

HISTORY NEWS

ISSUE 360 | JUNE 2022



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What's on at RHSV

Where possible we offer all our events as hybrid: both in our premises at 239 A'Beckett St, Melbourne and via Zoom. Information on booking tickets to all our events can be found on our website

EXODUS FROM VIENNA

Monday 20 June

10:30am–12noon

Speakers: Patrick Ferry and Angus Davison

Hybrid event held at PROV, 99 Shiel St, North Melbourne and via ZOOM

FREE

Following the 1938 annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany, many members of Vienna's vibrant Jewish community sought safe havens overseas to escape growing persecution. Amongst them were Michael and Regine Weiss and their family. Their story, as told through records held by the National Archives of Australia, reveals much about Australia's attitudes towards Jewish refugees during those dark days. Presented by Patrick Ferry (National Archives of Australia) and Angus Davison (Monash University History student) in conjunction with the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation.



THE RISE AND FALL OF THE IRON BRIDGE

Thursday 30 June

5:30–7pm

Speaker: Miles Lewis

Hybrid event at RHSV and also via ZOOM

\$10/\$20



The earliest cast iron bridges imitated those in timber or stone, because there was no established idea of what an iron bridge should be like, and most of them were simple arches. During the nineteenth century wrought iron, and then steel, became important bridge-building materials. Bridges fabricated in Europe were sent across the world to places like Latin America, Japan and India. Exported bridges faced special problems: the cost and difficulty of transporting the components, the lack of skilled labour at the site, unexpected foundation problems and hydrological conditions. These prefabricated bridges will be the main focus of the presentation by Miles Lewis, which is co-presented with Engineering Heritage Victoria.

Miles Lewis, AM FAHA, is an architectural historian specialising in the interaction between technology and culture in areas such as vernacular architecture and prefabrication, and in technical innovation generally. He edited the international journal *Architectura*, and has this year published a book, *Architectural Drawings: Collecting in Australia*. Miles is an emeritus professor of the University of Melbourne and currently a member of the Portable Buildings World Heritage Nomination Task Force.



MARKETING CLINIC

**Mondays: 20 June and 11 July
12–1pm**

by ZOOM, FREE

Christina Browning, the RHSV Marketing Officer will be hosting this series of lunch-time Marketing Clinics on the 2nd Monday of each month. Join Christina to find out how you can maximise the use of free social media platforms. Bring your questions. Look on our website for 2022 dates and Zoom log-in.

AUSTRALIA'S GREAT DEPRESSION

Tuesday 19 July

5:30– 7pm

Speaker: Joan Beaumont

Hybrid event both at the RHSV and via ZOOM

\$10/\$20

Joan Beaumont, Professor Emerita of History at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, will deliver our July lecture on her profound history of Australia's Great Depression.

Beaumont says, *'The pandemic has much in common with the Great Depression. Australians today have confronted external threats that neither they nor their governments could control. Everyone has had to dig deep for resilience. The pandemic like the Depression confirmed how important local and state loyalties are. Voters expected their leaders to protect them, and only them. However, there was one major difference in contrast to the Depression; today's governments utilised sophisticated policy tools, well beyond the imagination of the Depression-era governments, to prevent the social disaster on the scale seen in 1929 – 1932.'*

Some generations are born unlucky. Australians who survived the horrors of World War I and the influenza pandemic that followed were soon faced with the shock of the Great Depression. While many endured great hardship, anger, anxiety and despair, most 'made do' and helped each other. Some even found something positive in the memory of this personal and communal struggle. *'Australia's Great Depression'* details this most impressive narrative of resilience in the nation's history.

History News

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COVER IMAGE: 'The Four Seasons: A blast of light' at Kew Library. See Windows on history, p12-13

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President's Report

In 1968 William Stanner, the eminent Australian anthropologist, referred to 'the great Australian silence' in his ABC Boyer Lectures. By this he meant the prevalence in Australian society of a consistent ignoring of, and indifference to, Indigenous Australians and their cultures. Until recent times, historical societies including the RHSV, were also mostly indifferent to First Nations peoples, their cultures and history.

The RHSV is now addressing that former neglect. We have just held our first annual Indigenous Lecture, a report of which is included within this issue. Our Council and staff are undertaking cultural awareness training. The *Victorian Historical Journal* is publishing more Indigenous material.

We are also decolonising the collection. What might this term mean and not mean? First, it does not mean the destruction of any records, images and archives whatsoever. It does not mean we should feel shame or guilt about British and European pioneers, who were people of their time and must be understood as such, not judged by our values. Nor does it mean devaluing the positive achievements of our past.

However, it does mean that we will make Indigenous peoples and their cultures more visible through our catalogue. Previously, references to Indigenous people in our archives rarely appeared in catalogue entries. This was due to Indigenous history not being on our radar, but also because catalogue information was restricted by the size of the hard copy catalogue card. We now

have access to digital datasets built by Indigenous people and digital content management systems that allow us to provide vastly improved, wider and deeper cataloguing descriptions.

It is not clear how much might be found in our records about Indigenous peoples as we delve deeper, but until recently we had only a general impression, so any information will be an advance. From now on our cataloguing will record all references to Indigenous peoples, but it will be a slow process of re-evaluation as every item will have to be perused and looked at afresh. Decolonising may also mean using language appropriate for our day in the catalogue and will probably require providing warnings where appropriate to do so for First Nations researchers.

Decolonising our collection means also paying attention to new questions about our past and taking these to the catalogue. In this way our collection will reach its fuller potential and provide greater assistance to future researchers. The refinements we can bring to our catalogue, will also expand the types of exhibitions we can mount in the future from our own collection, due to the added catalogue information.

Through this process the RHSV will become more relevant and more truly reflect the contemporary society in which we live. We are decolonising our collection to enrich it and make it more relevant. We are doing it, because in all senses, it is the right thing to do.

Richard Broome AM

I wish to thank the RHSV for the recognition of my volunteer activities with The Barbara Nixon Award. The late Barbara Nixon worked as a volunteer for over 40 years from 1968 at the RHSV and I was thrilled to receive this award. I find it interesting that the Australian Bureau of Statistics data tells us that over 30 percent of Australians volunteer their time at an estimated value over \$40 billion a year.

And why do we do volunteer? That's simple, while we provide support to worthy causes we gain so much more: learn new skills, a sense of achievement and purpose and meet so many wonderful people. So, if you are not volunteering, I highly recommend it.



History News, October 2022

Our October issue of *History News* will have a focus on the history of holidays. I encourage you to think about holidays in Victoria in the years gone by. Were your holidays annual events or otherwise.

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Editor's messages

Where did you go? Were your holidays city or rural? Were school holidays spent at home with maybe outings for a day. What did you do? What did you see? Maybe you would like to write about school camps, holidays with friends or family. Or, perhaps you'd like to share the stories of your parent's holidays. Article submissions between 80-800 words are all most welcome. Or maybe send me a few notes and I'll write them into a piece for publication.

Sharon Betridge

Editor

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HERITAGE Report

Heritage report: time to put heritage on the agenda?

For nearly a decade, your committee has been participating in the planning process to protect heritage. But heritage is losing out. It's time to put heritage on the political agenda. As members of local historical societies, let's demand that candidates and elected representatives address the structural issues in the planning system that cause increasing loss of heritage.

Heritage is primarily a state issue. The Victorian elections will offer a chance to demand improvements. We thought that the Legislative Council Inquiry into Planning and Heritage would offer a chance to bring heritage issues to wider attention. The Inquiry received 285 submissions, most very substantial. But, as I reported in my last column, the major parties managed to mothball the Inquiry by deciding not to hold hearings. We are disappointed. No, we're more than disappointed. We are outraged.

This Inquiry was initiated by Mr Clifford Hayes (Sustainable Australia) and Dr Samantha Ratnam (Greens). Fortunately, they have not given up. They have set up two days of mini-hearings in lieu of the full committee. Ian Wight and I will be presenting these demands to them on Friday 6 May, after this column is put to bed, long before you will read it. And we will discuss these issues with David Davis, MP (Liberal) on Friday 20 May.

We're focusing on four steps that candidates could support that would make a big start in improving the system:

1) Restore the integrity of the Heritage Overlay

In recent years, the Planning Department has been putting Design and Development Overlays (DDOs) on areas to encourage intensive development. But they have imposed these DDOs without regard to Heritage Overlays (HOs). The John Curtin Hotel is only the latest example of this problem. It is covered by the Heritage Overlay and also by a Design and Development Overlay calling for an eight-storey building on the site! The Corkman Hotel was subject to an Overlay calling for a twelve-storey building! Thus, state planning controls invite developers' greed. As a first step, we demand that DDOs be amended to preserve sites covered by the Heritage Overlay.

2) Eliminate the designation 'contributory' and properly protect

precincts in the Heritage Overlay

All too often, sites labelled 'contributory' are fair game for developers. If they're 'only contributory', we hear at VCAT, they aren't really important. But take away the contributory sites and there's nothing left to protect! The planning system should fully protect each and every site that forms part of a precinct covered by the Heritage Overlay.

3) Restore the local heritage unit of Heritage Victoria and provide financial support for local heritage studies

Until a decade ago, Heritage Victoria had a local heritage unit that helped councils with heritage issues and allocated financial support for local heritage. Without the unit and without support, councils are left to deal with these matters on their own, with often unfortunate results for heritage. Regional councils in particular have difficulty funding heritage studies although they are responsible for a great deal of Victoria's heritage.

4) Replace VCAT with a Planning Appeals Tribunal composed of planners and heritage experts

VCAT gives too much power to one or two members who are often untrained and unsympathetic to heritage issues. We believe that all planning appeals should be decided before a new tribunal composed of town planners, architects, historians and heritage experts.

Heritage is also a national issue. The EPBC Act (*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*) was put in place to weaken heritage protection. Threats to heritage are

considered only if developers refer themselves! From Juukun Gorge to the Royal Exhibition Building World Heritage Site, the EPBC Act has given developers free rein. In 2020, the Minister (Sussan Ley) commissioned Professor Graeme Samuel AC to conduct an Independent Review. He found that the Act was 'ineffective', 'not fit to address current or future environmental challenges'. The government refused to consider his key recommendation, an 'independent compliance and enforcement regulator'.

The Australian Heritage Advocacy Alliance (AHAA) has been set up to demand that the next government address this challenge. Check their web site and then ask your local member to commit to reform.

To see the 285 submissions received by the Legislative Council Inquiry into Planning and Heritage, see: <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/epc-lc/inquiries/article/4652>

PS: An update on the Portable Buildings Taskforce. Readers will recall that the RHSV joined the taskforce aiming to obtain World Heritage status for Australia's unique collection of extant nineteenth century portable buildings; we would consider them pre-fab. If you're in a historical society near a portable, we will be writing to you for help in getting more information on it!

Charles Sowerwine
2 May 2022



The John Curtin Hotel is subject to a Design and Development Overlay calling for an eight-storey building, contradicting the Heritage Overlay.

Rescuing Australian History

Analysing Australian History VCE



 **CAMBRIDGE**
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Richard Broome presents a boutique to Rosalie Triolo AAH launch

A historically significant event was held at the RHSV on 7 March. Over 70 people gathered at History House, aka the Drill Hall, to witness the launch of a series of four textbooks for the new Australian History VCE Study Design which commenced in 2022. Another forty households from Victoria and interstate watched on via Zoom.

The books were co-edited and partly authored by our President Richard Broome, along with co-editor Ashley Pratt and thirteen other teachers and academic authors. The significance of this launch was pointed out by Richard Broome. Only five per cent of VCE students study History at Year 12 and less than one per cent study Australian History. Moreover, Victoria is the only state that offers a study of our own Australian history at Year 12, the most intense learning a student will ever do in their secondary education. The new Australian History Study Design was due to commence in 2022 without a textbook, dooming its enrolments of 650 students in Australian history in 2021 to decline to zero within a few years. When our President learned of this perilous situation he pushed for a solution and teamed with a like-minded group of people at Cambridge University Press.

The four speakers on the night outlined the situation surrounding these textbooks. Mark O'Neil, CEO of Cambridge University Press (Australia) outlined Cambridge's reasons for taking on an economically

unviable textbook project due to low numbers, essentially because they are a not-for-profit publisher which believed in the need for this project. He praised the 15 authors for agreeing to give their royalties to the Indigenous Reading Project and declared CUP would match this giving.

Gerry Martin, Manager of History and Humanities Curriculum for the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority outlined how a radically new Australian History Study Design (2022-2026) was created for Australian History by a committee of teachers and academics and ratified after the appropriate consultations. It was a marvellous insight into how new study designs are devised.

Richard Broome outlined the attacks on Australian history in schools by some politicians, the parlous state of Australian history at Year 12, and the importance of this study for our society. He described the breakneck speed effort of the team of writers and publishers, who took just one year from conception to publication to create four magnificent, full colour books that amounted to just under 400,000 words. Richard praised the heroic efforts of his 14 fellow authors: Michael Adcock, Jess Chamoff, Graeme Davison, James Grout, David Harris, James Jacobson, Ian Keese, Bill Lewis, Geoff Peel, Angie Pollock, Ashley Pratt, Jenny Pudney, Marian Quartly and Helen Smalley.

Rosalie Triolo, a history teacher educator from Monash University, one of our councillors, and a member of the board of the History Teachers Association of Victoria for over 30 years, then launched

the books with her usual vivacity and warmth. In doing so, she praised all concerned, especially the authors and the publishers Mark O'Neil, Nick Alexander and Cameron Piko. She predicted these beautiful and comprehensive books will revive the fortunes of Australian History at VCE level, not only in this state, but across Australia.

Richard invited the audience to buy at least one book to see what and how students were studying of Australian history these days and how they are taught to think for themselves through original historic sources and questions. He suggested purchasers might learn a few new things themselves of their own country. The themes of the four books are: environmental history; the history of immigration to Australia; the struggle for democracy and rights; and finally, the impact of war on Australia. Thirty copies were bought on the night! More are available from the RHSV bookshop.



L to R Gerry Martin VCAA, Mark O'Neil CUP, Rosalie Triolo, Richard Broome



Centenary of the Red Hill railway line

The 2nd of December 2021 marked 100 years since the first train ran on the newly constructed branch line from Bittern to Red Hill on the Mornington Peninsula. By way of Bittern it linked those communities to Frankston and then on to Melbourne. It truly was a day to celebrate for people who lived along the line.

Ever since a rail line had linked Frankston to Crib Point, a line that opened mainly for military reasons in 1889, the fruit growers in Red Hill had been pushing for an extension. A route was decided and a Railway Act passed in 1915 for the line's construction, but World War I intervened and the plan was put on hold. Finally, in 1920, the first sod was turned opposite the general store in Balnarring, at about the half way point, by the Minister of Railways and construction commenced. It proceeded in both directions, towards Bittern and towards Red Hill. The route covered just under 10 miles, or 16 kilometres, and there were three new stations along the line: Balnarring, Merricks and Red Hill. The land was fairly level as far as Merricks but the route then turned inland and began to climb, a short, steep climb with a maximum gradient of

1 in 30. The line was standard gauge and it took about fourteen months to complete at a total cost of £76,000 well over the estimate.

The first train was a special one bringing dignitaries from Melbourne for the official opening. Carriages were pulled by a Dd980 engine decorated with bunting, flowers and greenery. People came from all over the district to welcome its arrival at Red Hill. The two people chosen to hold the ribbon, which was officially cut by Mr Barnes, the Minister of Railways, were the oldest person in the district, 92 year-old Mary Haig, and Mary Forrest, the youngest school child. Speeches followed before the official party moved into the coolstore for the prepared luncheon and yet more speeches. Meanwhile outdoors the crowd picnicked while being entertained by the Flinders Naval Band and the train gave joyrides as far as Bittern and back.

Trains along the route carried both freight and passengers. Firewood left for Melbourne plus produce from the orchards and farms destined for markets in Melbourne or beyond. Materials and goods needed by the small local communities were brought in. There was talk of extending the line further into the area. At first trains ran daily, except on Sunday, coming to Red Hill on one day and returning the next. However, as road transport developed and the state of roads improved the service was used less. Road transport proved to be cheaper and faster. The frequency of trains was cut back gradually until, by the early 1950s, only one train was running each week, on a Monday. The line was no longer viable and was closed in 1953.

The last train ran on 1 July, 1953. One last tour train was organised by the Railways Historic Society on 25 February 1956 before the line was finally dismantled.

Today reminders of the old line can be found: an embankment or cutting, remains of a platform and a turntable. A walking trail follows the route from Merricks up to Red Hill and historical markers, in various locations, tell the story of the railway line that opened with great fanfare a century ago.

Ilma Hackett

Balnarring and District Historical Society

The Red Hill Railway

(By Our Special Representative).

RED HILL, December 2nd.
They came from the orchards on the hills and valleys of Mornington Peninsula yesterday to witness the official opening of the railway extension of 10 miles from Bittern to Red Hill. For nearly 40 years these settlers had been struggling for a line, and as the first passenger train steamed into the new station at the foot of the hills they saw the consummation of their hopes. It was a great day for the district. The small town enthusiast is the finest enthusiast of them all, and from Bittern to Red Hill there were 1000 enthusiasts about the possibilities of the railway. They claimed that it would give a great impetus to the fruit-growing industry; that it would open up virgin country for settlers;

Frankston and Somerville Standard, Friday 9 December 1921, p 3 from Trove



Bonegilla registration cards digitised

Family historians and immigration scholars will be pleased to note that, at the request of Wodonga City Council, the Victorian Government has included \$800,000 towards digitising Bonegilla Registration Cards in its Regional Tourism Investment Fund.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-05-01/bonegilla-id-cards-records-digitised-australian-migrants/100106834>

This will ensure all the Bonegilla cards held in the Canberra office of the National Archives of Australia will be available online. It extends a NAA project, completed late last year, which entailed digitising Bonegilla Registration Cards for all new arrivals between 1956 and 1971. For more information.

<https://www.naa.gov.au/explore-collection/immigration-and-citizenship/migrant-accommodation/bonegilla-migrant-reception-and-training-centre>

Bruce Pennay



Bonegilla is "not just a national heritage place, it's a public memory place".
Image courtesy of the ABC (ABC Goulburn Murray: Annie Brown)

Inaugural Indigenous Lecture

After the usual delays in 2021 caused by COVID, Auntie Zeta Thomson, a Woiwurrung Wurundjeri and Yorta Yorta woman, began the evening with a gracious 'Welcome to Country'. About 100 people on Zoom and at the Drill Hall were thrilled by Professor Julie Andrews' address 'Milestones in Aboriginal Women's Activism, Melbourne 1939-1970'.

Our President Richard Broome then explained the significance of the lecture for changing the face of the RHSV. It will be a perpetual annual lecture and has been funded by a member for its first five years at \$3000 per annum. Those wishing to assume sponsorship after that or give to the lecture fund right now, can contact the RHSV. Discussions have begun with an extended family and application made to the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Corporation for an Indigenous name to be given to this lecture in future years.

Julie Andrews, Professor of Indigenous Research at La Trobe University, is also a member of the Dhulanyagan family clan of the Ulupna people. Richard Broome introduced Julie Andrews, to whom he had taught Aboriginal History in 1991, noting that he had also been taught by Julie.

Julie's impassioned lecture focussed on the women activists of her family. Fortunately, COVID delays meant it was appropriately delivered in the RHSV's Women's History Month. The lecture will be published in a forthcoming issue of *Victorian Historical Journal*.

From left to right Professor Julie Andrews, Richard Broome, Auntie Zeta Thomson (courtesy Margaret Donnan).



Upper Maffra Mechanics' Institute and Newry Hall

The story of the Newry Hall starts with the Upper Maffra Mechanics' Institute and Library, which opened in March 1883 with a celebration 'ball and supper'. This 'largely attended' event raised close to £20. There were 'some 40 couples present' with 'lovers of the terpsichorean art coming from Maffra, Tinamba, Briagolong, and other parts of the district'.

Described as a 'substantial brick building' which 'would do credit to many places boasting a larger population', the building was 'very tastefully decorated with ferns [and] Chinese lanterns' and the dancing carried on 'with unflagging zeal until broad daylight'.

The Institute had begun with a public meeting of more than 40 Newry district residents in July 1881 and work was underway by late 1882. Located on land donated by Donald Manson JP, who became the inaugural chairman, it was just outside the surveyed Newry township and became the Upper Maffra Mechanics' Institute: a fact which had to be regularly pointed out to the officials in government.

The £160 estimate quickly rose to £200 and the opening celebration was 'for the purpose of reducing the debt on the building'. However, community support has been strong throughout the life of the hall and locals helped with carting the 30,000 bricks from the local brick kiln, timber from Heyfield and other building materials were railed from Melbourne to Sale.

The free library opened in May 1883. A piano was added to the hall for events, and hire rates set until midnight, with another charge through to 6 am for those apparently common 'long' nights.

While it was a relatively modest building, it served the farming community well for many years. There were many more balls, concerts, and the usual euchre card nights, weddings, parties and farewells when families left the district.

When the Newry Hall was constructed on an adjacent allotment, the venue sealed its role in the community's social life. Mr Manson laid the foundation stone in August 1913.

The library closed in 1931 and became the hall's supper room and the reading room,

with its distinctive curved windows and timber-lined ceiling, is a meeting or board room. For some time, the hall hosted movies, with a bio-box installed above the entrance porch, from which projection, lighting and sound are controlled.

There have been celebrations for the hall and district milestones but, although quite well cared for, the hall was getting rather tired. However, in the past decade it has undergone extensive renovations to join the growing popularity of country halls offering outstanding facilities.

The quarter-million-dollar renovation, largely funded by the Latrobe Valley Authority and local donations in cash and kind, has transformed it into a modern up-to-date facility with amenities to match.

The sound system is now state-of-art, upgraded under the guidance of local expert Paul Verstedden, with quality lighting systems and even a disco ball. Continuing the strong community involvement, the new sound baffles were constructed by volunteers. There are new stage curtains, a screen and projector for films, and the old store room has been converted to a Green Room with curtained dressing areas.

New heating and cooling was installed, toilets modernised, the kitchen upgraded to commercial standard, water tanks and filtration installed and a container located onsite to provide equipment storage.

The boardroom table was constructed from local Australian Sustainable Hardwoods timber and the room features refurbished war honour rolls and display cabinets of historic local memorabilia, some linked to events at the hall and others from local industry.

The 2019 upgrade is marked with a sign framed with the front section of the original piano, well remembered by those locals who have attended events over the years, but no longer fit for use. A 'new' piano with many local links has been donated to replace it. Local Clare Warn, who was downsizing, had a piano inherited from her local pioneer Weatherly and McCole ancestors and she was delighted to donate it.

While there are still balls and local celebrations and the movie nights continue, there are now a range of concerts by local and visiting entertainers.

The Hall combined with the Bundalaguah and Heyfield halls for a memorable Beatles Magical Mystery tour between

COVID lockdowns. One of the most regular events is a weekly playgroup which utilises a screened section of the green room to store the youngsters' favourite toys and an outdoor play area at the rear.

Other events these days include local dramatic society performances, local band rehearsals, birthdays, weddings, buck's nights, funerals, a gender reveal party and community meetings on district developments. Last month Newry formed one of the locations for the 'Country Halls Tour' for Australian country music singer and songwriter Fanny Lumsden. Watching an AFL grand final on the 'big screen' and community and private Christmas parties add to the calendar gradually being rebuilt.

The committee is not resting on its laurels and has a long list of new projects. The floor will need replacing in the near future, continuing the same flooring into the supper room, the fenced play area is to be extended and central heating is on the agenda.

A 'local correspondent' for Upper Maffra predicted, as the original building took shape in 1882: 'It certainly will stand out in relief as a land mark to the people of the district.' It continues, with such strong community support, to be a special land mark for all.

Pauline Hitchins



History Victoria Support Group: researching military personnel

ANZAC Day and similar events often prompt a run of queries about those who served in the wars. Many returned service personnel were reluctant to talk about their experiences and it is only long after they have passed that their descendants start seeking more information.

An excellent starting point is the National Library of Australia's online Trove collection which provides researchers with access to obituaries and family notices placed in local, state and national papers for servicemen killed in action. The Trove collection is extensive. While, many newspapers are yet to be digitised, to acknowledge the World War I (WWI) centenary many newspapers covering the era were added. For Trove search: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/> or information <https://trove.nla.gov.au/help/categories/newspapers-and-gazettes-category>.

Anniversaries in recent years, such as the centenary of the end of WWI, have prompted many local societies, cemeteries, RSL branches or other groups to collate information on the local experience of war, providing other excellent information resources. Local honour rolls and cenotaphs are other interesting and useful sources of information.

Other obvious sources for such information are the defence force records such as those online at National Archives of Australia: <https://www.naa.gov.au/>. Also, consider the Australian War Memorial has records providing background on and locations of battles: <https://www.awm.gov.au/>.

There are many gems to be discovered in the service records but also many traps for the unwary. For instance, one record provided some confusing information until we discovered our subject's paperwork included some pages from another with a similar name; the mix up appears to date from wartime.

Lieutenant John William Sinclair from Sale served in the militia prior to the war and enlisted in July 1942 after marrying the previous February. He served in New Guinea but met his death in action in Bougainville three years later, just months after the birth of his second son. John William's records include, in error, some referring to Captain John Wisbey Sinclair. It is understood this J. W. Sinclair from Melbourne was reported killed in action and his family notified of his death. After some months the family received a communication from the 'deceased'

and the error realised. Apparently, the family from Melbourne made the journey to Gippsland to console the family of the Sale Jack Sinclair.

However, it was not his military record that first brought Lieut. Sinclair to our notice: it was a framed certificate and some swimming trophies donated to the museum by his sons. On 6 January 1932 a 14-year-old Jack Sinclair rescued two youngsters, Rita and Ethel Mason from the Thomson River in Sale. At the end of year High School presentation night, Jack received a leather bag from the Mothers' Club in recognition of his bravery, and the following year he was one of a number of youngsters who were recognised by the Royal Humane Society with a Certificate of Merit. His bravery obviously continued.

I am always impressed by the battle records and the casualty lists from wartime; the reports in such chaos are indeed an outstanding achievement. Even in the relative calm of the Homefront, there are still difficulties in compiling accurate reports.

Local military historian Ross Jackson has just published his research into the names on the Sale Fallen Soldiers' Memorial or 'empty tomb' cenotaph. He reports on the obvious complexities of compiling the list of fallen but his own research adds some missed names and queries the connection to Sale of a few others. Some of the research on which the list was based was less than perfect, but today's growing resources can help us confirm or correct some tales.

From another perspective, those left behind formed a large cohort of youngsters who were unable to complete their schooling. During the years of war, they were forced to focus on the family farm or other commitments to 'keep the home fires burning'.

Many ran successful farms and other businesses, in spite of their poor numeracy and literacy levels. Their achievements against the odds are just as important as those who fought overseas, and add to the rich source of stories on how our cities, towns and regional areas have developed, grown and changed. There are heroes in all walks of life.

Congratulations to Rosalie Triolo who takes over as Convenor of HVSg after the Annual Meeting. Rosalie already enthusiastically leads the Membership Committee and is sure to have plenty of ideas to activate the Support Group after



RAAF Aerobatic team the Roulettes pass over the Sale Cenotaph. Image Sarah Luke.

Sale cenotaph in the 1920s, probably Anzac day. Image courtesy of the Sale Historical Society

COVID restrictions put so many obstacles in our path over the past two years.

I plan to continue to bring you stories of success and innovations by our member societies and look forward to your recommendations for worthy inclusions.

Pauline Hitchins

Convenor HVSg (RHSV)

Phone: 0437 296925

Email: hvsg@historyvictoria.com.au

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 AUGUST 2022 ISSUE please send details to office@historyvictoria.org.au by 2nd July 2022.

ALTONA LAVERTON: The home of the Historical Society is the Altona Homestead, located at 128 Queen Street, Altona. To view our upcoming events, please check the events calendar on our website: <https://alhs.com.au> These include Devonshire teas, ghost walks and open house. The Homestead opening hours are Saturdays 10:00am-12:00noon and Tuesday 10:00am-2:00pm.



AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY: Upcoming Victorian events: Thursday 30 June, online lecture by Caroline Holmes: 'The Edwardian Garden: golden & delicious'; Sunday 14 August, Wattle Park walk & talk with Professor Tim Entwisle; Thursday 18 August, AGM followed by lecture on Edna Walling by Sara Hardy; Sunday 25 September, self-drive trip to Nobelius Heritage Park, Emerald and 'Gorongu', Pakenham. Find more information on our website at www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/

BALLARAT: The Society is embarking on an exciting project to celebrate our 90th anniversary in 2023. We are producing a high-quality coffee-table-book of images from our own and other private collections, many being published for the first time. We are seeking more images, so if you have slides or photographs of Ballarat, particularly from the 1960s onwards, we'd love to hear from you! Photos and slides can be scanned and returned, or if you wish to donate them to the Society, they will be catalogued, stored and preserved in our archives. For more information, email the Society: ballarathistoricalsociety@gmail.com . Alternatively, message our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ballarathistoricalsociety>

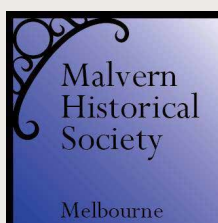
HAMILTON HISTORY CENTRE: The centre is located in the Mechanics Institute Building, 43 Gray Street, Hamilton. Our collection includes over 2000 local historical photographs, cemetery records, German settlement history, war records, family history records, parish

maps, pastoral properties, records of Hamilton residences, shops, businesses, church and school records. Visit our new website: hamiltonhistorycentre.org.au. Or find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Hamilton-History-Centre-Inc-1477242752489632>

MALMSBURY: The historic township of Malmsbury grew from a travellers' stop, on the banks of the Coliban River, on the road from Melbourne to the Mount Alexander Goldfields, Castlemaine District, in the 1850s. An early feature of the town was a hotel. Another was the Caroline Chisholm Shelter Shed, one of only 10 built in Victoria to offer safe and affordable accommodation for travellers, especially women and children, travelling to and from the goldfields. The Malmsbury Mechanics Institute at 71 Mollison St, built in the 1870s and extended in 1895, is another historic building in the town; it is the home of the Malmsbury Historical Society: <https://www.facebook.com/Malmsbury-Historical-Society-Inc-101126394568883>



MALVERN: The society supports the Stonnington History Centre and is an advocate for the preservation of history, especially within the suburbs of Armadale, Glen Iris, Kooyong, Malvern, Malvern East and Toorak. Hawksburn, Prahran, Windsor and parts of South Yarra are also part of the City of Stonnington. The Society actively collects and preserves material relating to the area formerly the City of Malvern, now part of the City of Stonnington. Lots of information and articles on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/malvernhistoricalsocietystonnington>



MELBOURNE TRAM MUSEUM: After two long years, we are finally re-opening the museum, at 8 Wallen Road, Hawthorn. The museum is home to 20 fully-restored trams including: a 'toast-rack' bodied V-class from 1906, one of the first electrified trams in Melbourne; several versions of the iconic Melbourne W-class trams; the experimental X-class tram designed for lightly patronised routes; the prototype of the Z-class which marked the steady modernisation of the fleet when it was introduced in 1975. Encounter a part of the history of Melbourne at a unique heritage location. <https://www.trammuseum.org.au/>



MIDDLE PARK: On Monday 5 September 2022 at 7:30pm at Middle Park Primary School, entry from Richardson Street: Ken James: History of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria. Ken collaborated with Pam Baragwanath to research and present the histories of nearly 1000 institutes from around Victoria. The resulting publication, *These Walls Speak Volumes: a history of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria* (2015), won the 2016 Victorian Community History Award. Ken will talk about the origins of Mechanics' Institutes in Britain and their movement to Australia including Victoria. He will then give an overview of Mechanics' Institute in Victoria today and finish with a discussion of the South Melbourne Mechanics' Institute originally known as the Emerald Hill Mechanics' Institute.

MOUNT EVELYN: 'History of the Whaling Industry 1700s– Late 1800s', talk by Ross Martin, Saturday 16 July, 1:30 pm at Hardy House RSL Hall, 49 Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. Visit our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/MtEvelynHistoryGroup2016



POLISH MUSEUM AND ARCHIVE: The annals of the *PMAA/Rocznik MAPA* were first published in 1996. The series publishes interdisciplinary scholarship on the history of Poland with a specific focus on Polish migration to Australia, New Zealand and Oceania. It aims to document, promote and disseminate knowledge through discussion of historical knowledge. The publication also aspires to contribute to a broader understanding of the social, economic and political culture of the Polish Australian community. The 2022 edition will be published on the first anniversary of the passing of its founder and first editor, Dr. Zdzislaw Andrzej Derwinski. The final deadline for the paper's submission will be June 30 2022. For more information, visit our website: <https://polishmuseumarchives.org.au/>



PORT PHILLIP PIONEERS: 2022 scheduled meetings: 9 July, Martin Playne: Harbours and Shipping on Port Phillip; 10 September, Cheryl Griffiths: Education Schools and Teachers; 12 November, Moira McAlister and Dr Barry Cotter: the First Doctor in Melbourne. Meeting venue: Wesley Hall, St Andrew's Uniting Church, 253A Burke Road (cnr Malvern Road), Gardiner. Visitors Welcome. Doors open 1:30p.m. Two dollars entry includes refreshments.

RICHMOND AND BURNLEY: The Society was established in 1972 through the initiative of the founder Mr Angus Wishart with the support of the Richmond City Council. Located on the lower level of the Richmond Library our reference materials provide an amazing insight into Richmond's history. The information is organised into: subjects, people, streets, industry, council, reports, maps, newspaper articles, family histories,

photographs, books and newsletters, postal directories and rate records. We are on the Lower Level, Richmond Library, 415 Church Street, Richmond. Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/RichmondBurnleyHistoricalSociety



SANDRINGHAM: The Society continues to collect photographs, written pieces, videos, newsletters etc. for its COVID Community Archive. Donations can be sent by email: collections@sandringhamhistorical.org.au

Alternatively, mail donations to SDHS PO Box 8 Sandringham 3191 or drop off at the Centre, 62 Bay Road, Sandringham. Visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Sandringham-District-Historical-Society-Inc-1135867603110493>



SEYMOUR: Regina Young – Speaking on The Lions Club. At the Pioneer Library on the corner of Edward and Tallarook St, on Sunday 26 June, at 1.00pm followed by a General Meeting at 2.00pm. Visit our website at <http://seymourhistory.org.au>

ST KILDA: We have some great displays planned for the St Kilda Library Foyer, in conjunction with our two current projects. In July, keep an eye out for a display featuring some of the musicians who lived and performed in St Kilda in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. Later in the year, our October display will preview Carmel McKenzie's forthcoming book *St Kilda 1841-1900: Movers and Shakers and Money-makers*. More info at www.stkildahistory.org.au



TERANG: We are located in the grounds of the Terang College Primary Campus on Warrnambool Road, Terang. We have a collection of local memorabilia relating to Terang and District: newspapers, business and organisation records, cemetery records, photographs and family data. Our museum is open to members and the public on the 3rd Sunday each month from 1-4pm. Find more on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/teranghistoricalsociety

WARRAGUL: Art Exhibition and Concert. We propose holding an art exhibition at the museum from Thursday 16 June to Sunday 26 June 2022. We will display the restored Neville Cayley and C H Round paintings and the Pioneer and Early Settlers Board will have been replaced in the entry hall after restoration work. During this exhibition we will also have on the Sunday afternoon 19 June a musical concert in the upstairs hall. Albert Fox has offered to provide this entertainment and this will give the opportunity to use the Mason & Hamlin pedal organ we have on display in Room 2 of the museum. It will be taken upstairs for the performance. Albert Fox restored this organ for our society. It has a wonderful history having been owned by Mr John Dodds, who provided music throughout the district. It is also fitting that it be used as it was used in accompaniment to the unveiling of the Pioneers and Early Settlers Board in 1911.

Windows on history: 'The Four Seasons', 'A blast of light' at Kew Library



Kew Library
exterior, c1992

“

The local papers took up the cause: ‘that a town of 12,000 inhabitants should be without a reference library seems a decidedly retrograde position in these days of enlightenment and culture’ (June 1915).

”

‘The Four Seasons’, circular stained-glass window that dominates the east wall of Boroondara’s Kew Library was never intended to be in such a public space, or indeed, even a window. Alan Sumner (1911-1994) designed the three-metre diameter work as a skylight for a city apartment in 1977, but for reasons unknown the commission was never fulfilled. However, although it would be a decade before the ‘window’ brought additional light into its new home at Kew, Sumner considered it one of his most successful works.

The library opened on its current site, the renovated former Kew Civic Hall overlooking Alexandra Gardens in 1987, but its long history started as the Kew Literary and Scientific Society, opened in 1860. Then, from 1884 to 1904, it shared space in the upper floor of the Council chambers in Walpole Street, before being housed in a small timber cottage adjoining the Town Hall. Even here the library had its good and lean periods, first facing closure in 1915 when falling revenues and competition from up-to-date fiction libraries saw the gradual withdrawal of Council support. The local

papers took up the cause: ‘that a town of 12,000 inhabitants should be without a reference library seems a decidedly retrograde position in these days of enlightenment and culture’ (June 1915). It was rescued by the local traders’ association, and, with council assistance, the refurbished building reopened in 1917. But by 1937 the wooden building was in a state of dilapidation, as was the book collection. The mayor, Cr Vaughn, found the only *Encyclopedia Britannica* dated from 1863, the only Victorian statutes dated 1890, and the latest *Who’s Who* was the 1890 edition. It was deemed unworthy of a progressive municipality and time for change. At the library committee’s recommendation, Council resumed its management and by the year’s end, the remodelled and up-to-date library was reopened with ‘modern books’, the addition of a children’s library, and a selection of paintings on loan from the National Gallery of Victoria adorning the walls. The building remained in use for more than 35 years when it moved into the Charles Street Civic Centre: its current home.

For the first time in its history, the Kew Library was housed in a modern, bright, open space, thanks to the steel truss construction, a number of clerestory windows, and the hole punched in the east wall to house Sumner's stained-glass window. The window's purchase was negotiated by Cr Jill O'Brien, mayor 1983-84, to mark Kew's 125th Anniversary. *Kewriosity* described 'The Four Seasons': 'Clockwise from the top is Autumn with sinuous lines in yellow and brown, then winter in cool blues and mauves with lines and circles suggesting rain, snow and hail. Spring follows in the bottom left quadrant with organic ovaloid shapes richly coloured and lines evoking growth. Then to the top where summer explodes with the colours of fire and blue of the sky at the height of summer. The centre panel has a powerful image of sun, moon and stars which links the surrounding panels.'

Sumner is remembered for the extraordinary number of windows that he designed and made for churches in Melbourne's burgeoning post-World War II suburbs, including Frankston, Mordialloc, Bentleigh, Balwyn, Reservoir and Pascoe Vale. His characteristic Modernist style combined realism with recognisable symbols appropriate for each denomination. He regularly included the sun, moon and stars to evoke a universal life force, as a 'blast of light' from his radiant sun.

But it was not always so, as Sumner's training was along very traditional lines at the commercial firm, E L Yencken & Co, Little Collins Street, Melbourne. He started as a 15-year-old after his mother saw an advertisement in the daily press. His 'master' was William 'Jock' Frater, better-known as a Modernist painter than for his 'day job' as head of the stained-glass department at Yenckens. Frater was 'not much of a teacher' according to Sumner, but he learnt by careful observation, and became Frater's trusted assistant. Frater did give him an introduction to the George Bell School, and thus Sumner began to also learn about Modernist painting; he only gradually inserted Modernism into his stained glass after a first, life-changing visit to Europe in the early 1950s.

Alan Sumner did not believe in imposing his own will or ego into his art. He preferred to bend his ideas to suit the architecture and design of the window, recognising formal principles which he used in the abstract. In Sumner's own words, 'Art has to have a purpose – to move you, art has to deal with eternal verities. Great art strives to endeavour to balance all parts of the whole'. Although not initially designed for the Kew Library, 'The Four Seasons' added to its architectural setting and admirably achieved his aims.

Bronwyn Hughes

Author interview with Alan Sumner 6 April 1991

Further information at Kew Historical Society and Kew Library.



Donation News

(E R) Bill Russell FRHSV, historian, public policy advocate, a former senior public servant and a former president of the RHSV (2002-2005), announced at the Inaugural Jessie Webb Society meeting in March 2021 that he had made a bequest to the RHSV.

Recently, Bill approached me to ask how the RHSV was travelling during COVID. I assured him that we were holding in the black. He wondered if he might move his future bequest to giving over the next few years, instead of (hopefully) in the distant future.

After discussions, Bill decided on this new course and gave a wonderful donation of \$100,000 to be matched over the next two financial years. Bill agreed to making his very generous donation public knowledge, and his reasons for doing so, in order to give food for thought to others.

Bill Russell stated that he had great trust in the current leadership of the RHSV. He also made note of our new Investment Philosophy and Strategy, our Investment Committee and our recent appointment of a financial planner to better manage our investments. He saw that anything he gave now could and would grow to be greater than a bequest down the track. This is because the RHSV investment policy is about building capital and only using

interest when needed to enhance our mission to protect Victoria's history and heritage.

Bill was disturbed by the imminent loss of our annual government funding, about ten per cent of our annual budget. We hope a new government funding scheme might be devised by the Victorian government for the History and Museums sector, but there are no guarantees.

So, thank you so much Bill from all at the RHSV! We will do all in our power to protect and grow your tax-deductible gift.

Richard Broome AM,
President RHSV

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Wodonga HS: read all about the Border District on Trove from 1860 to 1949

As from June 2021 Trove has at least one border district newspaper from 1860 to 1949.

This marks the end of a five-year-long project undertaken jointly by Wodonga Historical Society and Albury & District Historical Society.

In 2017 there were no Albury district newspapers on Trove before 1896 or after 1938. No other major regional centre in New South Wales or Victoria had similar chronological gaps in its local newspaper records on Trove.

Since 2017 the two societies, working in conjunction with Albury Library Museum, raised \$132,000 to expand the coverage back and forward in time.

Among the successful grants the two societies won, one was from the NSW Regional Cultural Fund (\$68,877); one from the Public Record Office, Victoria (\$14,400) and four from the Royal Australian Historical Society (totalling \$12,559). Smaller, but still substantial grants were from Inland Rail, the Albury Commercial Club and Charles Sturt University.

Both societies relied on the generosity of their members and the community for financial and in-kind support totalling \$40,400.

The coverage obtained is still incomplete, but further moves beyond or within this span of years is beyond the Society's five-year ambition.

Bruce Pennay



Uta Wiltshire, Secretary Wodonga Historical Society with a copy of the Albury Banner and Wodonga Express.



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What's on at RHSV

► continued

Where possible we offer all our events as hybrid: both in our premises at 239 A'Beckett St, Melbourne and via Zoom. Information on booking tickets to all our events can be found on our website

KALEIDOSCOPE EXHIBITION

Until December 2022

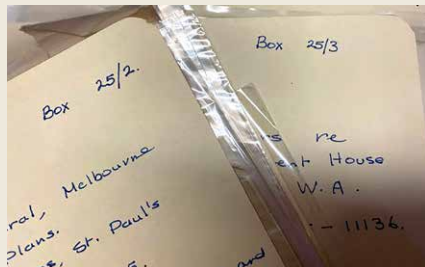
Curated by Dr Cheryl Griffin and designed by Katrin Strohl. Women have always played a pivotal role in the RHSV's long history however their achievements are rarely spotlighted. This splendid exhibition highlights just 50 of those women who have helped shape and nurture community history in Victoria through the RHSV.



CATALOGUING CLINIC

Thursdays: 23 June and 28 July
11am – 12noon
by ZOOM, FREE

Jillian Hiscock, RHSV Collections Manager, hosts these monthly hour-long clinics which are a relaxed gathering of people who are finding their way through the intricacies of cataloguing material in historical collections which, as we all know, fall between a library and a museum with sometimes a bit of art gallery thrown in. Jillian always prepares some material on a specific topic and questions are encouraged. If you are new to cataloguing or an old hand you will find plenty to interest you in these sessions. Look on our website for 2022 dates and Zoom log-in.



VICTORIAN COMMUNITY HISTORY AWARDS

The awards are now open for entries, closing 8 July 2022, for history projects which came to fruition between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022.

Winning projects will display excellence across all categories ideally: originality,

scholarship, popular appeal, accessibility and local community involvement. In 2022 we are introducing a new category, The Small Organisation History Project Award (\$1500) which is open to historical societies with an annual operating budget of less than \$10,000.

More information and entry forms can be found on the RHSV website.

HOLSWORTH GRANTS

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 is interested in supporting enthusiastic community groups and organisations with a true interest in heritage preservation and appreciation, and the enhancement of community life.

Small grants of up to \$3,000 are available for two purposes:

1. **Publication.** The publication of any specific or general local history or natural history in rural and regional Victoria or
2. **Digitisation.** Funds can be used towards the purchase of scanning equipment or for the costs of outsourcing digitisation to specialist scanning companies.

More information and entry forms can be found on the RHSV website.

OCTOBER IS HISTORY MONTH 2022

Celebrating 150 years of free secular & compulsory education for Victorian primary school kids!

A century before the Whitlam government's institution of free university education, Victoria was ahead of the game and flew the flag of progressive liberalism. The Education Act 1872 made Victoria the first Australian colony (and one of the first jurisdictions in the world) to offer free, secular, compulsory education to its primary-school children.

History Month is a wonderful opportunity for each historical society to hold an event with a local primary school (or two or three!). Take in a box of historical objects, perhaps some antique toys, or photos of your area. Or play a game you

used to play as a kid! The list of ideas is endless.

So put the dates in your diary, and start planning! We'll send more event ideas and the Dept of Education is developing curriculum suggestions for release in term 3.

Activity resources:

<https://www.carnamah.com.au/education>

<https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/stay-at-home-festival/>

<https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/societies/other-resources/>

Funding resources:

The 2022 Children's Week Grant (\$1000) is an option for the last week of History Month. For more information email - childrens.week@education.vic.gov.au

FLAGSTAFF GARDEN GUIDED WALKING TOURS

Chris Manchee is taking his very entertaining guided walking tours of Flagstaff Gardens again. The tours are at 11am or 2pm every Monday and cost \$10. Bookings on 03 9326 9288. Chris can often accommodate larger groups on other days too.

Visitors will climb Flagstaff Hill to consider its place in Melbourne's topography and pre-European history as well as its early roles as a burial ground, flagstaff signalling station and magnetic and meteorological observatory.

These are great tours for groups like Probus and U3A – to find out more please contact Rebecca on 03 9326 9288 | <mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au> Tours can be combined with the exhibition or a morning and afternoon tea.





■ Mr Harry Forder back row second from the right, and Miss Maggie Mulvogue front row second from the left.

RHSV collections: The Blind Musicians photo album

An 1896 tour of the ensemble group known as the Blind Musicians forms the subject of one of many photo albums held in the RHSV Collections. This small, red album had yet to be researched, but I knew that it was a doorway into a long-forgotten footnote in Victorian history.

The photographs show a tour of regional Victoria, with stops including Creswick, Daylesford, Ballarat and Steiglitz. Many of these locations have changed substantially since the days of the Blind Musicians tour, with Steiglitz now a ghost town and the Daylesford Mineral Springs they visited a far cry from the luxury spas of today. A miner's camp in Rokewood and a horse-drawn tram in Ballarat are exotic visions to modern eyes, but other events in which they partook are more familiar: the musicians stopped for afternoon tea in Wedderburn and enjoy the cascading sounds of the Lal Lal and

Moorabool falls. Their journey ends with a ride on the paddle steamer *Hygeia*, taking them back to Melbourne across Port Phillip Bay from Queenscliff.

Naming the blind musicians: searching through newspaper records from the 1890s I found articles on a troupe of blind musicians who toured the countryside of Western Victoria in 1896. These musicians went by the names of Mr Harry Forder, Mr John Tainsh, Mr Charles "Chaz" Bartlett, Miss Maggie Mulvogue, Miss Amy Wilson and Miss Lizette Wotton. They received training from the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind, also known as the Blind Asylum and the Victorian Asylum and School for the Blind, and spent their professional lives touring nationally and internationally, including countries such as South Africa, New Zealand and China.

The performances were made up of popular songs, hymns, nursery rhymes and a demonstration of the Braille system; they enraptured audiences with their musical prowess and instrumental

skills. The newspaper reports all speak highly of their performances, and they were met with enthusiasm by their audiences, if not always financial success.

Unfortunately, evidence to connect the Blind Musicians photo album to the tour of the Blind Musicians proved harder to obtain. Newspapers of the day often didn't contain photographs, and photographs of the musicians available from other sources didn't contain names, just nondescript titles such as 'Vision Impaired Musicians'.

We put out an appeal for information, and one of our readers recognised a musician from our photographs as his great-great-grandfather, Mr Henry "Harry" Forder and was able to provide us with photographs of Mr Forder.

We can now confidently say this photograph contains Mr Harry Forder, Mr John Tainsh, Mr Chaz Bartlett, Miss Maggie Mulvogue, Miss Amy Wilson and Miss Lizette Wotton, plus two other unidentified men. Please contact the



■ *Afternoon tea at Wedderburn*

RHSV if you can help us identify any more of these long-forgotten musicians.

The musicians: following the newspaper trail to identify these musicians, I became interested in their personal stories. These musicians were making their way in the world at a time when job prospects for those with vision impairments were low and support services were limited.

Miss Margaret Mulvogue (1869-1962) was the first person I researched due to the rarity of her surname. She was a Geelong local and lost her sight in her early teens due to an attack of typhoid fever. She was sent to the Victorian Asylum and School for the Blind to receive musical training and made her professional debut in 1893, gaining renown as a talented soprano singer, and later on managing the band when they played in Perth. Tragedy struck her in 1898 when her son, Percy Bartlett, died of "infant atrophy" while in the care of his grandparents.

Mr Charles Bartlett (1875-1933) was a baritone singer and also renowned for his comic songs and sense of timing. He was born in Tasmania, and lost his sight at eight years old when he ran a pen into his eye while at school. He married Margaret Mulvogue in Melbourne in 1896 and they had four children: three of whom died before 12 months of age. Charles Bartlett died in October 1933 and was survived by eight children by his second wife, Elizabeth.

Mr John Tainsh, the band's tenor singer is difficult to pin down in the records. From an interview given by Charles Bartlett in 1902, Mr Tainsh had lost his sight in

a mining accident in Ballarat 20 years earlier. There had been an incident in Ballarat in 1885, where a John Cook Tainsh and John Cook Tainsh jnr. were killed in what was officially reported as a lightning strike. However, there was also a John Tainsh who was admitted into the care of the state in 1868. His internment papers list him as being "totally blind", with a deceased father and a mother in gaol; this John Tainsh later trained as a piano and singing teacher. Whether the John Tainsh of our interest was born in 1865, or was related to the men who were killed in the lightning strike, or is somebody completely different, we may never learn.

Mr Henry "Harry" Forder (1857-1925) played the clarinet, pipe organ, piano and violin among other instruments. He was most likely blind from youth and was admitted to the Victorian Asylum and School for the Blind when he was ten years old. There he received his musical training. He later worked as the organist and music teacher at the Presbyterian Church in St Kilda, and then made a career as a pianoforte tuner and repairer and musical teacher. Many thanks to the family of Harry Forder for providing this information to us.

Unfortunately, little information on Amy Wilson and Lizette Wotton can be found outside of their careers with the Blind Musicians, so unless anyone is able to come forward with information on these individuals, all we can do is hope they lived happy and healthy lives.

Jennifer Young,
RHSV Volunteer

“

These musicians were making their way in the world at a time when job prospects for those with vision impairments were low and support services were limited.

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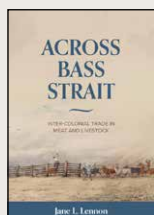
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www.historyvictoria.org.au/bookshop/

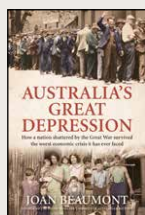


Across Bass Strait: Inter-colonial trade in meat and livestock

Jane L. Lennon (2022)

PB - 198pp \$34.95

Across Bass Strait is a history of the connection between squatters, merchants and mariners in developing the 1840s livestock trade for the meat supply to feed convicts in Van Diemen's Land. The trade established nineteenth-century Gippsland as a prime beef producer exporting through Port Albert, a now-forgotten port. This account is based on merchants' records and letters from two families who were major players in this trade: the Crooke and Foster families.

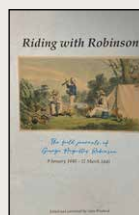


Australia's Great Depression: how a Nation Shattered by the Great War Survived the Worst Economic Crisis it has ever Faced

Joan Beaumont (2022)

HC - 576pp \$49.99

In this wide-ranging account of the Great Depression in Australia, Joan Beaumont shows how high levels of debt and the collapse of wool and wheat prices left Australia particularly exposed in the world's worst depression. Threatened with national insolvency, and with little room for policy innovation, governments resorted to austerity and deflation. Violent protests erupted in the streets and paramilitary movements threatened the political order. *Australia's Great Depression* details this most impressive narrative of resilience in the nation's history.

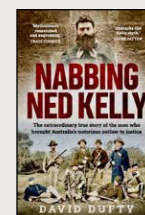


Riding with Robinson: the Field Journals of George Augustus Robinson, 9 January 1840 - 11 March 1840

Gary Presland, editor and annotator (2022)

PB - 117pp \$30.00

George Augustus Robinson's journals contain much information about prehistoric Aboriginal life, Aboriginal-European relationships, changes in the physical and cultural environments, and of the European settlement history of rural Victoria. Thus, as with all other ethno-historic sources, the journal cannot be used without some allowance being made for the ethnocentric and egocentric perspectives of the writer. However, this source has the advantage of an immediacy of recorded observations, and a temporal and spatial range unequalled in any other Victorian source of this kind.

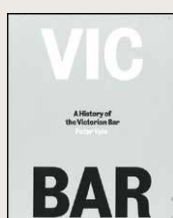


Nabbing Ned Kelly: the Extraordinary True Story of the Men who Brought Australia's Notorious Outlaw to Justice

David Duffy (2002)

PB - 424pp \$32.99

For over a century, the Ned Kelly legend has grown and grown. He has become Australia's Robin Hood, and leader of a colonial Irish resistance. How much of the legend is true? This book takes on the perspective of the law, getting to the heart of the story and finding answers to many unresolved questions. As gripping as any police procedural, it is an account of poorly trained officers unfamiliar with the terrain, in pursuit of the most dangerous men in the state.

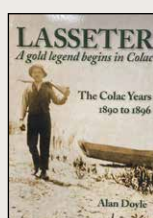


Vic Bar: A History of the Victorian Bar

Peter Yule (2021)

HC - 363pp \$69.95

Vic Bar presents a history of the Victorian Bar, from its earliest days in the late 1830s to the present. It records countless dramatic incidents that have played out in our courts, under a system of justice in which barristers are the contestants. Peter Yule describes the Victorian Bar as a collective of individuals. The reader will find many great figures of the law and of politics, and a vanguard of activists who have pressed for human rights and social progress.

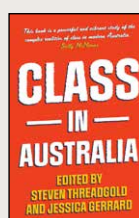


Lasseter: a Gold Legend Begins in Colac

Alan Doyle (2022)

PB - 70pp \$17.95

Longing to be rediscovered, Lasseter's lost gold reef apparently lies in Central Australia. For over ninety years, many have debated his mythical story. Numerous prospectors and expeditions have chased Lasseter's lost dream: with nothing to show for their efforts. Doyle's research of the mystery takes a different perspective, recounting Lewis Lasseter's journey of his early youthful days in the Victorian town of Colac. His discoveries divulge a new twist to the tale of Lasseter: an enigmatic man that everyone thought they knew so well.

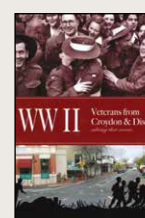


Class in Australia

Steven Threadgold and Jessica Gerrard, editors (2022)

PB - 280pp \$39.95

Two decades since it was claimed that class is dead, social, economic and cultural inequalities are rising. Though Australia is often described as a 'lucky country' with a strong economy, we are witness to intensifying inequality. *Class in Australia* brings together a range of new and original research for a timely examination of class relations, labour exploitation and the changing formations of work in contemporary Australian society.



WWII Veterans from Croydon: Saluting their Service & District

Geoff Arnott (2022)

HC - 382pp \$40.00

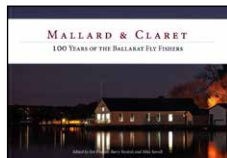
WWII Veterans from Croydon provides an account of the involvement by WWII veterans from Croydon, North Croydon, Kilsyth, Mooroolbark and Wonga Park in the military campaigns and battles that were fought on the land, at sea and in the air. The soldiers, sailors and airmen from Croydon and District were heavily involved in these campaigns, with the book featuring the stories of over 70 individuals which typify how and where the war was fought with examples of gallantry, unimaginable suffering and sacrifice.

Books received

John Schauble

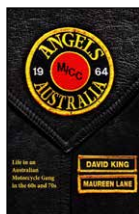
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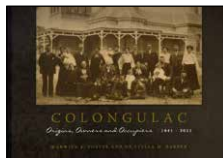
Mallard & Claret: 100 years of the Ballarat Fly Fishers. Jim Findlay, Barry Kentish and Mike Sorrell, editors, Ballarat Fly Fishers Club, Ballarat, 2020, pp.1-246, ISBN 978064682090.

There is no question that fly fishing elevates the pastime of angling to a different level. It has suffered in the past from being seen as elitist and even as an extension of the old class system imported from Britain. For more than a century, the focus for fly fishers in Ballarat has been Lake Wendouree. Generations have plied their skills on this fine still water fishery. The Ballarat Fly Fishers club established its home on its banks. This handsome, beautifully illustrated book tells the club's history from its formation in 1919. The story includes tales of local rivalries, the introduction of carp and perch to the lake, competitions and trips, drought and other challenges.



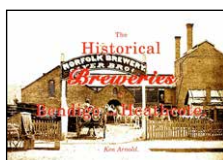
Angels: Life in an Australian Motorcycle Gang in the 60s and 70s. David King and Maureen Lane, Melbourne Books, Melbourne, 2021, pp.8-171, ISBN 97819255568345.

The subtitle of *Angels* takes the reader straight to the point, as this is a life story centred on the Angels motorcycle club, a local group, not to be confused with the US-based Hells Angels; and its place in the western suburbs of Melbourne. It is an insight into Melbourne's recent past unknown to most. But it is also the tale of a homeless boy living on the streets of Williamstown who found a group with a common interest in motorbikes and acceptance as he escaped from a life of poverty and domestic violence. David King, who just liked to make engines roar, would become a driver to two Victorian Governors, survive cancer and tell a remarkable tale.



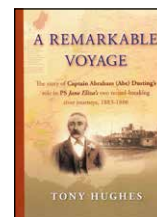
Colongulac: Origins, Owners and Occupiers, 1841-2020. Warwick M. Foster, Stella M. Barber and others, the author, Melbourne, 2021, pp.1-264, ISBN 978192555568345.

Sometimes people are fortunate enough to own significant properties. Sometimes the community is fortunate that they have the capacity, interest and insight to document the story of these homes. On balance, this is more likely to occur in the country. Colongulac today is a substantial private home in suburban North Balwyn. Its origins were in the land boom of the late 1880s and in succession it was a country homestead, a veterinary practice, a respite home and private hospital, evangelical mission and family home. This is a story centred on and celebrating the families that have lived here. But is also a record of the house itself, its origins, construction, distinctive tower and restoration.



The Historical Breweries of Bendigo and Heathcote. Ken Arnold, Crown Castleton, Golden Square, 2020, pp. 1-148, ISBN 9780959632729.

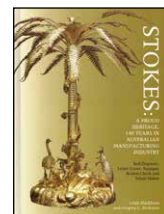
In an era of "boutique breweries" and dozens of brews to choose from at the bottle shop, perhaps few Victorians today appreciate that this was how it was for the first century of beer production here. Long before the multinational brewing behemoths of the twentieth century, many towns had their own brewers: and loyal customers. Bendigo, as a provincial city, had thirst and several breweries over the years. Among the best known was Bendigo United Breweries, which went through several iterations between 1909 and its inevitable acquisition by Carlton and United in 1947. This book tells of the rise and fall of more than 40 brewers in the district, amply illustrated with historical photographs and some beautiful old labels.



A Remarkable Voyage: the Story of Captain Abraham (Abe) Dusting's Role in PS Jane Eliza's Two Record-breaking River Journeys, 1883-1886.

Tony Hughes, the author, Melbourne, 2021, pp. iv-52, ISBN 9780646840376.

This is a sliver of a longer family history. The importance of Australia's inland waterways as trade and passenger links is easily forgotten. From the 1850s until the early 20th century, steamboats were important links before road and rail expanded. Captain Dusting, a mariner who deserted his ship at Port Melbourne to seek his luck on the goldfields, eventually found his way onto the river system where he skipped several steamboats, including the ill-fated PS *Jane Eliza*. Stranded by the drying river, it took the vessel three years to complete the longest duration river voyage leaving Morgan in South Australia in 1883 for Bourke in NSW. The trip back, propelled by flood waters, was much quicker!



Stokes: a Proud Heritage, 140 years in Australian Manufacturing Industry.

Leigh Blackburn and Gregory C. Eccleston, Evandale, Malvern, 2021, pp. v-323, ISBN 9780646839783.

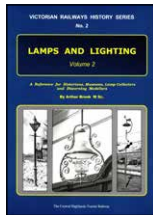
For generations of Australians, the name Stokes was embossed upon their consciousness, always on the reverse or underside. From the 1850s, the business manufactured all manner of medallions, trophies and table silverware before branching into more utilitarian items: fire extinguishers, hose couplings, ball valves and electric hotplates. At one point, the company became the distributor of that curious cutlery item, the Splayd. In its heyday Stokes was charged with making official gifts from Australia to the Queen. Yet after 140 years it would fall victim to the decline of skilled manufacturing in Australia in the late twentieth century, as cheap imports flooded the country and local manufacturers went offshore. Only a fragment of the business survives.

Books received

John Schauble

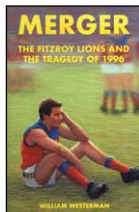
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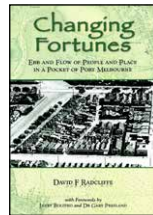
Lamps & lighting. Volume 2, Station Platforms, Buildings and Yards, Gas and Electric Lamps and Lighting. Arthur Brook, Central Highlands Tourist Railway, Daylesford, 2021, ISBN 9780648374718.

This is an oddly fascinating book, given its rather esoteric subject matter. Billed as 'a reference for historians, museums, lamp collectors and discerning modellers', this slice of Victorian industrial history looks at the lighting of railway stations and facilities. What make it so interesting is on one level the collection of illustrations and photographs from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. On another is the technological change it traces as public lighting moves from various types of gas to electricity. This reflection upon some long-disappeared technology should find a keen following among railway historians in particular. A previous volume deals with lighting using solid and liquid fuelled lamps.



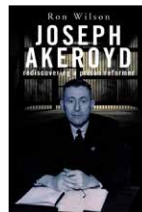
Merger: The Fitzroy Lions and the Tragedy of 1996. William Westerman, Melbourne Books, Melbourne 2021, pp.1-390, ISBN 9781925556858.

A quarter of a century on, the pain is still visceral for many a Fitzroy fan. In 1996 the Lions, an AFL club with a long and strong history, merged with Brisbane rather than disappear forever. The merger, the only such club amalgamation to date in the league, marked not just the end of an era but the end of a generational bond for many supporters. This is a book not just for Fitzroy tragics, but a book with serious lessons for those who, lured by dollars, choose to devalue history. It is a complex story beyond the saga of football. The re-emergence of Fitzroy as a strong community club is its minor premiership.



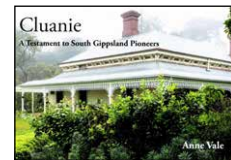
Changing Fortunes: Ebb and Flow of People and Place in a Pocket of Port Melbourne. David F. Radcliffe, Penfolk, Blackburn, 2021, pp.vi-266, ISBN 9781925467093.

The sub-title of this book, 'Ebb and flow of people and place in a pocket of Port Melbourne', introduces this more intensive form of locality-based history interpreted through a section of its community rather than the whole. This study is centred on a pocket of reclaimed land in Port Melbourne and its transition from a lagoon to modest working family cottages. One focus is on many of the 'ordinary' people who lived there rather than just those of influence. Another is the significance of property development and ownership and the influence this had on the lives of working-class people in the area. Commended in the 2021 Victorian Community History Awards.



Joseph Akeroyd: Rediscovering a Prison Reformer. Ron Wilson, Xlibris, 2021, pp.9-265, ISBN 9781664106482.

Accounts of the work of senior public servants in Victoria are rare. Frank Tate (education) and William Calder (roads) were a couple who attracted public attention for the depth of their reforms but for the most part bureaucrats remain in the shadows. Joseph Akeroyd was Inspector General of Victoria's prison system from 1924 until 1947. This account of his work in reforming the prison system, in particular through giving prisoners better access to education, had its beginnings in a PhD thesis by an author who himself worked in prison education. The focus is squarely on Akeroyd's work and its import rather than on him personally. The book suffers somewhat from the lack of an index.



Cluanie: a Testament to South Gippsland Pioneers. Anne Vale, Heriscapes, Inverloch, 2021, ISBN 9780646841663.

Here is the delightful story of a South Gippsland property traced since the late 1870s through a small number of owners; one family held it for almost a century. Originally called 'Lyre Bird Mound' and one of the few remaining twentieth century homesteads in the district, it eventually fell on hard times. The house has been bravely and lovingly restored by a couple of later owners. Dr Anne Vale is a noted garden historian whose family has lived at 'Cluanie' since 2009. Theirs is the latest chapter in the continuation and rejuvenation of the property, which has seen its reinstatement as a working farm and the restoration, not surprisingly, of the homestead garden.



The Anderson Mines of Aberfeldy: Includes Stockholm Tar, Waterloo, The Pride, Knapping Mines & Kitty Cane. Rudi Paoletti and Andrew Giles, Paoletti's Maps and Videos, [Langwarrin], 2020, pp.1-71, ISBN 9780980745771.

Rudi Paoletti has spent the past 20 years or so exploring and documenting the mines of the Walhalla to Woods Point area. He also leads expeditions into the area verifying and recording evidence for his maps and publications. This is the latest in a number of publications which have recorded the physical remnants of mining and mine settlements in West Gippsland. The publications focus on identifying sites and relics rather than presenting a formal history, although this is often supplemented by dipping into official records and newspaper accounts. In this case, the story of the Anderson mines largely emerges through maps and many historical and contemporary photographs.