. It also meets every month. The Rally Committee concentrates on running a successful rally and meets monthly before each rally, and every two months after that. The Warehouse has a Committee that meets every two months and deals with Warehouse concerns.

Warracknabeal is not a large town and many of the members are on several of the committees. There are around 120 members: about half of these are 'expats' or people who are not particularly active, but are interested in the town's history.

The 2020 two-day Easter rally would have featured working vintage tractors and machinery, stationary engines, steam engines, axe handle lathe and vintage cars. There was to be a on CASE and American Machines this year plus shearing demonstrations and model aeroplanes, as well as craft stalls and vintage and collectable displays.

Lesley Stephan, WDHS Secretary

PS The RHSV shares the disappointment experienced by the Warracknabeal and District Historical Society and the wide range of other events planned by Victoria's Historical Societies for the coming months.

But, as historians, we all know that good times come and go, and bad times come and go. We look forward to the time when we can again promote the importance of history and historical artefacts with future events.



Windows on History: St George's Presbyterian Church, Geelong

As Anzac Day 2020 approaches, Australians will once again honour the service and sacrifice of so many during hard years of war, as they have done since 1916. The longed-for peace in 1918 brought the men home but it also brought hardship for many: striking workers, unemployment, shortages and illness, not the least of which was the influenza pandemic that swept the world. Even during the tough days of war, public monuments were already being built in the landscape and grieving families commissioned stained glass memorials to individual soldiers in churches across the country.

The need for shared remembrance was strong, and church communities everywhere began collecting funds to provide permanent monuments, including many stained-glass windows, to their fallen and to those who served. It often took years to amass the necessary funds and was not until 1921 that St George's Presbyterian Church in Geelong installed a window, costing £157.10.0, dedicated to 20 men who died and a brass plaque to honour all 120 Presbyterians who enlisted. Church secretary and benefactor James H. McPhillimy, ordered the window on behalf of the congregation and probably contributed to the cost, equivalent to about \$76,000 in 2020.

Both memorials were unveiled by Brigadier-General Robert Smith during a solemn service conducted by Presbyterian Chaplain-General, the Rev. J. L. Rentoul, two men who had served with distinction in France.

Like thousands of other young men across Australia, the 120 men from St George's left jobs and families to defend the British Empire and serve their God, King and country. They were from a diversity of backgrounds, trades and professions: grocers to graziers, labourers to law clerks. Of the 20 who died, 18-year-old recruit Edward Palmer died of pneumonia in Geelong Hospital, four were killed in action at Gallipoli, four were thrown into the debacle at Fromelles, and others survived illnesses and wounds only to die in later battles in the Somme mud and in Flanders fields; stories tragically repeated with variations in every community. One St George's family was particularly hard hit

when Alexander McLean and his two sons, 21 years old Alex and 18 years old Victor went into the line together on 19 July 1916 at Fromelles. Both young men were killed. A year later their mother wrote to the authorities that her husband Alexander 'has never been the same in health since', and asked for his early return, which was ultimately granted.

St George's two-light window, *The Crown of Life*, was based on the text, 'Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of life' (Revelations 2:10). The subject suited a two-light window, as the 'heavenly' figure of Christ (or sometimes an Angel) could be placed on one side, juxtaposed with an 'earthly' kneeling knight or soldier on the other. At St George's, traditional armour was replaced by a khaki-clad Australian accepting the laurel wreath of victory.

The digger and the AIF badge entered the iconography of stained glass in 1920, firstly in secular settings such as at Melbourne Teachers' College and was accepted in the Barkly Street Methodist Church, Ballarat, later the same year. St George's *Crown of Life* was designed and made by Melbourne's leading stained-glass artist, William Montgomery. Montgomery made more than 80 commemorative windows from 1915 onwards including eight two-lights for the first stage of the new chapel at Geelong Grammar School and another suite for Newtown's All Saints.

It is likely that William Montgomery's son, 'Mont', was the auburn-haired model for the young soldier depicted in the window, his slouch hat and rifle at his side. In 1915, Mont was a senior art student at the National Gallery of Victoria Art School, when he enlisted in the newly forming Victorian 6th Brigade. He survived a torpedo attack in the Aegean Sea, fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula and went on to take part in battles over more than two years in France and Belgium. Well aware that the war was soon to end, he was killed at Montbrehain on 6 October 1918, one day before the last Australian troops were withdrawn from the Western Front. Typically, families grieved quietly, understanding the pain that was felt by other families' losses. Perhaps this outstanding work of art might have been Montgomery's way of paying tribute



Heritage Council Victoria, 'Stained Glass Window at Geelong St. George's Presbyterian Church' <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/196891>

to one community's loss as well as acknowledging his own.

For more than 140 years, St George's Church served Presbyterians in Geelong and, although its doors closed in January 2015, its solid bluestone and distinctive broach spire remains an integral part of the Geelong landscape. As time goes by, only a few will remember the wealth of stained glass inside, which documents generations of Geelong pioneers and people. *The Crown of Life* remains among its treasures, a small but significant part of St. George's and Geelong's history.

Bronwyn Hughes

If Trees talked: A Conversation with Old Red

By Green Gully Creek, close to Newstead, estimated to be well over 400 years old, a majestic old river red gum grows, dominating the skyline, towering over nearby trees and buildings.

A silent historian, watching and waiting.

What secrets do you keep Old tree, what have you witnessed as our history unfolded?

Old Tree talk to me, or do I read your silence?

I know you witnessed Major Mitchell's party passing by on his way home to Sydney in 1836; the Major's glowing reports of the country he had seen soon brought the squatters and their flocks to the area.

And the discovery of gold in 1850 which brought a huge influx of miners of many nationalities to the area. They searched for the alluvial gold scattered close to the surface, then through quartz mining expanded into payable mines, you saw them move on to richer gold fields.

In 1854 you witnessed a site for the township of St. Andrews surveyed at Mingus's Crossing downstream on the Loddon, and how that new township didn't eventuate. You waited until 1856, when a new site was surveyed for Newstead, and land sales began. The site of Newstead township was situated on the Tarringower run. But when land was made available for selection in 1854-56, you saw the forced abandonment of pastoral runs.

I know you watched the building of the three bridges built over the Loddon, the first built

in 1861, while the township grew around the crossing; two flour mills, a creamery, later the Butter Factory, blacksmiths, wheelwright and coach builder, ginger beer factory, bank, butchers, hotels, police station with Newstead's mounted constable, post office, churches, Mechanics Institute, Courthouse, biscuit factory and general stores.

I know you heard the cursing of the bullockies as bullock wagons passed by, the whip cracking drivers of horse drawn vehicles, saw the weariness of those who walked, often pushing a wheelbarrow or with a swag on their back as they negotiated rough bush tracks, later roads, that often turned to boggy quagmires in winter.

I know you witnessed the first combined church services in 1854, your spreading boughs their shelter. In 1856 the residents, most of them living in tents or slab huts took up a subscription to provide for the establishment of a church and school. They purchased a tent and you watched as they erected it in the vicinity, and fitted it out as a chapel. It was used by different denominations and a school until the Common School was built in 1859. That year the first agricultural show was held, with the showground then being moved elsewhere as the site was required for a new railway station.

I know you saw the Castlemaine to Maryborough railway being built in 1874, the line passing close by, you heard the trains rumbling past, felt the vibrations, heard the auctioneer's raucous voices

in the nearby sale yards, the bleating of stock waiting to be loaded onto trains en route to Melbourne

And what of your tales, about the rushing floodwaters that spread across the paddocks, swirling around your roots? The Loddon River, a quiet stream in summer, has a long history of floods, inundating houses and businesses with 'fearful' damage. In 1911 a levee bank was constructed to prevent such disasters, but still the water spread across the flats.

I know you also witnessed the tears as Newstead sent its sons and daughters off to war. The Relief of Mafeking (Boer War) was celebrated in 1901, the streets were illuminated with lighted tar on either side, and the whole town turned out to celebrate, the streets ringing with joy. Other wars followed and again the 'welcome home' was one of joy and relief, but perhaps not with the same exuberance of 1901.

Old Tree you have always been an important part of my life and of our celebrations; Five hundred people gathered under your spreading boughs for a religious service which commemorated the re-enactment of Cobb and Coaches in 1963. Afterwards the coach continued its journey to Plaistowe, an old changing station in the 1840-50s.

In 1968 celebrations were held to mark the centenary of the Mechanics Hall and in 1977 a church service was held to mark the centenary of education and the first church services.

Old Tree, a silent witness to our history, of the first people of country, the coming of the squatters, the settlers, diggers in search of their fortune, the birth of the first white baby, the first motor car, floods, droughts, fire, the hardship and the struggles of the people who came before as they coped with the harsh conditions of a new country.

Old Tree, you stand before me, tall and strong, a reminder of the strength and endurance of our pioneers who called this place home.

Joan Sartori

Secretary, Newstead and District Historical Society, Inc.



1968 gathering to mark the centenary of the Mechanics Hall
Photo courtesy of the Newstead & District Historical Society

Around the Societies

Prepared by volunteer Glenda Beckley on behalf of the History Victoria Support Group.

We welcome Societies to submit an article/event of around 50 words, or email your Newsletter to us and we will write up around 50 words for you around twice per year.

FOR THE JUNE 2020 ISSUE

please send details to office@historyvictoria.org.au by Friday 8th May 2020.

In this rapidly changing situation, please check with individual societies as to whether their exhibitions, museums, meetings and other events mentioned in Around the Societies, will still be happening as advertised.

CHELSEA AND DISTRICT: We have finalized our lease agreement to remain at 313A Station Street, and our storage facility "shed" will still remain in the grounds of the Court House. We also have the availability to hold exhibitions and events at the Court House but due to our present circumstances we are not in a position to do so! Manning an exhibition does require at least two able bodied people per session. Our Society, like most Volunteer organisations, is facing new challenges as the pool of volunteers has lessened. The Committee welcome your suggestions or ideas. Even so, the committee is ensuring all files are being catalogued and updated. This is a massive task and one that will take many hours of work. Contact chelseahistorical@bigpond.com

CIVIL AVIATION: Meetings are at the Airways Museum, and commence at 12noon at 1 Edgar Johnston Lane, located in the rear of the building at the corner of Wirraway Road and Shaw Court, Essendon Airport. Following Wednesday meetings, a light lunch is served. The cost is \$4. The program for the first half of 2020 includes: 8 April - Speaker: Mr Barry Bennett, Subject: 'From Electrical Apprentice to Manager: 43 Years with DCA'; 10 June - Speaker: Mr Geoff Goodall, Subject: Cocos Islands Airport: Indian Ocean Aerial Crossroads. See www.airwaysmuseum.com or contact (03) 9374 3905

HEIDELBERG: The Society was formed in April 1967 and the historic Old Heidelberg Court house has been our home since April 1979. Through our collections and exhibitions, we provide an informative insight into the development of the Heidelberg district, its history and heritage. Our area of primary interest is the District of Heidelberg as generally referred to, the Shire of Heidelberg, City of Heidelberg and City of Banyule within their boundaries, as established from time

to time. In April 1979 the Society acquired the use of the Old Court House after a new nearby Magistrates' court was built. In the following months the Society did restoration and maintenance work and established a museum in the old court. The exhibition of Heidelberg's 'Busy Bee Signature Quilt 1895-96' will close on Sunday 26 April 2020. Our new exhibition on the Arts and Crafts movement will open in the second half of the year.

KEW: 'The Feminine Aesthetic – Fashion in Melbourne 1860-1950 - Villa Alba Museum'. Enter a glamorous world exploring the feminine aesthetic in fashion and design at the historic Villa Alba Museum. The exhibition showcases almost one hundred years of Australian fashion and design, drawn from the collections of the Kew Historical Society in one of the great remaining Victorian-era interiors. Curated by Nicole Jenkins. In addition to the general days of opening, a special day of lectures by experts will explore the work of Melbourne designers and home dressmakers on Wednesday 29 April, 10am-3pm. Villa Alba Museum, 44 Walmer Street, Kew Saturday and Sundays from 25 April to 17 May, 1-4pm General Entry - \$12, \$10 concession. Lectures \$20 Contact info@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au

KOO WEE RUP SWAMP: How pleased we are to say that the Society's Museum has now re-opened after over two years of renovations. We plan to be open on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 1.30-4.00pm or by appointment. We had our grand re-opening on 1 March, attended by about 75 people. The Mayor of Cardinia did the honours of cutting the cake and made a lovely speech and our local ward councillor also made a speech. We acknowledge and are grateful for the financial support of the Cardinia Shire, the Bank of Bendigo and the Lions Club Opportunity shop, both at Koo Wee Rup. Contact harnold@dcsi.net.au

MELBOURNE MARITIME HERITAGE NETWORK: In organisational terms we are still ramping up our capacity to affect change and to pursue those maritime objectives identified thus far: see our website www.mmhn.org.au. The Board

plans will incorporate input from Special Advisory Groups (SAGs). If you haven't registered your interest in one or more SAGs, then you may wish to do so now. Or, you may choose to participate by simply keeping the MMHN Board 'in the loop' about relevant maritime matters by emailing info@mmhn.org.au. Your input is invaluable to us. We rely on your continuing interest, advocacy and participation. Remember to join the Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network, <https://www.mmhn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/MMHN-Membership-Form.pdf>

NEPEAN: 'Behind The Name' exhibition - Do YOU know who or what were: Cheviot, Nepean, Sullivan, Darbyshire or Corsair? What connections to the past do these names hold? That the beach where PM Harold Holt disappeared in 1967, was the site of a shipwreck 80 years earlier? That Portsea was named by a convict transported to Tasmania? Discover more interesting facts about the naming of Nepean Peninsula sites during the National Trust Heritage Festival 2020 - 18 April to 19 May 1.30-4.30pm Saturday and Sunday at the Sorrento Museum Mechanics' Institute, 827 Melbourne Road, Sorrento. Contact (03) 5984 0255

PORT MELBOURNE: At the January meeting three members presented and each gave a brief talk about an item in the collection. John gave a lively account of how a 1942 air raid siren was acquired for the collection. David presented a photo of the arrival at Port Melbourne of Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester who was attending the 1934 Victorian Centenary celebrations. He showed how one photo led to a trail of information discovery. Janet presented a charming panoramic 'fold out style' sketch book, which seemed at least two meters long, depicting the beach front from Station Pier to Lagoon Pier. Janet took the opportunity to remind members that history was all around us and significant items about Port Melbourne are also always appreciated as acquisitions by PMHPS. See www.pmhps.org.au

QUEENSLIFFE HISTORICAL MUSEUM: 'THE HUB' is a truly exciting project. As the 'Cultural Centre' of the Borough,

the HUB will enliven the commercial precinct of the township of Queenscliffe and is expected to act as a focal point for many community activities and events. During the anticipated twelve to fourteen months construction period, the Museum will relocate to a suitable venue. It will continue to deliver its core services to residents and visitors, albeit on a much-reduced scale. Our popular 'Monthly Talks' will continue to be presented, the History Research function will operate as usual, as will some of the Displays and the imperative Administration. In addition, we hope to keep the public informed as to the progress of the 'rebuild' with 'artist's impressions' of what we may all expect when the building is completed. See <http://www.historyofqueenscliffe.com/>

WODONGA: Associate Professor Bruce Pennay's professional and personal pursuits have aligned with Charles Sturt University's goals of enriching the lives of regional Australians. More than two decades working at the University and its predecessor institution and a further 21 years of service post-retirement was rewarded when he was conferred an Honorary Doctor of Arts. When his full-time employment with the University ended after 22 years in 1998, Professor Pennay became an Adjunct Associate Professor and took up state-wide responsibilities within history and heritage. He served terms as a councillor of the Royal Australian Historical Society and as an appointee on the NSW Heritage Council History Advisory Panel from 2004 to 2011. In recent years he has published three histories, 12 academic journal articles and the same number of academic journal book reviews. He was a successful advocate in winning National Heritage listing for Bonegilla Migrant Camp and then State Heritage listing for Benalla Migrant Camp. With support from councils and funding sponsorship from the Murray Darling Basin Authority, he arranged commemorative activities to mark the centenary of Hume Dam on 28 November 2019. Professor Pennay said he was, "pleased to be honoured", but paid tribute to the efforts of others in furthering his career and his causes.

History Victoria Support Group

As a child I enjoyed frequent family trips exploring Victoria, including historic centres such as Beechworth, Mildura, Rushworth and Whroo; as well as the Goldfields area and Gippsland.

My mother's extensive research into family history also whetted my appetite for history. She did most of her research the 'hard way': microfiche, microfilm, hard copies and snail mail letters to researchers and distant 'potential' relatives: also, trips around the state to visit those sites we were connected to through our ancestors. She came home, not only with stories of our ancestors, but with news of new friends and mentors, such as our late Joan Hunt AO, who was also researching a Hitchins connection! And so, it seemed inevitable that I'd be a happy victim of the history bug and I now spend countless hours pursuing this for work and relaxation.

While I am delighted to be appointed the new convenor of HVSG, I am also in awe of those who have come before and I am cognisant of the huge task we face to provide the appropriate support to societies around the state.

There's a wealth of knowledge about historical groups around the state held by the other fabulous volunteer members of the HVSG and I've benefitted from their energy, ideas, feedback and understanding of past achievements of the HVSG.

There are many issues we all face but each society also has its particular challenges. Delivering support across the state is a mammoth task. What training is required, and where do we deliver it?

A series of workshops delivered by Sophie Shilling in Gippsland, in partnership with the Gippsland and Regional Studies Collection at Federation University, has provided valuable guidance to a group of societies and individuals, not all from Gippsland: but, it's a small drop in the ocean really. The level of those courses, beginner, general, advanced, varies

from group to group and it's an ongoing challenge to get the balance right!

Where societies or networks are planning seminars or workshops, we hope RHSV can enhance these events by providing presentations from RHSV or helping identify suitable experts.

Do let us know if you believe you could benefit from a particular workshop or training session in your area; particularly, if you have a network organising a seminar we could link into. And we may be able to direct you to online resources to assist you.

We hope that stories of the success of various societies, such as Wedderburn's cataloguing project and Warracknabeal's great activities, both showcased in this issue, will inspire others to identify a need for support in those areas. We'd love to hear from you all.

It was exciting to read the results of a recent Australia Council survey that revealed tourists were more likely to visit their local museum and art gallery than stop at wineries or theme parks. The survey recorded an increase in all arts activities and noted more domestic tourists attended the arts than organised sport, amusement parks or wineries.

We all know the value of local museums and their collections, which can help visitors understand the development and the stories of the local area. While we often struggle to find the volunteer numbers to open as often as we'd like, it's great to be recognised as contributing to tourism, which is a major contributor to local economic sustainability in many areas.

I look forward to catching up with many of you in the coming months, at least by phone or email, if not in person, but I encourage you to let us know of your successes and the key issues you face, to help us direct our assistance in the best possible way.

Pauline Hitchins

Convenor HSVG (RHSV)

Phone: 0437 296925

Email: hvsg@historyvictoria.com.au

Mistresses of the House in Doveton Street

'Castlemaine, Victoria – View', c. 1861
Photographer J.H. Jones,
From State Library Victoria collection

In *History News*, October 2019, Elizabeth O'Callaghan laments the invisibility of women in the historical records of Warrnambool, in her article 'Silent Lives: My Inspiration'.

That view is also consistent with the story of women in Castlemaine, as told by Heather Holst, in her book *Making a Home: a History of Castlemaine*. Holst notes that Australia's 'pioneer miner narrative' trumpets the courage, perseverance and ingenuity of men who developed new settlements in the 19th century. In contrast, she says, evidence of the women settlers is largely absent from the public record.

Holst cites several women members of Castlemaine's prominent pioneer family the Yandells, to illustrate her point that women, too, deserve recognition for 'courage, perseverance and ingenuity'.

The Yandell brothers built and occupied numerous houses in Castlemaine. For example, in his 1929 Will, held by the Public Records Office of Victoria, A.C.W. Yandell bequeathed thirteen Castlemaine properties to his wife, Lavinia, nee Jorgensen.

Lavinia already owned a property: Allotment 10 of Section 5 (No. 14 Doveton Street). The chain of ownership in original title deeds, from 1858 to the present, admirably demonstrates the capability of single and widowed women, in managing their financial affairs and their dwellings.

Now classified as National Trust Property B5401, Allotment 10, Section 5, is recorded in the Crown Grants Register as being purchased in 1856, by Richard Living. He died the following year, leaving all his properties to his wife, Sylvia Living, nee Hodges.

The next year, 1858, Sylvia is recorded as paying exceptionally high council rates on a 'brick villa residence' on Allotment 10, Section 5. Possibly, before he died, Richard Living had borrowed money to commission the substantial house, and

then his widow was unable to service the debt after construction was completed in 1857. Consequently, the land, house and outbuildings were advertised in the *Mount Alexander Mail*, in September 1859, and the title deeds confirm the sale in November, to the Goldfields Commissioner, AJ Smith.

The resourceful Mrs Living then became Smith's first tenant at No. 14. She earned her rent by taking in boarders. A photograph by JH Jones, c.1861, provides a birds-eye view of Castlemaine, before the completion of the Market Building construction project, 1861-1862. Magnified detail shows the house with its distinctive gables and tall chimneys but minus the bay windows, presumably a later addition, standing proud at No. 14 Doveton Street.

AJ Smith died in 1872, leaving his properties to his wife, Sarah, nee Read. She became a wealthy woman, and continued to use the house as an investment until 1887, when it was sold to another widow, Elizabeth Cramer, nee Nicol. Elizabeth Cramer's death in 1891 brought the house yet another new owner: the widow Bessie Lewis, nee Newton, who rented it out again.

The chain of female owners was interrupted when ACW Yandell acquired the house from Bessie Lewis in 1901. Perhaps it was Yandell who added the bay windows.

Within the Yandell family, ownership changed hands from ACW Yandell to various women relatives: his daughter Lavinia Margery, 1921-1924, then his wife, Lavinia, 1924-1950, who, in her Will, mistakenly surmised that it had been built around 1890. Thereafter it went to her daughter Valerie Yandell, 1950-1951, and then her daughter-in-law Hannah Yandell, nee Rosewarne, until 1965.

After 65 years in the Yandell family, the house was sold to Castlemaine's Municipal Engineer, Henry Kane and his wife Mary, nee Jenkins. Whilst making



No. 14 Doveton St, 2019,
photo K. Mather

significant improvements to the house and garden, the Kanes were famed for the numerous sophisticated parties that they hosted there.

However, they did not stay long in Castlemaine, and the property rapidly changed hands from Kane to Dunn to Ely, who converted it to flats, renting it out until 1973.

Despite being dilapidated after tenant occupation, the house still charmed the writer and poet, Pauline Rough, nee Johnson, and her husband William, who bought it in 1973, and began restoring it to the handsome seven-room dwelling that it still is. For a time, the house enjoyed a rare period of stability. However, financial concerns forced the Roughs to sell the house to their daughter, Marguerite and her husband and young family.

As Pauline wrote in 1987, the year before relinquishing it: 'I doubt that anyone has ever loved this old house as much as I have, but we are finding it difficult to keep it up to the standard that it deserves. It then changed hands twice in two years, finally coming into the possession of its current owner who has faithfully restored the house and who is undoubtedly the equal of Pauline Rough in devotion to it; carrying on the tradition of the female version of the 'pioneer miner narrative'.

Karen Mather



Wedderburn

A book co-authored by two men, more than 37,000 digital records entered by two more men and a speedy and efficient search engine have transformed research and operations of the Wedderburn Historical Records Museum. And we shouldn't overlook a strategic president who encouraged these people to use their talents to benefit local history.

The records museum was founded in 1967 and since then thousands of documents have been collected and housed at its premises: the original 1874 shire offices. The society obtained grant funding to purchase three laptop computers and two A3 sized document scanners, along with the equipment to network them.

The area was originally the Korong Shire and then the Loddon Shire from 1994, but neither exists today and many found this confusing so, under current president Irene Finch, the name was changed last year, hopefully clarifying the location for potential researchers.

A few years ago, the former Korong (Wedderburn) Historical Society was struggling, and then-president Ray Tonkin was known to use his own money to pay society expenses. Members Geoff Arnott and Keith Ring initially came to the rescue, obtaining funding and producing a book, *The golden harvest: a history of Wedderburn*, which helped get the society back in the black. Ray then sought assistance to digitise the existing manual filing system from retired computer systems analyst and programmer Alan Mulraney, bringing the collection and the society into the 21st century.

The result is an outstanding example of good practice for cataloguing collections, minimising handling of fragile items, providing accessible records, generating an income for the society, recognising the wider 'collection' in the community and acknowledging that today's news is tomorrow's history.

Alan was a Victorian public servant from 1980 and 1995 and then ran his own computer business in Doncaster and

later Charlton until he retired in 2015. Luckily Alan, who is also a musician and runs the local visitor radio station, has a keen interest in history, so he developed the program and, for the first year, input around 10,000 records single-handedly. He was then joined by Darryl Arnott, brother of Geoff Arnott; their family has more than a century of association with Wedderburn. Together they've compiled around 27,000 more records.

The system Alan developed allows documents to be scanned into the database as jpeg files and then a record set up to index every name that appears on that document. Surnames are entered into the system separately to given names to give more flexibility in searching for names. Keywords can be entered into the record to link similar types of documents together and the 'Comments field' gives a summary of the document, which is displayed in list form when a search is instigated. The important data search engine uses a blank record form which allows several fields to be filled in simultaneously. The system will then report on all of the records that match with what has been entered. It even provides for a year range search.

Alan admits there was some apprehension initially from some of the members, particularly those who were not computer savvy. However, once a few thousand records had been entered and they could see the speed at which information could be retrieved, they were soon converted.

Other members open the rooms three days a week and, like all societies, welcome new members at any time, especially to help with the many tasks of running a successful research group; and of course, helping build up the database.

Alan modified the software 'to prevent our wives from becoming History Widows' to enable he and Darryl to work from home, meeting in the office every couple of weeks to update the records.

One of the major advantages of the system compared with the manual records is that the society can

photograph and index items from around town, such as honour boards, gravestones, memorials, shire rate books etc. And, since today's news is tomorrow's history, they also index key events from local newspapers.

Because of that, Alan doesn't really see an end to the tasks but is sure the program is up to storing hundreds of thousands of records. At present Darryl is focused on digitising local newspapers and Alan is working on the ratebooks. Backup of the data is obviously critical to ensure that years of hard work is not lost. To that end the society keeps six complete copies of the database in three separate locations.

There are many advantages of digitisation, explains Alan. One being that fragile documents need no longer be handled directly. Another is that the ease of access of information has led to an increase in public requests for information and this in turn enhances the society's financial viability.

In addition to the database, Alan maintains a website for the records museum which generates many of the public enquiries: wedderburnhistorical.com.au

While Wedderburn, 214 kilometres north of Melbourne on the Calder Highway, may be a rural town of around 750 people today, it was originally a gold rush town with some 2000 residents in the late 1800s. There was another mini-gold rush in the 1950s when a local found a large gold deposit in his backyard...but that's a story for another time.

Wedderburn Historical Records Museum 26 High Street Wedderburn, 3518 is open between 10 am and 3pm Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Write to the museum, email: secretary@wedderburnhistorical.com.au, or call 0479 161146.

Alan Mulraney is happy to provide further information on the software package and can be contacted via the details above.

Darryl Arnott (left) and Alan Mulraney

Books Received

By John Schauble



Casey Commemorates. A.J. McAleer and Tony Smith, Mt Evelyn RSL, Mt Evelyn, 2019, pp.1-248, ISBN 9780648509905.

Communities around Australia have commemorated the events of World War 1 at a variety of events between 2014 and 2018. This book documents the way in which the centenary years of events that shaped Australia's war efforts at a local and sometimes national level have been marked in one federal electorate. It does so by collecting and publishing all the speeches given at events in the Casey electorate over the five-year period. It also provides a window into many local commemorative events, books, websites and memorials launched during that time. In that sense it is a rather unique look at the different ways in which history is captured, celebrated and interpreted at a local level.



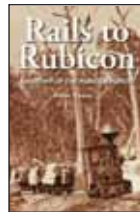
A Spanner in the Works. Loretta Smith, Hachette Australia, Melbourne, 2019, pp. xi-336, ISBN 9780733642104.

The story of Alice Anderson, proprietor of Australia's first all-girl garage, is a ripping tale. Alice was the daughter of an eccentric but well-connected engineer and one-time business partner of John Monash. While her father's career faltered, Alice went on to prosper as a pioneering motorist, chauffeur and later mechanic; the embodiment of the modern 1920s woman. Miss Anderson's Motor Service in Cotham Road, Kew backed the touring service she also ran. Alice became a member of the Lyceum Club and connected through this to historian Jessie Webb, who she took on an epic 1500-mile journey to Alice Springs in a Baby Austin in 1926. She was toying with the idea of aviation when her life was tragically cut short, aged 29. This marvelous, well-written story revives a slice of Melbourne's forgotten past.



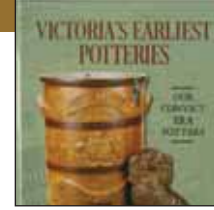
Her Majesty's Theatre Melbourne. Frank Van Straten, Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne, 2018, pp.1-336, ISBN9781925801.

The shows, the stars and the stories of one of Melbourne's most beloved theatres are at the heart of this large format, extensively illustrated history. J.C. Williamson took over the old Alexandra Theatre in 1900, previously the site of L.L. Smith's Hippodrome. Reborn as Her Majesty's, the theatre endures on the site to this day. A devastating fire in 1929 led it to close until 1934. Its latest restoration begun under the ownership of Mike Walsh in 2000 has seen its majesty restored. Those with an interest in Melbourne's theatre history will find this an enthralling work, finely researched and written.



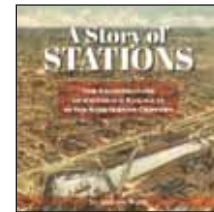
Rails to Rubicon. Peter Evans, Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc., Surrey Hills, 2019, pp. v-200, ISBN 9780909340544.

The Rubicon Forest to the north east of Melbourne was renowned for its fine stands of timber exploited during the first half of the 20th century. Initially, to get the timber out entailed construction of light railways which connected the forest with the main railhead at Alexandra. Originally built with wooden rails and eventually with steel, these were the lifelines of the forest until roads were pushed through. This is a new edition of a work originally published in 1994; one of a number of detailed histories published by the LRRSA, which detail life in Victoria's early timber industry and the communities that surrounded it. It also tells of the Rubicon Power Scheme, the first state-owned hydro-electric system in Australia, begun in 1922 and still operating today.



Victoria's Earliest Potteries. Gregory Hill, The Author, Melbourne, 2019, pp. i-182, ISBN 9780646968360.

Convict era pottery refers to the period 1820 to 1870, when convicts were being transported and a certain style of ceramic ware was being made. While Victoria was not a convict settlement, it did not completely miss the style as previously thought. This is an intriguing if esoteric account. Melbourne's earliest pottery was founded in 1842. It specialised in homewares. Within a few years, immigrant potters were manufacturing all manner of earthenware including drainage pipes and chimney pots. As the gold rushes took off, so too did the demand for bricks, pots, water filters, bottles and all manner of fired goods. In regional Victoria, Bendigo Pottery, founded in 1857 is still producing today.



A story of stations: the architecture of Victoria's railways in the Nineteenth Century. Andrew Ward, Australian Railway Historical Association Victorian Division Inc., Williamstown, 2019, pp. vii-337, ISBN 9780987605443.

The steam era is one which captures the imagination of many. Yet history of the architecture of Victoria's railways in the 19th century is likely not everyone's cup of tea. For those with an interest in public architecture and the imprint of the railways on the Victorian landscape, this book offers an immense amount of detailed information from an era when public infrastructure marked the prosperity of towns and the colony itself. Andrew Ward has acted to capture this disappearing estate; the story of how and why it came to be. Many of the structures which supported the Victorian Railways (and even some from the private railways era) remain in use and are detailed here along with lost treasures. As Victoria embraces a new era of public transport infrastructure, there is enduring relevance in this aspect of our past.

Authors, publishers and Historical Societies are invited to contribute books to the RHSV for the library and for consideration for inclusion in Books Received.

Please note: these books listed are not necessarily offered to the bookshop by authors, please check the shop catalogue.



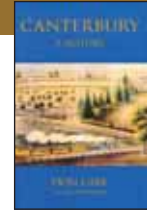
Breaking New Ground. Helen Billman-Jacobe and Ann Westmore, University of Melbourne, Parkville, 2019, pp. 1-148, ISBN 9780734055385.

A woman studying agriculture in Victoria was a rarity in the early 20th century and remained unusual until the 1960s. There had been just one female student at the Dookie Agricultural College before World War 2 and the doors were effectively closed until 1942, when three more female students were finally admitted. At the heart of this book are the biographies of 14 women who undertook agricultural science degrees at the university between 1942 and 1965. Fewer than 100 women graduated in agriculture before 1965. Among those who did, many pursued distinguished professional careers across a range of disciplines and occupations. Some would become eminent in research and teaching across a variety of fields, others prominent in agriculture. Each story provides a different insight from an unlikely group of pathfinders.



1919: The Year Things Fell Apart. John Lack (ed.), Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne, 2019, pp. v-149, ISBN 9781925984156.

In the first year after the guns fell silent on the "war to end all wars", the world seemed to shudder in anticipation of the uncertainty that would follow. 1919 was a momentous year in so many ways, both in Australia and elsewhere. This collection of nine papers from the History Fellows and Associates of the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne touches on many of the tensions of the time. Perhaps none is more pointed than the contemporary echoes sounded by Andrea Hyslop's account of the devastating Spanish Influenza Pandemic and its impact in Australia. The impact of the treaty of Versailles, emerging scientific discoveries, political unrest, social change and racism feature in a collection that marks the emergence of a young nation on a global stage.



Canterbury: A History. Don Gibb with Jill Barnard, Canterbury History Group and the RHSV, Melbourne, 2019, pp. vii-187, ISBN 9781875173099.

Prosperous, leafy, middle class, Protestant, conservative, suburban ... these words are commonly associated with Canterbury. Now considered an 'inner eastern' Melbourne suburb, Canterbury was once home to the large estates, farms and vineyards of prosperous Melbourne professionals. That changed with the coming of the railways in the early 1880s, suburban subdivision and the growth of middle Melbourne into the mid-20th century. Don Gibb was a devoted denizen of Canterbury and a stalwart of both the Canterbury History Group and the RHSV. This history of the suburb he loved was unfinished at the time of his death; further work upon it sacrificed to his many other history pursuits. The commitment of the CHG, the RHSV and Don's family has taken his incomplete manuscript and rendered it into a handsome and readable local history. Much credit must also go to Jill Barnard, who authored the two final chapters.

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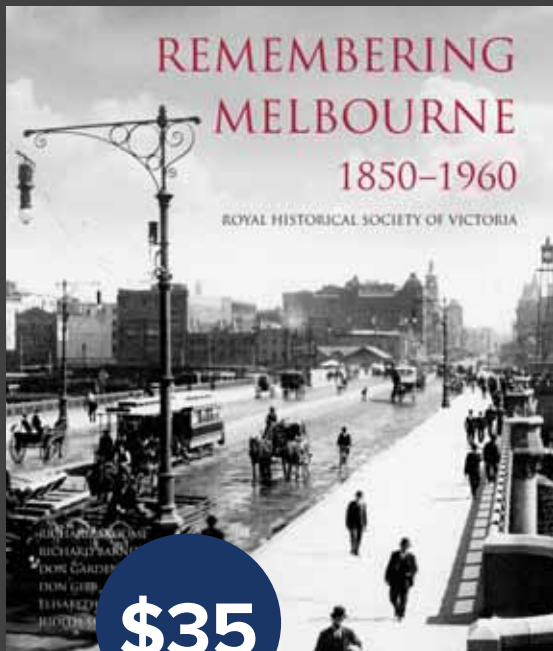


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GUIDED WALKS IN HISTORIC FLAGSTAFF GARDENS

Flagstaff Gardens, which are just to your right, are Melbourne's oldest gardens. They take their name from a flagstaff erected in 1840 at the settlement's highest point, in order to communicate between the harbour and town. This became known as "Flagstaff Hill". Before this, the area was used as a cemetery and was known as Burial Hill. (There is a memorial in the gardens that marks the graves of the first European settlers.)

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