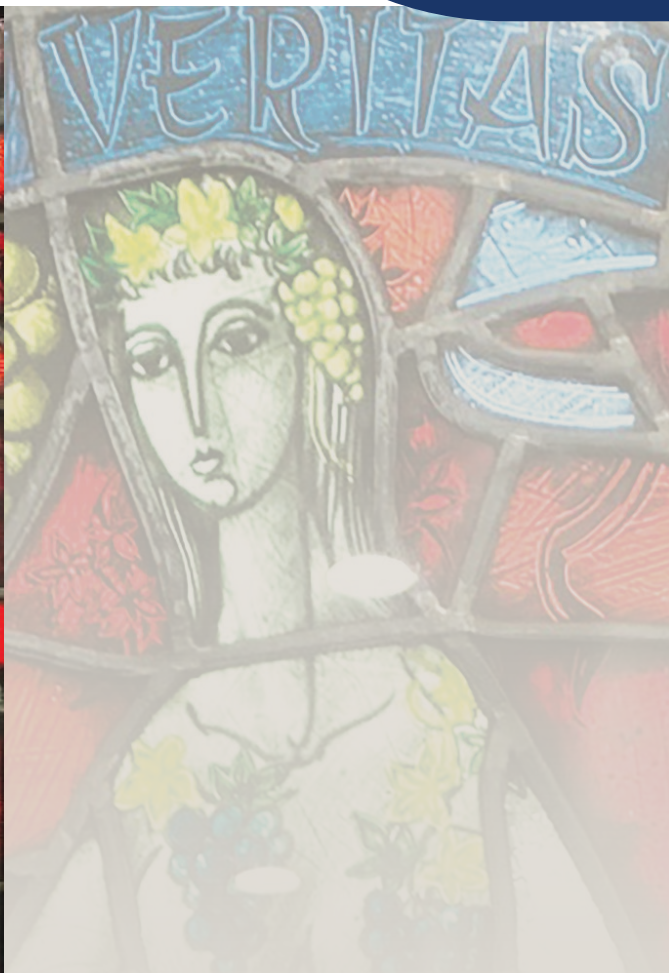


# HISTORY NEWS

ISSUE 364 | FEBRUARY 2023



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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

## WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG HISTORIES IN EARLY COLONIAL MELBOURNE: COUNTRY, ANCESTORS, AND THE MANAGEMENT OF NEWCOMERS.

**Date:** Tuesday 21 February 2023

**Time:** 5:30-7pm

**Presenters:** Rachel Stanfield, a non-Indigenous historian, and Karen Jones, a Wurundjeri Elder and Traditional Owner-historian

**Location:** hybrid, at the RHSV and via Zoom

**Cost:** \$10/\$20

This lecture is the 2nd RHSV Indigenous History Lecture which forms part of our annual Distinguished Lecturer Series.

In this lecture Rachel and Karen will outline how we came to work together and the development of our collaborative research relationship as an example of new directions in Indigenous history.

In their work together, they focus on extracting material from the archive that uncovers the lives of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung ancestors, their defence of their Country, and their custodianship of culture as they manage the invasion of their land. Presenters will outline important examples from their research that illustrate Wurundjeri responses to the invasion and efforts to protect Country and culture. They will also discuss the value of this knowledge for contemporary Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people.

## SAVE THE DATES: DISTINGUISHED LECTURER SERIES

We have a fabulous line-up of speakers for our Distinguished Lecturer series in the first half of 2023 so pencil these into your diaries now

**Tuesday 21 March:** Iola Mathews will deliver the Women's History Month Lecture

**Tuesday 18 April:** Dr Ashleigh Green will deliver the AGL Shaw Lecture presented in partnership with the C J La Trobe Society

**Tuesday 23 May:** The Honourable Justice Christopher Maxwell AC will deliver the Inaugural Paul Mullaly History and Law Lecture

**Tuesday 20 June:** Dr Bart Ziino will deliver the Weston Bate Oration

## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AND HISTORY MONTH

Remember that March is Women's History Month and October is History Month so start planning events for those months.

## IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS

Our monthly Zoom-based events, Cataloguing Clinics, History Writing Group and Marketing forums will return in 2023; these events are already on our website and bookings are open for February.

## TOUR OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS & MUSEUM

**Date:** Wednesday 15 February

**Time:** 10:15am – 12noon

**Location:** RACS, 250 - 290 Spring Street, Melbourne VIC 3002

**Cost:** \$15

We are delighted to offer RHSV members a tour of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) museum and building.

RACS was founded in 1927, by a group of leading surgeons who saw the need for a professional institution to improve and maintain the standards of surgery practised in Australia and New Zealand. Almost immediately a small collection of artefacts and surgical instruments, as well as a small library, started to form.

In 2007 a museum dedicated to surgery was opened by the then president, Dr Russell Stitz. The museum provides an educational experience for Fellows, Trainees, the surgical and medical professions, and the general public. The College collections which support the Museum are large and diverse. They can be divided into four major groups:

- Works of art
- Rare and historic books
- Surgical instruments and equipment
- Gifts from Fellows and affiliated Colleges

## NEW EXHIBITION: WELL BUILT: SIMMIE & CO MASTER BUILDERS 1924 – 1978

**Date:** 1 February – 30 June 2023,

**Mon – Fri excl public holidays**

**Time:** 9am – 5pm

**Curator:** historian, Dr Andrew Kilsby

**Location:** RHSV Gallery Downstairs

**Cost:** Free

Simmie & Co was a prominent building company in Melbourne (1924-1978) and in Canberra (1926-1969). The company was highly successful and built many iconic buildings including the Shrine forecourt (1939-45) some heritage listed today.

The founders were three Victorian brothers all of whom worked at the Sunshine Harvester factory before World War I veterans.

## History News

History News is the bi-monthly newsletter of the RHSV  
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**COVER IMAGE:** 'Windows on history: *In Vino Veritas*', see pages 10-11

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# President's report

I extend my best wishes for 2023 to all our RHSV members and friends. We at the RHSV, along with much of the world save for a few autocrats, hope for a better year this year, in terms of world peace, pandemics and the wellbeing of all.

The RHSV will hit the ground running in 2023 with many events and activities. In terms of our distinguished lecture series, in February we present the Indigenous History Lecture given by Rachel Standfield and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder Karen Jones. In March, Women's History Month will be showcased with a lecture by Iola Mathews.

Then in May we present the inaugural Paul Mullaly lecture in Law and History during Victoria's Law Week, to honour the late Paul Mullaly QC, who was a supporter and benefactor of the RHSV. Paul Mullaly researched crime in early Port Phillip, and in particular meticulously edited the Judge Willis casebooks for our website, which have been in the possession of the RHSV for over a hundred years but until then not deeply used or researched. The Mullaly Lecture will be delivered by Justice Christopher Maxwell AC, former head of the Appeals Court.

The RHSV is also enhancing its outreach in 2023.

The History Victoria Support Group (HVSOG) has been revamped by its new team, led by its Coordinator, Rosalie Triolo. It will be offering an exciting program in 2023 and Council has sanctioned a new name, the Historical Societies Support Committee (HSSC), to bring it in line with our other RHSV committees.

By the time you read this report, our Vice-President Rosalie Triolo and I will have spent three days in Canberra with 15 teachers of VCE Australian History. Rosalie has arranged this trip with the National Capital Educational Tourism Project to give those teachers, who are trying to prevent the erosion of VCE Australian History at year 12, access to resources held by some of our key national institutions. Currently 1 in 10 VCE Year 12 students select History subjects, and 1 in 100 select Australian History.

The group will visit five institutions over three days to get a backroom special tour of resources that they might use to enhance their teaching. This is not

an RHSV event, but is supported by the RHSV leadership team, which ran a special meeting in November for these teachers at the RHSV. This meeting strengthened teaching networks and provided a successful forum for feedback on the first year of the new VCE Study Design in Australian History.

I look forward to seeing you in 2023 at the Drill Hall. We have a great program that will be delivered face to face and by Zoom. Our Council and committees continue to reflect on their performance and governance structures to better meet the future. We ended 2022 in good health and with a pleasing surplus. Challenges remain once government funding ends this year but we are working hard to meet them.

**Richard Broome AM**

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Richard, Rosalie and VCE Australian History teachers in Canberra



# Vale Mary Kenealy 1938-2022



Mary and Reg in the temporary history centre, 2009. Courtesy MDHS

**Born on 11 December 1938 at Yallourn, Victoria, Mary Therese Culhane was the fifth child of Jack and Nellie Culhane. She grew up with her siblings in Glenhuntly and attended St Anthony's School where she was successively dux of her class and gained a scholarship to Presentation College, Windsor. She graduated from teachers' college, and later taught at St Leonard's School, Glen Waverley.**

As a member of the Samaritan Light Opera Company, Mary met "Reg", Reginald Kenealy. Their marriage, solemnised on 20 February 1960, lasted 59 years. They had four children in five years, Anthony, Kevin, Damian and Mary-Louise, and lived in Vermont. Mary excelled as a teacher at St Timothy's School and gained promotion to vice principal.

Mary and Reg travelled widely but the mountainous, forested region of Marysville had a magnetic attraction. As a child Mary had been fascinated by the giant tree ferns in Nicholas Caire's photograph *Fairy Scene at the Landslip, Blacks' Spur*. The couple purchased a cottage at 55 Falls Road, landscaped a garden that became part of the Australia Open Gardens scheme, and participated fully in various community activities. Their move into a retirement village did not slow them down.

The couple made an outstanding contribution to the Marysville and District Historical Society (MDHS). They expanded the collection at the history

centre in Pack Road and opened it regularly at weekends and on request. Mary expressed her devotion to the township in her book *The High Way to Heaven: A Story of Marysville and District* (2006). The title referred to the Yarra Track which led from Melbourne to the Woods Point goldfields where some of Mary's Irish forebears had settled. Marysville, located about halfway along the track, was designated the main town. The magnificent scenery beside the track was distinctively Australian but names on the goldfield such as Jericho on the Jordan River had Biblical overtones. This track was, indeed, Mary's way to the Promised Land.

Mary was MDHS secretary for 25 years and Reg was president for 15 years. It's impossible to be precise, as the society's records were destroyed in the furnace of the 2009 bushfires. Mary and Reg loaded precious MDHS items into a trailer on Saturday 7 February 2009 but had to abandon it owing to the speed and savagery of the flames. Their son, Kevin, drove them to safety.

Mary testified before the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. The Commission's report stated, 'although some communities were physically destroyed, their members ... displayed ingenuity, strength and resolve in the face of the calamity'. Mary had these qualities in abundance. As she and Reg travelled across Victoria, appealing for items to replace their lost collection she became the clear, compelling voice of Marysville history. The couple were the subject of an episode on the ABC's *Australian Story* and participated on a panel for Q&A.

Mary and Reg secured a cabin at The Crossways, Marysville, which served as a temporary home for donated items and, ably assisted by art historian

Andrew Mackenzie, they developed a replacement collection. Prompted by Andrew, the RACV publicised the campaign for donations. Carolyn Webb, journalist at *The Age*, wrote that 'Marysville's past is pouring back in'. Items came from far and wide with the Bibliothèque Nationale de France promising copies of photographs by Nicholas Caire.

In 2010 the MDHS, assisted by a bequest and state government grant, bought a house at 39 Darwin Street and this was officially opened in 2013. Mary wrote *Razed, Raised* (2013) for the 150th anniversary of the township and as testament to the community's resurgence. In 2014 she and Reg were made Life Members of the MDHS and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria honoured each of them with an Award of Merit.

Reg died in 2019 and Mary was cared for by her son Damian at his home in Geelong before her death on 26 November 2022. Damian gave the eulogy at her service in Lilydale and Judith Vimpani wrote a moving tribute in the *Bulletin* of the Marysville and District Historical Society.

**Carole Woods OAM FRHSV**

RHSV Honorary Secretary

RHSV Fellowship Committee chairperson

# HVSG is now HSSC with exciting plans for 2023

## Welcome to 2023 and may it be a happy, healthy, historically rich year for all RHSV members.

This new year sees the History Victoria Support Group (HVSG) assume a new title: Historical Societies Support Committee (HSSC).

'Support' remains intentionally in the title, and will remain the strongest feature of HSSC's work with networks, societies and individuals who protect and promote all facets of Victoria's history and heritage. The word 'Group' has, however, been deliberately replaced to bring the title in line with RHSV's other responsible internal bodies, each being named a 'Committee'. The 'Convenor', thus, becomes a 'Chair'. Most importantly, the title is immediately clearer in meaning and more formal than 'group' has suggested in some contexts. HSSC is indeed a team of professionals who wish to support RHSV members 'professionally'; to represent RHSV equally professionally to significant others whose activities beyond RHSV influence Victoria's history and heritage, including in ways we might not always choose.

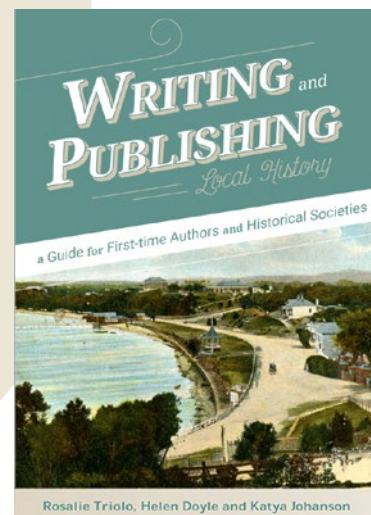
This report is being written in the opening days of January with most Victorians happily on holidays. At the same time, government officials are reminding us that, once holidays have concluded, we must 'learn to live with COVID' and resume more mainstream activities. The fine details for 2023 are still being confirmed but, fingers crossed, HSSC intends to resume offering four seminars on Saturdays in 2023, with Sunday site visits, where applicable. Three such events will be located in the regions and one in Melbourne at the Drill Hall. As soon as the details are finalised, these opportunities will be promoted.

You might also recall that HSSC (HVSG)

asked in 2022 for network leaders to email me their names, current correct network titles and some indication of the geographical area or names of member historical societies within their networks. Thank you to those who responded. If there has been any change in your network since late 2022, please email me anew.

There was a reason for the request other than the updating of records. In an HSSC initiative, networks leaders will soon receive information from HSSC to help organise their own 2023 seminar days and other events. Last year, HSSC reviewed the lockdown phone tree records of 2020-21. HSSC members also listened genuinely through other means for what networks and societies require. HSSC learned that networks welcome opportunities for professional learning from speakers with specific experience and expertise, being speakers from within, or external to, the networks. And that networks also enjoy informal sharing of participating individual societies' specific successes. Network events *efficiently provide knowledge, skills and inspiration to large numbers of attendees in a positive multiplier effect*; attendees can return to their own societies to share and enact what they have learned.

With this in mind, HSSC members and RHSV Councillors have been asked to nominate topics about which they feel comfortable presenting to networks. The topics are of two broad kinds informed, as above, by what most 'require', but also the expertise HSSC and RHSV people believe they can 'provide': firstly, practical advice with regard to networks or society management and operations, such as managing finances; secondly, historical content knowledge relevant to a local region or theme, such as local school communities' experiences of, and contributions to, WWI. Consequently, network leaders will soon receive two lists of topics and speakers.



To summarise, network leaders will contact volunteer speakers and the two will negotiate the specifics of what might be presented, along with any other arrangements, perhaps petrol or accommodation support if long distance travel is required. Circumstances will alter cases. The post-COVID world of Zoom to which more members have become accustomed might also offer possibilities. If volunteer speakers are unable to meet networks requests for any reasons, then leaders can simply return to their lists for alternative speakers or topics.

Unfortunately, the speaker lists cannot be made available in blanket terms to every single one of RHSV's 340 societies because, quite simply, the number of speakers could never meet that scale of demand and could lead to frustrations for all. Also, HSSC members and RHSV Councillors are volunteers. While some are retired, many are working part-time or full-time, or volunteering for RHSV or other organisations in other activities and bigger projects additional to usual family and other daily commitments. Again, network events conveniently and collegially reach the largest number of society representatives. If the initiative proceeds as efficiently and positively as intended there will then be more time and capacity for us to engage foremost in 'our real work': protecting and promoting Victoria's history and heritage.

HSSC is excited to contemplate the year ahead and will be interested to observe this initiative in action. Our committee looks forward to interacting with known colleagues and developing relationships with new.

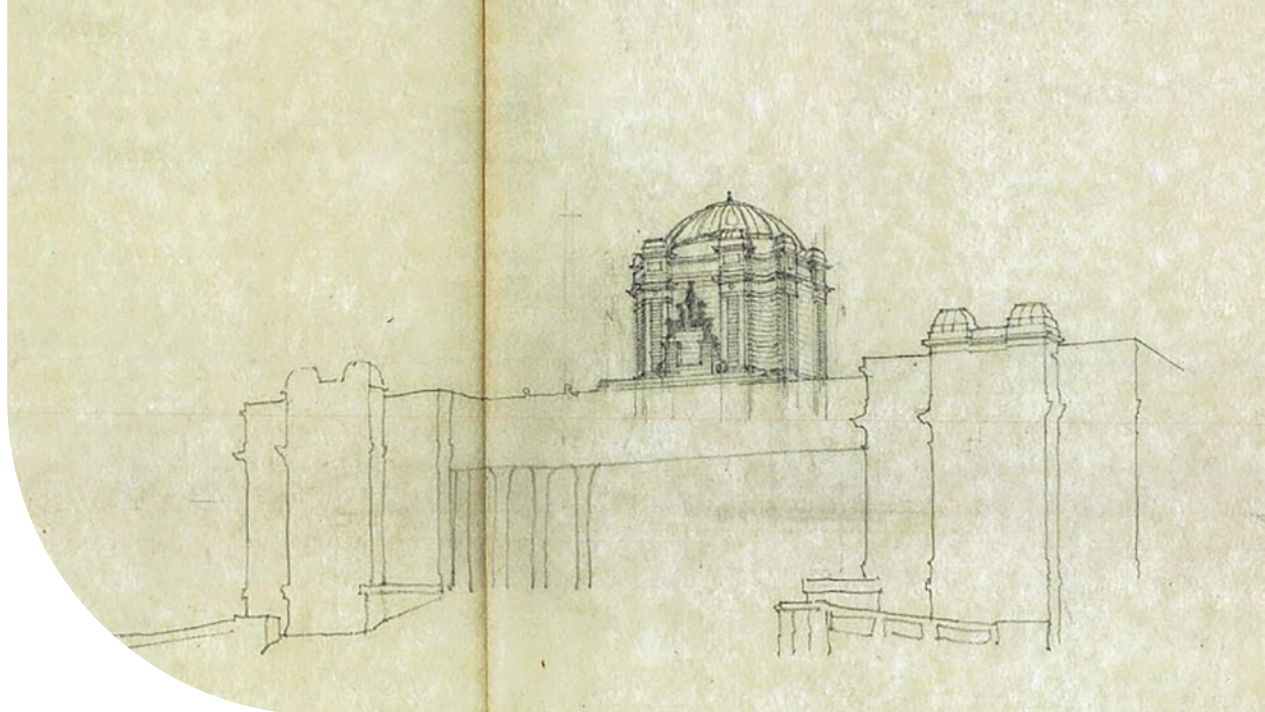
More in time,

**Dr Rosalie Triolo**

Chair HSSC (RHSV)

Email: [hssc@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:hssc@historyvictoria.org.au)





■ This rough, conceptual sketch from 1926 gives some idea of how a 'less ambitious' dome would have looked on top of the Victorian state parliament building. NAA, A281, DGW1927 450.

## Architecture in the archives: The unbuilt dome

**The National Archives of Australia holds a significant series of architectural drawings of public buildings across Victoria. Amongst the many gems in the series are drawings thought to be of a dome which the Federal Government considered funding for the Victorian state parliament building.**

The designs of many buildings once owned or leased by the Federal (Commonwealth) Government across Victoria are documented: series B3712 – Folders of Construction Drawings (1850 – 1975). The buildings represented in the series range from humble rural post offices and suburban drill halls to coastal lighthouses and grander edifices such as Melbourne's former Customs House and General Post Office. There are over 2,500 folders of drawings in the series containing an estimated 38,000 individual drawings.

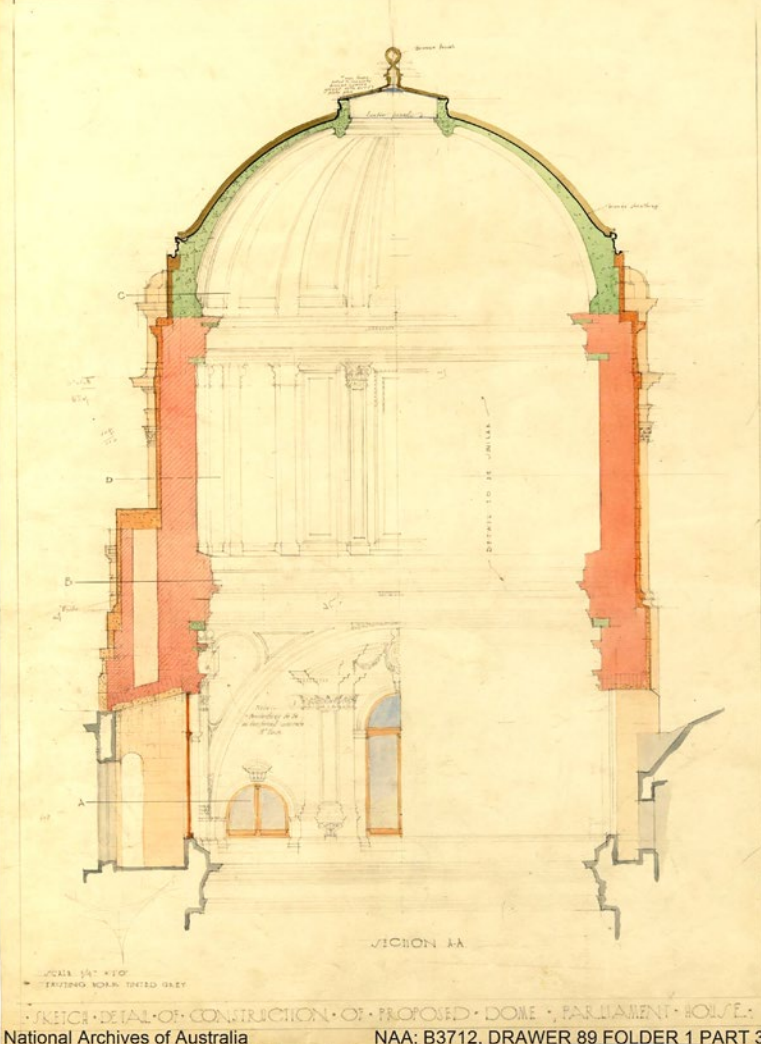
The earliest drawings date from the nineteenth century and relate to buildings originally built by the colonial Victorian government but later transferred to the Federal Government after Federation. Intricately hand-drawn and exquisitely water-coloured, many of these earlier drawings are art works in their own right.

Drawings in B3712 can include elevations, schematics, floor plans, cross-sections, engineering and mechanical layouts and even details of internal fittings. The drawings can document how these buildings were originally used and key changes over time, such as extensions. Some of the buildings have long since

disappeared from local communities. Others never 'got off the drawing board' in the first place.

The drawings of unbuilt domes for the Victorian parliament building in Spring Street were showcased during a joint National Archives and RHSV webinar about the B3712 drawings. The older drawings show the lofty and ornate dome originally conceived by the building's architect, Peter Kerr. This design is well known. However, it was drawings of a simpler design which attracted the interest of heritage collection officers from State Parliament. These are thought to relate to the dome which the Federal Government considered funding for the building in the 1920s.

From 1901 until 1927, the state parliament building served as Federal parliament house. As the Federal Parliament prepared to relocate from Melbourne to Canberra, consideration was given to how to recognise the Victorian Government's generosity in granting free use of their building for so many years. One proposal which caught the imagination of some was to finally build Peter Kerr's dome. This had been floated several times over the years, most recently in 1925 as a memorial to



**Top Left:** Undated and unsigned drawing of an alternative, simpler dome for Parliament House – now thought to be from 1926/27. NAA B3712, Drawer 89, FOLDER 1 PART 3

**Top Right:** Item level descriptive work being undertaken on the B3712 drawings as part of the Defend the Past, Protect the Future Program.

**Bottom Right:** The grand and lofty dome for the Victorian parliament building as originally conceived by architect Peter Kerr in the nineteenth century. NAA B3712, Drawer 8 FOLDER 1 PART 4

former prime minister Alfred Deakin. This proposal did not fly though, given the estimated cost and differences of opinion as to whether the dome would actually improve the look of the building or not.

Instead, the Commonwealth and Victorian chief architects came up with an alternative design. Described as ‘necessarily in a less ambitious form’, this is presumably the second dome design found in B3712. Although undated and unsigned, key elements of this design match the detailed dome specifications prepared by the Department of Public Works in 1926.

Although the alternative dome design was within the Federal Government’s price-range, it was criticised by some Victorian politicians as being too ‘squatty’ to command attention. Peter Kerr’s son also argued that a ‘stunted dome’ would not realise his father’s vision, nor improve the appearance of either the building or city.

Ultimately, the alternative dome design was ‘rejected as quite unworthy of the building’. Instead, the Federal Parliament simply legislated to grant Victoria the sum of £50,000 on the condition that it was spent in a commemorative way on the

parliament building or its surroundings. In the end, the Victorian government opted to use the money for something far more utilitarian than a dome: to build new ‘refreshment rooms’ at Parliament House!

The National Archives’ Victoria Office is currently describing all of the drawings in B3712 at item level in RecordSearch, the National Archives’ online catalogue. This project, which will improve access to the drawings, is being funded through the National Archives’ \$67.7 million Defend the Past, Protect the Future program.

#### **Patrick Ferry**

Assistant State Manager, Victoria at the National Archives of Australia, based at the Victorian Archives Centre in North Melbourne.



# Around the societies

Prepared by volunteer Glenda Beckley on behalf of the Historical Societies Support Committee.

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 APRIL 2023 ISSUE** please send details to [office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au) by 24 February 2023.

**AUSTRALIAN LEBANESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY:** Throughout 2022 we have continued to work closely with our Victorian Lebanese Community Council (VLCC) partners to establish a group dedicated to meeting the needs of preserving the history of Australian Lebanese in Victoria. 2023 is a critically important year for Lebanese Diaspora communities around the world; it is the centenary of the publication of *The Prophet* by Khalil Gibran. There are worldwide celebrations taking place and ALHSV members are working hard to develop an exhibition to coincide with these celebrations. [facebook.com/profile.php?id=100053360785957](https://facebook.com/profile.php?id=100053360785957)



**BALWYN:** Our first meeting for 2023 will be on Thursday 9 February 2023 at 7:30 pm at Balwyn Evergreen Centre, 45 Talbot Avenue. Guest Speaker: Martin Semken of Semken Landscaping; Topic: The Chelsea Flower Show. Martin will speak about the major commitment his company made in preparing for, and participating in, London's Chelsea Flower Show.

**BOX HILL:** The following general meetings of the Society have been organised for 2023: February - Leah Mariani on the history of her home, Corio Villa; March - Graham Lee on the history of the Box Hill Lacrosse Club; April - George Petrou OAM on his book *The art of sacrifice*.

**BRIGHTON CEMETORIANS:** Sunday 19 February at 2pm - Sports Walk: Overcoming adversity to achieve the sportsmen and women of the cemetery walk. Walk begins at the front gate on North Road. On this walk we meet John Stanley Nicholes who became a weightlifting champion before he became a major pioneer of the application of weight training and conditioning of athletes around the world; Charles

Lawrence who as Captain Coach took the first Aboriginal Cricket team to England in 1868; Richard Henry Whitecross whose dream to become a Professional Golfer didn't eventuate and Jennifer Anne Zeffert who was a gifted junior swimmer representing Victoria in the Australian Championships. Join us to hear about these and other amazing sportspersons who are buried at the Brighton Cemetery

**CORNISH ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA:** Saturday 18 February 2023 - Our speaker will be author Michelle Scott Tucker, author of *Elizabeth Macarthur: A life at the edge of the world* (2019). Register please by Saturday 11 February 2023. Held at Darebin North West Uniting Church, 399A Murray Road, West Preston, located between Park Avenue and McDonald Street. <https://www.cornishvic.org.au>

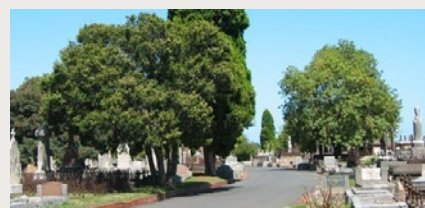
**DONCASTER TEMPLESTOWE:** Our Annual Garden Party will be held on the lawns of Schramm's Cottage on Saturday 18 February at 6pm 2023. Following last year's program we have decided to again have a BYO picnic. Members and friends will need to provide their own food and drink. Tea, coffee and sweets will be provided. Music by Vartuli. RSVP Friday 10 February to Glenys McIntyre: 0409 250 502

**FRIENDS OF CHELTENHAM REGIONAL CEMETERIES:** We are delighted to announce that our tours will be back in 2023. While specific dates have not yet been determined, we are planning on conducting two tours for the year, in May and September. The first tour in 2023 will have an eclectic theme, covering people with interesting stories from all walks of life. The theme for our second tour in September is yet to be decided. Dates will be advertised in advance, at least a month prior to the scheduled tour. Don't forget that we also conduct private tours on weekdays at the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery. So, if you have a small group of history buffs, a Rotary group, locals interested in their community or just love wandering around cemeteries and hearing the stories of those who rest there, please let us know and we can arrange a tour for you.

**FRIENDS OF WESTGARTHTOWN:** The next Westgarthtown Descendants' Day will be held on Sunday 5 March 2023. It is exciting that Ziebell's Farmhouse at Westgarthtown is now classified as a museum and heritage garden and has open days each Sunday. As a result, we will be sharing the place we all love with the general public. To avoid confusion, descendants will be asked to wear a name tag, which will be provided, to identify them as a descendant. There will also be a lucky door prize for descendants so don't forget to get your lucky ticket! As always you are most welcome to bring a picnic lunch and chair. We will also be hosting a BBQ for a small fee. Tea and coffee will be provided free of charge. <http://www.westgarthtown.org.au>

**visit**  
Westgarthtown

**FRIENDS OF ST KILDA CEMETERY:** Twenty-five years ago, the first issue of *Cemetery Conversations*, the Friends' newsletter, reported that 'Early in 1998, a small group of people with an interest in St Kilda Cemetery met to discuss the formation of a Friends group'. The article went on to state the Friends' objective is to 'promote the conservation and appreciation of the St Kilda Cemetery as a place of remembrance, of historic importance, and of natural beauty'. We will commemorate this milestone for the Friends of St Kilda Cemetery in 2023. History of the Friends can be traced in our newsletters which are on our website. <https://foskc.org>





**KEW:** Five new walking tours. While you are waiting for us to open and are desperate to learn more about the history and heritage of Kew and Kew East, you may want to discover it for yourself. You can do so by downloading one of our five new self-guided walking tours. They include maps and information about people and places along each route. There is a link to the downloadable tours on the front page of the Society's website <https://kewhistoricalsociety.org.au/khs/>



**KILMORE:** After the holiday closure, next opening date for the rooms in the Old Post Office will be Thursday 2 February 2023. The following Tuesday, 7 February, will be our next evening meeting with a speaker. Brian Clancy will be talking about Catholic Education in Kilmore. Brian has a longstanding connection with the Catholic Church and has an interest in its history.

**MARYBOROUGH MIDLANDS:** Worsley Cottage repairs. We're pleased to announce that repairs to the foundations and walls of our heritage stone cottage in Palmerston Street are scheduled to commence in late January 2023 and are estimated to take three months. Because the site, including the buildings, will be closed to our volunteers and the public, our Society will suspend operations from February to April.

You will still be able to contact us via email or our web pages, but we won't be able to carry out research. Personal visits will not be possible. The telephone message service won't operate. email: [mmhs@outlook.com.au](mailto:mmhs@outlook.com.au) Website: [mmhs.net.au](http://mmhs.net.au) You can also find us on Facebook

**MORNINGTON:** Monday 13 February at 10.30am - \$10 'Coffee Morning' at St. Marks Church Hall, corner of Barkly Street and Waterloo Place. Speaker: Peter Aldenhoven on Aboriginal Culture. Peter was a teacher at Woodleigh School

and is now involved at Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association Inc gathering place in Hastings.

**MORWELL:** Our collection continues to grow with individual donations on a regular basis. The La Trobe Valley Yacht Club has recently folded after approximately 50 years of operation. We have now received papers, photos, trophies and other memorabilia from them which will enhance our collection. We are located at 12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell and we open the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays and last Sunday of the Month from February until November 11am-2pm.

[facebook.com/morwellhistoricalsociety](https://facebook.com/morwellhistoricalsociety)

**MOUNT EVELYN:** Association of Eastern Historical Societies Meeting, Saturday 18 February 2023 at 1:30pm, at Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road, Mt Evelyn. Dr Janice Newton will give an overview of her current research the 'Woodlanders'. MEHG members are welcome to attend.

**NARRE WARREN AND DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY GROUP AND KOO WEE RUP SWAMP HISTORICAL SOCIETY:** 'Getting to know your Family History', a series of talks on the third Thursday of the month, 2023. Presented by Jane Rivett-Carnac, President of the Narre Warren & District Family History Group and Heather Arnold, President of the Koo Wee Rup Swamp Historical Society. Venue: Koo Wee Rup Swamp Historical Society Museum, 325 Rossiter Road, Henry Street corner, Koo Wee Rup. Talks run from 11am-12pm. Gold coin donation appreciated. No bookings required. Parking available at rear of Museum. For more information: Jane 0412 084 671 or Heather 0407 521 637

**SNAKE VALLEY:** Our latest book *The Carngham General Cemetery*, written by Patricia Yeoman, has been released. This unique publication is the result of decades of historical research. The book traces the steps of our forebears as they established the Carngham Cemetery during the earliest years of European settlement. In addition to providing readers with the history of the Cemetery, it includes a guided walking tour and a selection of historical biographies from some of our earliest graves. *The*

*Carngham General Cemetery* is available for purchase at the Snake Valley General Store (thank you, Vanessa!) for just \$30 and if you are not lucky enough to live in Snake Valley, you can send us a message on Facebook and we can assist you with payment and postage. All proceeds of book sales go towards the management and upkeep of the Society.

[facebook.com/snakevalleyhistoricalsociety](https://facebook.com/snakevalleyhistoricalsociety)



**ST KILDA:** We are planning some great events for 2023. On Saturday 18 February - The history of the beautiful organ at St Kilda's Presbyterian Church, followed by a short organ recital. This organ, made by George Fincham in the late 1800s, is the sister of the St Kilda Town Hall organ destroyed by the tragic fire of 1991. Future events will include: a joint event with Glen Eira Historical Society looking at the indigenous history of the area, presented by Professor Ian Clark, who has been researching and publishing Victorian Aboriginal history since 1982; Book launch, *Biography of Esmond Dorney*, the architect of many of Elwood's Streamline Moderne apartment blocks during the inter-war years, written by Paddy Dorney; Book launch, Carmel McKenzie's *19th Century exposé of life in St Kilda: St Kilda 1841-1900: Movers and Shakers and Money-makers*; Two walks of 15 people each, exploring St Kilda hill's 19th century mansions. Two visits of 15 people each to Mirka Mora's studio in Richmond, arranged by William Mora. Check our website at <https://stkildahistory.org.au/>



# Windows on history: In Vino Veritas

**Stained glass, as described in these pages previously, is not confined to churches. In the nineteenth century, as gold (and wool) brought wealth to Australia, stained glass was soon seen in civic buildings and town and country residences across the country, as well as in all denominations of Christian churches.**

Stained glass was not commonly seen in commercial premises, although leadlight became popular for the upper panes of shopfronts in the 1920s. However, at Hamilton, in the Western District of Victoria, a striking stained-glass panel, *In Vino Veritas*, was installed in the John Thomson & Co department store on Gray Street, designed and made by Dutch-trained artist, John Orval.

Unlike townships that sprang up around Victoria's goldfields, Hamilton developed only gradually. In 1858, its local farming population was around 1300, when a small department store, The Iron Store in Gray Street, was built by merchants Levy and Sander. Only a few years later it was purchased by the Thomson family, extending its offerings and expanding its premises as wool clips and pastoral enterprises prospered. It continues to this day as John Thomson & Co.

The Thomsons, Robert, his wife Ella, both in their forties, teenage sons Alexander and William, four-year-old John, with Robert's older brother William, left Fifeshire, Scotland, and arrived at Hobson's Bay aboard the *Yarra* in 1853. Robert tried his luck on the goldfields of Bendigo, leaving his older

sons to gain 'colonial experience' with Melbourne merchants, but within a year, Thomsons opened a store in Collins Street, Melbourne. When Robert died in a street accident, his sons demonstrated their business acumen and bought into Market Square, a Geelong enterprise, successfully becoming sole proprietors within a few years before branching out into Hamilton, and later in Horsham, with their uncle William.

Combining Scottish caution with a willingness to embrace change, the Iron Store flourished. The astounding array of goods ranging from gunpowder, candles, spices, hams, sheep shears, ploughs, crockery, camp ovens, household goods, and later, bedding and mens' and womens' clothing was organised into departments. From 1866, uncle and nephew ran 'W & W Thomson' until the elder William retired in 1872, just as John completed his schooling and joined his brother in partnership. Heralding a period of growth, a two-storey building replaced the old iron building in 1873 to accommodate the growing drapery trade and new fashionable goods being imported from British and foreign markets. When much-loved William junior died







in 1892, followed by John only two years later, the business may well have closed, but instead, John's widow, Martha Bain Thomson nee Brake, turned her exceptional skills and experience in community organisations towards the family business. Mrs Thomson and her willing and capable staff saw the firm through both good and bad times. Martha's death in 1932 spelt the end of the family business and it became a registered proprietary company in 1937.

John Thomson & Co celebrated its centenary in 1958, the same year that John Orval was employed as signwriter and display artist for the business. Emigrating from Holland with his wife Josefine and nine children in 1953, the family spent several years at Port Fairy, where John was a house painter, before moving to Hamilton. It was always his intention to continue designing and making stained glass, and his earlier training and experience in graphic

design business before World War II enabled him to bring modern design ideas to Thomson's. His brief was broad and window displays, floats for street parades, show cards and newspapers advertisements were much-admired and occasionally received awards. Orval's more impressive ideas involved huge eye-catching murals on the walls of various departments, among them a fire-spitting dragon that accompanied shoppers up to the Manchester department.

Orval's stained-glass panel, *In Vino Veritas*, 'in wine there is truth', was commissioned by the store's manager, Bob Waters for Thomson's liquor department. The ambitious and highly appropriate subject, Bacchus and Bacchante, appear in many of Orval's works, but never for a public setting like this. If the daring depiction of the figures, clad only in bunches of grapes, vines and carefully draped cloth, was not enough to startle the 1950s shoppers, the bold,

blazing reds, blues and golds must have really taken them aback, especially when lit by the late afternoon sun. It was a bold undertaking: by both Orval and Thomson & Co.

The panel vanished during another renovation of the building in the 1980s. It was presumed destroyed or lost but was found in a cellar, almost unrecognisable under decades of dust, but is now in a private collection and was a major work in the Hamilton Gallery's recent exhibition, 'Luminous: John Orval, stained glass artist'.

When he installed *In Vino Veritas* in John Thomson & Co, Orval was publicly announcing his modernist intentions that would be spectacularly achieved over his lifetime and beyond.

**Dr Bronwyn Hughes OAM**



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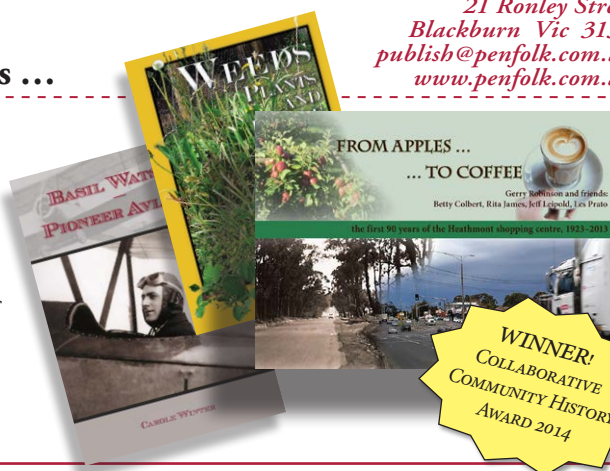
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## Library Collection: Marketing postcards for Closer Settlement, c1908

We do like to highlight the discoveries we have been making as we work through our collection to review and re-catalogue material. That work also includes combining records for material in different formats that were once in separate databases. This has identified a lot of duplicate material as well as larger sets of material of which we were unaware!

This story starts with the finding of a single postcard promoting the government's early twentieth century 'closer settlement scheme' in our postcard collection. This led to finding another 35 or so related postcards catalogued in our images collection. A happy surprise and a good reminder to check for material in a range of formats when doing your research.

The 1898 amendment of the *Land Act 1880* had made provision for the acquisition of land for the purpose of closer settlement. That made it possible for the Government to acquire land, either by purchase or compulsory acquisition, within 15 miles of a proposed railway line for division into smaller allotments. Each of these purchases had to be negotiated with the owners separately.

The *Closer Settlement Act 1904* was legislated and Victorian Premier, Thomas Bent, actively promoted the scheme. In

that year, purchases included 31 acres in Footscray and 45 acres in Dal Campbell estate, near the Moonee Ponds Creek in West Brunswick, for subdivision into blocks to build workmen's cottages. Land in Glen Huntly and Tooronga were also purchased with the intention to create subdivisions to build clerks' cottages to a standard house design.

By 1906, the Government amended the *Land Act* to include the *Small Improved Holding Act 1906* which enabled them to spend £150,000 per annum to purchase properties for subdivision into small holdings close to centres of population. This enabled the government to acquire land in larger estates further from Melbourne. There were a number of government purchases in 1907: Staughton Vale, near Bacchus Marsh; Yarrima, near Cressy; Amphitheatre, near Avoca; Commerralghop, near Rokewood and Werneth, near Colac. These were all subdivided into farm allotments.

The photographs on the cards are an interesting range, some not seen commonly on our other postcards or photographs. There are photographs of farms and farming, country schools, produce such as pears and grapes for the fruit export trade, forests and

mountains and Melbourne street scenes and notable buildings.

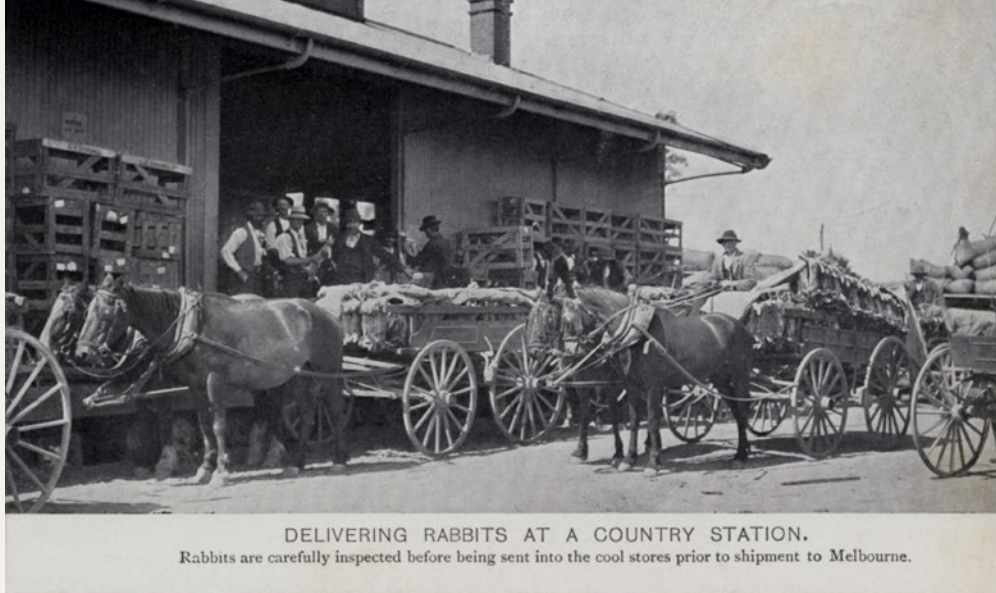
On the verso they all have standard wording and graphics to catch the attention and encourage interested parties, tourists or immigrants, to take up an offer:

*'Land for mixed farming is available under Closer Settlement Acts. For plans and full particulars in Closer Settlement Allotments Available apply to The Agent-General for Victoria, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C., or The Secretary Lands Purchase Board, Public Offices, Melbourne'*

The information on the verso also includes the monetary value of industries, and the wealth of the state, to reinforce the message of riches to be made by migrants.

Having such a large set of related postcards enabled us to see that they were published with a range of themes, such as tourism, farm life, education and rabbiting. This last one may be regarded as an oddity now, but it reflects the size of the export rabbiting market internationally in the early 1900s. By 1929 it was reported to be the largest employer of labour in Australia. For Victorians, especially the poor, rabbit was a plentiful and affordable source of protein.





DELIVERING RABBITS AT A COUNTRY STATION.  
Rabbits are carefully inspected before being sent into the cool stores prior to shipment to Melbourne.



With assistance from one of our volunteers, Elizabeth Bernard, we were able to place the cards in a broader social context. Early in the twentieth century the Victorian Crown Lands Department, 'under the direction of The Hon. J. E. Mackey', created a number of marketing items to promote the Closer Settlement Scheme within Australia and overseas in Britain and the United States. The first were a book of essays titled *Victoria: The Garden State of Australia* (c1908), and a booklet, *Victoria: The Garden State of Australia: information for the Guidance of Intending Settlers*, and, of course, the postcards.

Those of us who have relatives who took up land in this scheme, or the one of the Soldier Settlement Schemes, often assume that these schemes were targeted at land in the rural areas, and it is a good reminder that this initial scheme targeted land in towns and cities.

We now know that this early scheme, like the later and perhaps more well-known Soldier Settlement schemes, was not entirely successful and the Closer Settlement Scheme itself was largely discredited by a royal commission in 1915.

So, what have we learned from this collection and the research? Having

a number of the postcards gave us an opportunity to see what messages the government prioritised at the time; it reminded us of the metropolitan schemes; it gives us a richer set of material to match with our histories of closer and soldier settlements. Always a good outcome.

**Jillian Hiscock**  
Collections Manager and Volunteer Coordinator



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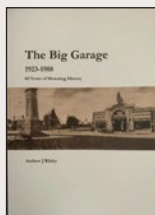


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# Bookshop

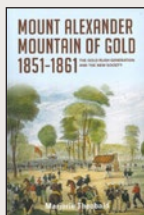
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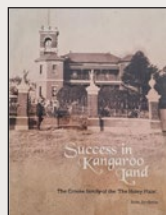
**The Big Garage 1923-1988: 65 Years of Motoring History**  
Andrew J Kilsby (2022)  
PB 105pp \$30

As a brand, The Big Garage remains extant and approaches its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. After Ernest and Nelson Capuano returned from the Great War the family established Bairnsdale Motors in 1922 in partnership with the Winson brothers. Initial business failures led to The Big Garage, which became synonymous in Gippsland with motoring sales and service for the next 65 years. Author Andrew Kilsby has brought together the story of The Big Garage and its family founders in a fascinating slice of Victorian motoring history.



**Mount Alexander Mountain of Gold 1851-1861: the Gold Rush Generation and the New Society**  
Marjorie Theobald (2021)  
PB 348pp \$39.95

Marjorie Theobald's latest book provides a new insight into the history of the Victorian goldfields. It challenges the accepted view of the 1854 Eureka Rebellion as the wellspring of Australian democracy and reinstates the men and women of the 1851 Monster Meeting at Chewton and the 1853 Red Ribbon movement in Bendigo as seminal in forcing Governor La Trobe to draw up the new democratic constitution well before Eureka. Theobald also acknowledges the environmental destruction on Dja Dja Wurrung Country caused by the alluvial mining.



**Success in Kangaroo Land: The Crooke Family of 'The Holey Plain'**  
Ann Andrew (2022)  
PB 165pp \$60

The fascinating story of the life and times of early settlers is described in this book. The Crooke family of The Holey Plain is one of the very few families who still remain on the property selected in the early 19th century. For the casual reader, Ann Andrew's book is wholly enjoyable. For the scholar of land history, it is a breakthrough work allowing a much fuller understanding of the nature of and place of squattocracy in Australia's history.



**The Worlds and Work of Clarice Beckett**  
Edith M. Ziegler (2022)  
PB 271pp \$39.95

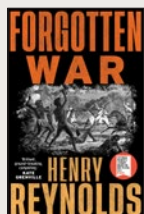
Clarice Beckett, one of Australia's most important early Modernist painters, excelled portraiture, still-life and landscape. The discovery of a trove of her artworks has led to her remarkable talent and evocative art being recognised afresh and greatly admired.

Clarice Beckett was self-effacing; she left no diaries or letters and was only occasionally mentioned in the diaries of her friends. For an insight into her genius, Ziegler focuses on Clarice's family background, childhood; art education; philosophical, spiritual and psychological enquiries and influences; friendships and contacts.



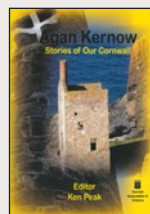
**Boundary Crossers: The Hidden History of Australia's other Bushrangers**  
Meg Foster (2022)  
PB 240pp \$34.99

Historian Meg Foster reveals the stories of bushrangers who don't fit the stereotype. African American man, Black Douglas, who was seen as the terror of the Victorian goldfields; Sam Poo, known as Australia's only Chinese bushranger; Aboriginal man, Jimmy Governor, who was renowned as a mass murderer and Captain Thunderbolt's partner; and Aboriginal woman, Mary Ann Bugg, whose extraordinary exploits extended well beyond her time as 'the Captain's Lady'.



**Forgotten War**  
Henry Reynolds (2022)  
PB 288pp \$29.99

Australia is dotted with memorials to soldiers who fought in wars overseas. So why are there no official memorials or commemorations of the wars that were fought on Australian soil between First Nations people and white colonists? This historical analysis shows that the coming of the European settlers to Aboriginal territories was firmly defined as a frontier war. Reynolds makes a compelling and measured case that we should officially honour and acknowledge the tens of thousands of people who died in our frontier wars.



**Agan Kernow: Stories of Our Cornwall**  
Editor, Ken Peak (2022)  
PB 261pp \$25

The Cornish Association of Victoria Inc. has put together a collection of 76 stories written by 51 authors from four countries of the Cornish diaspora: stories of Agan Kernow, or our Cornwall. There are stories from Australia, as well as those from folk with Cornish heritage in Canada, the USA and New Zealand. A recurring theme in these stories is the resilience and determination of people in the face of challenges. Attributes that describe all that it means to be Cornish.



**The Australian History Industry**  
Editors, Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton (2022)  
PB 391pp \$49.95

Australian history has undergone major transformations over the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Started by small groups of historians, it is today practised in a myriad of ways by millions of Australians. Local, community and family historians spend huge amounts of time and resources investigating the past. The Stolen and Forgotten Generations seek connection and healing through history. The digital revolution has democratised history making: its production and consumption. Through 22 readable chapters by leading practitioners, this book explores the complex, multi-roomed house of Australian history.

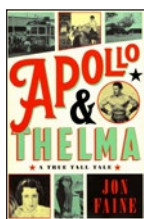


# Books received

## John Schauble

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

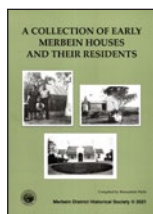
Please note: these books listed are not necessarily offered to the bookshop by authors, please check the online bookshop.



### **Apollo and Thelma: A True Tall Tale.**

Jon Faine, Hardie Grant, Richmond, 2022, pp. 1-373, ISBN 9781743797082.

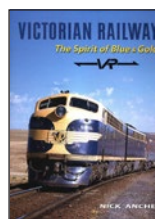
Long before he graced Melbourne's airwaves, Jon Faine practised law and one of his first cases as a junior lawyer was unravelling the estate of Thelma Hawks, sister of Paul Alexander McPherson Anderson: better known as the legendary Melbourne strongman "The Mighty Apollo". Forty years later, Faine has gathered up this very human story and entwined it with his own career in the law and the media. The result is a reflection upon changing values, changing politics and changing society in Melbourne, the Northern Territory and Australia more broadly. This is a skilfully constructed narrative, laced with four decades of politics and history, with people met and issues confronted along the way.



### **A Collection of Early Merbein Houses and their Residents.**

Brenda Wells, Merbein and District Historical Society, Merbein, 2021, pp. i-229.

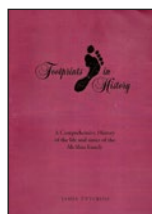
This gem is of a book is based upon an ongoing display at the local historical society. The rather prosaic title is self-explanatory. It documents the stories of over 100 homes and the families that occupied them in and around Merbein in the far north-west of the state. There are examples from the humblest of structures built of tin and hessian bags through to rather more grand estates. Many of these houses were those of "blockies" who farmed the irrigation estate, growing and drying the fruit for which the district is famous. While much of the architecture is simple enough, the gold is in the stories of those who lived and worked and built a community.



### **Victorian Railways: The Spirit of Blue and Gold.**

Nick Anchen, Sierra Publishing, Melbourne, 2021, pp. 1-336, ISBN 9780648811008.

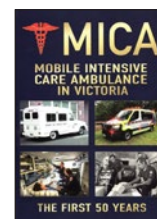
This is Nick Anchen's 15th book, all but two of them about trains and railways. A train driver since the 1990s, he comes from three generations of family working in the Victorian railway system, but his passion has been documenting the stories of not just the trains but many of those who worked them. This large format book is on one level a spectacular pictorial record of the now defunct Victorian Railways. But it is also an excellent primer on the history of rail transport in Victoria, its significance in the state's development, its centrality to many rural communities and its collapse into a corporatised and privatised system from the 1970s onwards.



### **Footprints in History.**

James Twycross, The author, Melbourne, 2021, pp. v-328, ISBN 9780646839905.

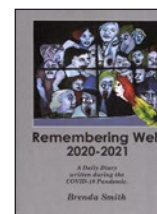
This detailed, somewhat ponderous family history tells the story initially of Catherine Martin, an Irish-born immigrant, and Pan Ah Shin, a Chinese merchant, who married in Melbourne in 1857. Such unions were uncommon but not unheard of in these early colonial times, especially on the Victorian goldfields. This is where the couple and their growing brood of children would end up: on the Buckland goldfields in the Ovens Valley, after first trying their luck around Bendigo. Their story is wreathed here in quite a bit of extraneous material. Sadly, Catherine would die in 1872, leaving seven young children and Pan Ah Shin outliving her by more than 20 years. Their descendants number more than 2000.



### **Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance in Victoria: The First 50 years.**

Mairi Barton, Ambulance Victoria, Doncaster, 2021, pp. 1-132, ISBN 978064816742-6.

Half a century ago, about the best you could hope for when you called an ambulance from one of Victoria's then many different ambulance services was to be speedily transported to a hospital for medical care. It wasn't until 1961 that 'Ambulance Drivers' became 'Ambulance Officers'. The experience of the Vietnam War, rising cardiac arrest rates and the horrific road trauma of the 1960s and 1970s pointed to the need for more immediate medical interventions by trained paramedics. Victoria's Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance (MICA) was one of the outcomes. Along the way there was resistance from the medical profession and from within the ambulance service itself, but, thankfully, the model of comprehensive paramedic practice prevailed.

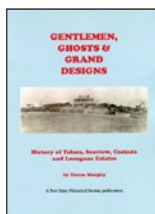


### **Remembering Well 2020-2021: a Daily Diary Written During the COVID-19 Pandemic.**

Brenda Smith, The author, Melbourne, 2021, pp. 1-372.

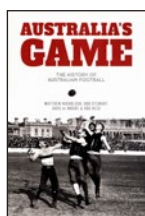
Many people embraced the idea of writing a diary of their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. It became for some a way to focus on an experience which would define their lives in the early 21st century. Others recognised the significance of the event on a broader scale. It will be interesting to see how many of these are published in some form or collated as part of the broader experience of Victorians living through an event which remains far from over. Brenda Smith, a retired teacher and active U3A tutor, has published her diary of 2020 as her world, and those many others, contracted in the hope of at least stalling the virus's spread.

# Books received



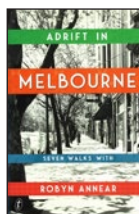
**Gentlemen, Ghosts and Grand Designs: History of Talara, Seaview, Cooina and Loongana Estate.** Teresa Murphy, Port Fairy Historical Society, Port Fairy, 2022, pp. 1-70, ISBN 9798886279139.

This slim volume tells the stories of four of Port Fairy's notable estates: of which only two, Seaview and Talara, survive. They were all built around the time of the town's boom years in the mid 1800s but are also linked by the tragic or early demise of their original owners. Their stories and those of their inheritors is at the crux of this history and there are indeed some interesting tales. Lloyd Rutledge built Cooina only to, reputedly, fall down its stairs while inebriated and break his neck aged just 31 years. Millie Holden was raised at Loongana. She would in time become Lady Peacock, wife of three-time premier Sir Alexander Peacock and a state parliamentarian herself.



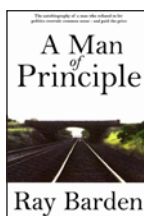
**Australia's Game: The History of Australian Football.** Mathew Nicholson, Bob Stewart, Greg de Moore and Rob Hess, Hardie Grant, Richmond, 2021, pp. iv-784, ISBN 9781743796573.

This history of Australian football is by no means the first, but in the hands of four of the country's most eminent sports historians it is surely one of the most comprehensive. It offers both social and political context in telling the story of a game that went from its epicentre in Melbourne and Victoria to, finally, the nation. The Indigenous influences on its development, the role of key proponents and the challenges the code has faced in recent decades are all explored in a considered manner refreshing in a context so often marred by passion and even irrationality. Lovers of the game, and others, will gain much from this book.



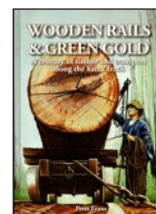
**Adrift in Melbourne: Seven Walks with Robyn Annear.** Robyn Annear, Text Publishing, Melbourne, 2021, pp.1-268, ISBN 9781922330970.

Melbourne's original definition, according to Robyn Annear, was 'not-Sydney' and it remains a preferred description for her. Annear is well-known for her insightful, sometimes quirky, interpretations of Victoria's history including *Bearbrass, Nothing But Gold* and *A City Lost and Found: Whelan the Wrecker's Melbourne*. Her latest book is 'ostensibly a walking guide' but there's really no need to leave the couch. There are seven 'walks' set out here. Some of the buildings and sites she visits are obviously no longer there, except in memory, and that is the point. This book is a reminder that we have forgotten more of Melbourne than we probably ever knew. It is a trek through a lost yet familiar city.



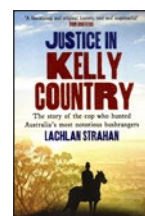
**A Man of Principle.** Ray Barden, The author, Gisborne, pp.vii-395, ISBN 9780648284277.

Ray Barden worked on the old Victorian Railways for more than 30 years, starting as a lad porter, qualifying as a stationmaster, and rising to the upper levels of state management as V-Line Director of Operations. His memoir might easily have been consumed by the bitterness of his departure at a relatively young age, which coincided with the breakup of the VR in the 1980s. Instead, here is a useful reflection upon the way things were in that once most influential of public institutions, critical to the development and growth of Victoria. A bonus is a brief account of growing up in the Gippsland hamlet of Nyora and of life on the railways across the state.



**Wooden Rails & Green Gold: a Country of Timber and Transport along the Yarra Track.** Peter Evans, Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc., Surrey Hills, pp.1-288, ISBN 9780909340599.

A story of life along the Yarra Track between Healesville and Woods Point from its opening in 1865 to provide access to the Woods Point goldfields until more modern times. The gold rush was short lived, but the next century or more was about 'green gold' the timber for which the region became famous. Much of this was transported along wooden-railed tramways to the Yarra Track roadway. The Light Rail Research Society of Australia has detailed histories of railway infrastructure and the communities and industries that depended upon them. Peter Evans latest offering is no exception; a meticulously researched and comprehensively illustrated account of the challenges of the timber industry in the far reaches of the Yarra Ranges.



**Justice in Kelly Country: The Story of the Cop Who Hunted Australia's Most Notorious Bushrangers.** Lachlan Strahan, Monash University Publishing, Clayton, pp.ix-327, ISBN 9781922633507.

One might be forgiven for wondering whether there is room for yet another book about the Kelly outbreak. Well, there is for this one ... the story of Anthony Strahan, the policeman identified by Ned Kelly in the 'Jerilderie Letter' of threatening to shoot him "like a dog", a charge that has resonated through history. For author Lachlan Strahan, a career diplomat and sometime academic, this is also family history – for Anthony was his great-great grandfather – and it marks the unravelling of the belief fostered in his family that his forbear was a tough lawman on the wrong side of justice.