

HISTORY NEWS

ISSUE 366 | JUNE 2023



Inside this issue

Forest Hill Holiday Home and Residential Kindergarten: 1926 to 1991

Stories from the Archives (NAA):
Marking 75 years of Maltese assisted migration

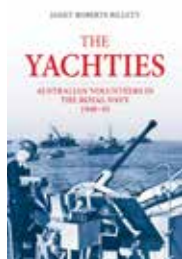
RHSV Council declaration on the referendum on the Voice

RHSV image collection enhanced

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

BOOK LAUNCH: THE 'YACHTIES': AUSTRALIAN VOLUNTEERS IN THE ROYAL NAVY 1940 - 45



Date: Tuesday 6
June 2023

Time: 5:30 - 7:00pm

Cost: Free

Event type: In person

Bookings: janrobbill@bigpond.com

Join author, Janet Roberts Billet for the launch of her book, *the 'Yachties'* which is a unique saga of exceptional valour displayed by Australian volunteers who served in World War II as officers with the Royal Navy.

Recruited under the Dominion Yachtsmen Scheme, their war service in the Northern Hemisphere was as diverse as it was dangerous. Most sailed in convoy duties in the Battle of the Atlantic and some in the Arctic run to Murmansk in Russia. A small group distinguished themselves in rendering mines safe.

The majority served in combined operations, which included daring coastal raids, the amphibious landings in the Mediterranean and Normandy, covert operations and mine sweeping.

Later in the war, 'Yachties' also served in the Royal Australian Navy in South East Asia and the Pacific, contributing

to victory with bravery, dash and loyalty to country and Empire. As a group they are the most highly decorated Australian volunteers.

Published by Australian Scholarly Publishing and available through the RHSV bookshop.

BOOK LAUNCH: FAILED AMBITIONS: KEW COTTAGES AND CHANGING IDEAS OF INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES



Date: Tuesday 13 June 2023

Time: 5:30 - 7:00pm

Cost: Free

Event type: In person

La Trobe University and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria invite you to the launch of *Failed Ambitions* written by Lee-Ann Monk and David Henderson with Christine Bigby, Richard Broome and Katie Holmes. The book will be launched by Dr Colleen Pearce AM, the Public Advocate, Victoria.

A gripping history, both topical and timely

The history of Melbourne's Kew Children's Cottages (1887–2008) is the challenging story of an institution that failed its residents. It is vividly relevant to today, when the rights of people with disabilities are the subject of a royal commission.

Those with an intellectual disability were historically the most vulnerable in our society and the least protected. Governments continually failed them by under-delivering on ambitious promises of reform. *Failed Ambitions* traces the development of Kew Cottages and the broader themes it gives rise to, including changing social ideas about intellectual disability. Australia saw a shift from a belief that those with intellectual disabilities were educable to a view, which took hold in the 1920s, that the 'feeble-minded' were unreclaimable and a menace to society. It took until the 1980s to formally recognise the rights of disabled peoples and demand dismantling institutions like Kew and associated ideas of disability.

Throughout Kew Cottages' history, a cohort of journalists, parents, activists and residents fought for and finally gained greater rights and respect for disabled people. This is a moving and powerful story that deserves to be read by all policymakers so we can avoid repeating the mistakes of the past.

The RHSV Gallery Downstairs is a fully-accessible venue.

What's on is continued
on page 6



History News

History News is the bi-monthly newsletter of the RHSV
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COVER IMAGE: The Commissioner for Malta, Captain Henry Curmi OBE and Australian Immigration Minister the Hon. Arthur Calwell signing the 1948 Malta-Australia Migration Agreement. Courtesy of Dr Mary Elizabeth Calwell. See pages 12-13.

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President's report

As we descend into winter and are soon to celebrate the shortest day of the year, the RHSV's 113th Annual General Meeting is imminent. At the AGM on 27 June, we will hear the Weston Bate Oration delivered this year by Dr Bart Ziino, the 2022-23 RHSV Historian in Residence.

In the past 114 years, the HSV, which became the RHSV in 1951, has continued its advance. Our membership is now at its highest level; our unique collections continue to expand with two part time staff to manage and disseminate them; and our publications, bookshop and stewardship of the Victorian Community History Awards, jointly with the Public Records Office Victoria, make a growing imprint on the research landscape of Victorian history.

Yet challenges remain. Rosemary Cameron, Councillor Paul Fearon and I met with the Minister of Creative Industries, Steve Dimopoulos, at his office in mid-April to speak with him about two important matters. We were introduced by a friend of the RHSV, Judy Maddigan, a former speaker of the Victorian Legislative Assembly. The Minister gave us a very attentive and engaged hearing for which we thanked him with a gift of some of our publications for his departmental library.

First, we raised the matter of our loss of funding from Creative Victoria to take affect at the end of 2023. The Minister and his CEO Sam Strong were enlightened about the impact this will have on our operations and the ability to protect our collections. The Minister gave an undertaking that we would be at the table when the parameters for the next round of funding were being set over the coming months.

Second, we asked for his help on the lack of a lease on the Drill Hall, despite it not being part of his portfolio. We pointed out that we cannot undertake any plans to develop the exhibition and office space of the Drill Hall to create a permanent exhibition without a lease. We need to make modernisations within this heritage building to attract more through-traffic, including tourists visiting the Victoria Market precinct.

After our delegation, the Minister is now more aware of our existence, our work and our current strengths and challenges. Our lease on the Drill Hall is our next issue to tackle and solve.

June is also the month when you might like to see how you can assist the RHSV. We have put out an appeal to fund various projects from our collection: large and small, and some of them Indigenous material. I hope you will give them close consideration for our image and manuscript collections are unique and need your nurturing help.

Our updating of the Melbourne Lane's book, *Essential but Unplanned* (1994), due for publication next year, has led to some amazing and massive image acquisitions to our collection. The printing of the book now needs your support. Our journal, the Victorian Historical Journal, published continuously for 112 years, forms an unparalleled trove of Victorian history and forms a significant collection in itself. You can assist the journal, our collections, and other projects by visiting <https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/donate-to-rhsv/> or by ringing Rosemary Cameron on 9 326 9288.

Richard Broome AM

Table of contents

Regular features

What's on.....	2
President's report.....	3
Heritage report:	
High density and future homes... and, some good news.....	4
What's on cont	5
HSSC Historical Societies Support Committee	6
Around the societies	8-9
Windows on history: The wreck of the <i>Jane Elizabeth</i>	10-11
Library Collection:	
Ingram collection scrapbooks ...	14
Bookshop	15
Books received.....	16

News and feature articles

Paul Mullaly Lecture.....	7
RHSV image collection enhanced.....	7
Stories from the Archives (NAA): Marking 75 years of Maltese assisted migration	12-13
RHSV Council declaration on the referendum on the Voice	14

Enhance your next book with an Index by Terri Mackenzie

Professional Back of Book Indexer
Member of Australian and New Zealand
Society of Indexers
Honorary Victorian Historical Journal Indexer
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Heritage report: High density and future homes... and, some good news

■ The Koondrook Baptist Church: photo courtesy Barham Koondrook Historical Society

Unless you've been hiding under a rock, you'll have heard that pesky councils, residents, and—you guessed it—heritage protections stand in the way of solving our housing problem, which, of course, is to build 'high density' apartment buildings. Yes, build some high density and rents will fall, prices will come down, and everyone will be housed. *The Age*, planning ministers, the property council and, behind them, developers, have all agreed. They have even rented a crowd, calling themselves YIMBYs, 'Yes in my back yard'.

What a great idea! Let's build apartments. Let's construct 75-storey apartment towers in the City, on Elizabeth Street for example. And 50-storey towers in Box Hill. And 30-storey towers in Moonee Ponds. And seven-storey blocks in single-storey neighbourhoods. And ... Hang on, haven't we already done that? Haven't we been building so much that there's a shortage of tradies and supplies? And yet we haven't made a dent in the housing problem. Houses are beyond the reach of most Australians and rents are skyrocketing. And beneath the shadows of the new towers, we find the homeless camping out on the footpaths.

Let's face it. The problem isn't in the lack of building, it's in the purpose of the building. Rabbit warrens bought by investors to rent to students won't provide housing for adults. Tiny two-bedroom flats built by developers won't attract families. Everything is built as an investment. What we need is housing

built for housing. In this century, the tax system, the banking system, even the planning system have been geared to investment in houses rather than meeting a community need. That's the problem we need to face.

Our planning system and our heritage protections are already weak. We need a proactive planning system that encourages housing that people want to live in, that enhances our neighbourhoods and complements our heritage. Otherwise, we will continue trying to create, in Michael Buxton's words, 'Hong Kong without the view', and we won't solve the housing problem.

We at the RHSV are involved in the Legislative Council Inquiry into the Protections within the Victorian Planning Framework which was, unfortunately, aborted last year after receiving 285 submissions. We are currently working for this Inquiry to be resumed in the current parliament. This will enable us, not only to put on public view the ways that the Department of Planning undermines local heritage protections, but, also to encourage the development of a more proactive planning system that encourages appropriate and adequate housing in neighbourhoods with soul. Heritage is essential in nurturing the soul of our city and of our neighbourhoods.

We have been working with David Ettershank, MLC, who is Deputy Chair of the Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee, and with Samantha Ratnam, MLC, who strongly supported

the Inquiry in the previous legislature. We have also held discussions with David Davis, MLC, a long-time friend of the RHSV. We are hoping that they and other like-minded MPs will soon start the ball rolling for resumption of the Inquiry. An Inquiry that holds public hearings will help awaken people to the threat of the developers' push to further weaken planning controls.

Now for some good news. On Friday, 24 March 2023, Councillor Judith Smart and I attended the Barham Koondrook Historical Society's inauguration of a new community facility. This small but dynamic historical society combines Barham on the NSW side of the Murray River and Koondrook on the Victorian side. The late Stan Roberts bought the 1889 Koondrook Baptist Church, after it was deconsecrated and advertised for sale in 2003. He gifted it to the Historical Society, and they have managed to renovate and transform it into a great community facility named in honour of Stan Roberts. We were delighted to represent the RHSV at this occasion. Koondrook is a lovely village enhanced by heritage. The transformed church and adjacent historical society will help to guarantee that heritage is preserved for future generations.

(One of the resources: Cara Waters, 'Look out Melbourne NIMBYs, the YIMBYs are here', *The Age*, 15 April 2023.)

Charles Sowerwine
Chair,

Heritage Committee, 3 May 2023.

What's on at RHSV

continued from page 2

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

SLUDGE: DISASTER ON VICTORIA'S GOLDFIELDS

Date: Thursday
15 June 2023

Time: 5:30
- 7:00pm

Speaker: Susan
Lawrence

Cost: \$10 | \$20

Event type: Hybrid



In a co-presentation with Engineering Heritage Victoria, Susan Lawrence, who is a professor of archaeology at La Trobe University and has spent thirty years studying the goldfields, will speak about *Sludge: Disaster on Victoria's Goldfields* which she co-wrote with Peter Davies.

This is a fascinating examination of a troubling legacy of the gold rush. Everyone knows gold made Victoria rich. But did you know gold mining was disastrous for the land, engulfing it in floods of sand, gravel and silt that gushed out of the mines?

Or that this environmental devastation still affects our rivers and floodplains? Victorians had a name for this mining waste: 'sludge'. Sludge submerged Victoria's best grapevines near Bendigo, filled Laanecoorie Reservoir on the Loddon River and flowed down from Beechworth over thousands of hectares of rich agricultural land. Children and animals drowned in sludge lakes. Mining effluent contaminated three-quarters of Victoria's creeks and rivers.

Sludge is the compelling story of the forgotten filth that plagued 19th century Victoria. It exposes the big dirty secret of Victoria's mining history – the way it transformed the state's water and land, and how the battle against sludge helped lay the ground for the modern environmental movement.

123RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: Tuesday 27 June 2023

Time: 5pm – 6pm

Cost: Free

Event type: Hybrid: in person
and via Zoom

The agenda and documentation for our AGM will be sent to all members at the end of May.

The AGM is followed by the Weston Bate Oration.

WESTON BATE ORATION: WWII AND AUSTRALIA'S PROTECTED INDUSTRIES

Date: Tuesday 27 June 2023

Time: 6:30pm – 7:30pm

Speaker: Dr Bart Ziino

Cost: Free

Event type: Hybrid: in person
and via Zoom

Following our AGM at 5pm, the 2023 Weston Bate Oration will be delivered by distinguished historian, Dr Bart Ziino, who was the recipient of the RHSV's first study grant funded by our most generous benefactor, Gordon Moffatt AM.

The management of human resources in Australia during World War II was founded on an awareness that modern war required strong government direction. This oration examines the dilemmas that confronted those Australians employed in reserved occupations between 1939 and 1945, protected, not always happily, from military roles. During World War I, men who were not in military service were often considered to be shirkers. Ex-service organisations demanded privileges for their members: socially and in government employment. In such an atmosphere, workers in reserved occupations ultimately found themselves largely excluded from recognition of their wartime work, both during the war and in the years after 1945.

RARE BOOK WEEK: THE EPHEMERA OF INTERNMENT IN AUSTRALIA

Date: Monday 24 July 2023

Time: 11 am – 12 noon

Speaker: Edwin Jewell

Cost: Free

Event type: in person

Bookings: <https://ephemerasyociety.org.au/rare-book-week-2023/>

Presented by the Ephemera Society of Australia. Want to know about how to build a collection about far-flung people, often not English-speaking, who were imprisoned in Australia in concentration camps? Edwin Jewell, a great collector, will be talking about and showing highlights from his internment ephemera sub-collection.

Morning tea is served to those attending the Rare Book Week events at the RHSV.

RARE BOOK WEEK: RARE ATLASES AND EXPLORERS' JOURNALS IN THE RHSV COLLECTION

Date: Monday 24 July 2023

Time: 12:30 – 1:30 pm

Speaker: Jillian Hiscock

Cost: Free

Event type: in person

In the 1920s, when the Victorian Branch of the Royal Geographical Society closed, their archive and library were absorbed by the RHSV. Whereas our collection is concentrated on Victoria, the RGS collection is much broader, covering exploration across Australia and the Pacific and, because of this 'misfit', the RGS collection was not catalogued until recently. Jillian will speak about two first-edition explorers' journals and the Moll atlas.

Morning tea is served to those attending the Rare Book Week events at the RHSV.



HSSC: Five tips for historical societies and networks

HSSC members have lately been enjoying their encounters with individual societies and networks and offer, in no particular order but for the benefit of all *History News* readers, the following five tips. The advice is offered generally and does not name the sources because there may well be other societies and networks adopting the same strategies. There will be more of these articles with practical ideas over time.

Sharing successes through network newsletters

Some networks cover large tracts of Victoria; others, at the other end of the scale, embrace smaller metropolitan clusters. For a variety of reasons, not all representatives of all member societies are able to attend all network AGMs or collective events. One means of working around the complications is an arrangement where societies are invited to share a brief report of their best recent activity, perhaps accompanied by a photograph or two, to be included in a network newsletter. Such newsletter articles are less-formal and more specific about a particular activity than the 12-month annual report overviews. For example, an article might be about a short-lived exhibition or a particular presentation by a guest speaker that attracted more interest than might have been expected, perhaps with thoughts as to why the outcome was more successful. Someone needs to be prepared to manage the newsletter task and societies need to have someone prepared to write their articles, however, at least one network is managing truly inspiring newsletters as often as quarterly. Once a tradition of due date is established, more people become involved. In summary, each society has a positive record of a feature of their work, and other societies can learn from the experience

Tapping into grants that might not specify 'history'

Some societies are thinking very cleverly about how they might tap into grants offered by all levels of government: local, Victorian and Australian governments. Some are tapping into tourism and public amenity grants that might not directly be badged as 'for historical societies', but can eventually help serve that purpose. One example for tourism is a society that received a grant to establish pillars of historical significance in its main street with 'then' photos and brief details compared to the site as visible 'now'. This was in addition to more regular signposts to human and natural sites of significance, all of which were then written into tourism promotions for the area. Another society, as a matter of improving public amenity and the local streetscape overall, was able to establish an attractive garden at one of its entrances that could also be enjoyed by members and visitors to the society.

Maximising opportunities with duplicate items in collections

Some societies receive donations of objects and books from well-meaning locals. While some items are incredibly special, there can be duplicates in excess of a society's storage capacity, or items that are not entirely relevant to that local community. Some societies donate extra items to nearby societies or to which the item specifically belongs: for example, a cordial bottle that has the production location on the bottle. Some societies donate duplicate books to other societies, including those affected by floods and other natural disasters. Such donations are warm goodwill and encourage positive ongoing interactions. Other societies sell duplicate items to raise funds; and, some also operate something of an Op Shop on their premises selling such books and other items, including general bric-a-brac, to raise funds. As long as there is good

business practice and record-keeping, some societies are receiving tidy sums that sustain their operations as might not otherwise have been possible.

Building capacity with and through school communities

Some societies have retired or current teachers in their midst, especially of History, with those teachers coming to the societies of their own accords. However, rather than wait for teachers to bring their knowledge and skills to a society, some societies have invited their local schools' history and other teachers, including Art teachers, to visit their exhibition. In piquing such teachers' interest, they have then gently encouraged the teachers to become involved, if not as members and volunteers, then at least in referencing in their work with students' any relevant elements of the society's exhibition or wider collection. The ideal is to bring school groups for visits. While Australian and local history might be most applicable in primary school, there are also opportunities for secondary schools. The benefits of bringing in school students or engaging the attention of teachers who are working so hard in the 2020s might not be immediate, but may very well have benefits in the long-term.

Visiting historical society colleagues

Some members of societies report that they visit neighbouring societies regularly; some report that they always visit societies' exhibitions 'when on holidays'; others report that though some societies are nearby, they have not visited in a while. There is much to learn and enjoy in such visits, including viewing items members value and the interaction with 'like minds'.

More in time,

Dr Rosalie Triolo

Chair HSSC (RHSV)

Email: hssc@historyvictoria.org.au



■ L to R. Hon Christopher Maxwell AC, the Hon Gerard Mullaly Judge of the County Court, Richard Broome President RHSV

Paul Mullaly lecture

The Inaugural Paul Mullaly Lecture in Law and History held on 16 May 2023 proved to be a sparkling occasion. Over 80 people in the Drill Hall and on Zoom, including 18 members of the Mullaly family, heard The Honourable Christopher Maxwell AC present the first in this Biennial Distinguished Lecture series.

It was an insightful and often witty discussion by the recent head of the Appeals Court of the Victorian Supreme Court of Victoria. Christopher Maxwell outlined the nature of legal history and its demise from the law faculties curricula across the country in the past generation or so. He also discussed why this was so and what consequences flowed from this situation. He spoke about the struggle to see the law in Australia in its own right and not simply as an offshoot from English Law. In typical colonial terms the Law was traditional but also new due to Australian circumstances. Christopher Maxwell also demonstrated, by discussing the law in early Victoria and Australia, how legal history informs us about the nature of early society, but also the evolution of the law, which is of course contingent. He was in praise of Paul Mullaly who always saw the importance of knowing the history of the law and the contexts from which it arose.

Richard Broome
RHSV President

RHSV image collection enhanced

The updating of Weston Bate's Melbourne Lanes book, *Essential but unplanned: the Story of Melbourne's Lanes* (1994), has helped to transform our image collection of recent Melbourne images, that mostly petered out in the 1980s. The need to source images since the publication of the book, that is post 1994, has been helped by sixteen members of the Hawthorn U3A Camera Group, who volunteered to take images of Melbourne's existing lanes for the updated version. They also agreed to donate the images they took to enhance our collection of laneway images. One of the U3A group knew another photographer, Peter Grimm, who has been photographing the artwork in the lanes for over fifteen years. Richard Broome and Peter Grimm met, and out of that conversation came Peter's willingness to donate much of his collection of images of Melbourne's lanes, artworks and buildings to the RHSV.

In all about 5,000 images from the two sources will become part of the RHSV's collection for the future.

On 11 May 2023 the RHSV hosted 'An Evening with Melbourne's Lanes' at which some of these images were revealed. Diane Wentworth, head of the U3A Camera Group, gave a witty account of the adventures the group experienced as they searched the lanes for the right image or three. Peter Grimm then showed another 30 of his artwork images and spoke



■ Diane Wentworth, president Hawthorn U3A Camera Group, explains how her team produced 2,000 images of Melbourne's lanes for our collection and book.

about how they were captured and some of their possible meanings. Roland Burke, from the History Department at La Trobe University, then showed how he is exploring 3D imaging of city lanes and statues. It was one of the most enjoyable nights for some time, and not a soul of the 50 people nodded off during this slide night.

The new version of the book containing Weston Bate's original version and the new sections is to be co-published by the RHSV and State Library of Victoria. Richard Broome and Andrew May are providing the new text. Helen Stitt and a host of RHSV volunteers, the Hawthorn U3A Camera Group and Peter Grimm are supplying post 1994 images. The book will be published in 2024 and launched in our very own lane: Singers Lane.

Richard Broome
RHSV President

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 AUGUST 2023 ISSUE please send details to office@historyvictoria.org.au by 24 June 2023.

AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY: Two upcoming events: 'Love of a crowd, a band, and "a gardens": Music, Recreation, and Gardens at Nineteenth-Century International Exhibitions' by Sarah Kirby: Tuesday 6 June at 6pm, connect from 5.45pm and online via Zoom; 'Little Men in Red Hats: The Story of Garden Gnomes' by Dr David Marsh, The Gardens Trust, United Kingdom: Tuesday 11 July at 6pm, connect from 5.45pm and online via Zoom. Find more details on the Victorian branch page at <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/branches/victoria/>



CAMPERDOWN: 'Camperdown Robert Burns Festival Weekend & Lectures': Thursday 29 June until Sunday 2 July. Visit <https://camperdownburnsfestival.com.au/lecture-series/> for the full program details. This year also marks the 140th Anniversary of the opening of the railway from Colac to Camperdown. Historian Norm Houghton OAM will speak about the railway at the Camperdown Heritage Centre on Saturday 22 July, at 1.30 pm.

CASTLEMAINE: 'Castlemaine Society: its beginnings and goals', by Alice Matthiesson: Monday 5 June until Monday 3 July: 'Cabosse and Feve – The Chocolate Business' by Thomas Vandaele & Freya Schellhorn. Events are held at our home, the former Court House, 7 Goldsmith Crescent, Castlemaine. <https://www.castlemainehistoricalsociety.com/>



CHELSEA: Our current projects include updating our presence on the Victorian Collections site. People are able to search the website for a variety of items including photos, books and artefacts. The Society has over 5,000 photos in its

collection which need to be uploaded to the website. In order to do this, photos need to be checked against the relevant catalogue sheet, the photo scanned and then uploaded to the site. We are asking for help from volunteers to ensure that this project can be completed. No experience is necessary and training will be provided. If you, or anyone you know, would like to help with this project please visit our meeting room or contact us on our email: chelseadistricthistorical@gmail.com

COBURG: The buildings in the Sydney Road, Coburg shopping strip and surrounds have been surveyed by our President and Vice President who believe many more buildings than those currently covered by a heritage overlay and interim heritage controls, should also be protected. An online petition has been prepared and we encourage everyone to sign it. <https://chnq.it/kqsp2C2zsq>

FRIENDS OF CHELTENHAM CEMETERY: Are you interested in helping our group? If so, we would love to hear from you. Maybe you have administration skills that you are happy to use, perhaps helping with our website or social media. Or do you love the thrill of the chase, when it comes to researching many of the interesting people who are buried at both cemeteries? Maybe you are interested in military research, there are many service personnel buried at Cheltenham cemeteries and the committee is currently attempting to put together a catalogue of all these gallant men and women. If you are interested in helping the group, please contact us for a chat, we would be delighted to meet you. Contact: info@focrc.org

HAWTHORN and CAMBERWELL: 'The printer and the Painter' by Elizabeth Yewers: Saturday 22 July at 2:00pm is a combined event at 25 Inglesby Road, Camberwell. This story connects two Boroondara residents, printer James P. Beveridge and artist William Dargie. In 1954, Beveridge, a Scottish born printer, commissioned Dargie to paint Australia's official portrait of Queen Elizabeth II. Liz Yewers is James Beveridge's granddaughter, and her presentation will be based on correspondence held by the Beveridge family.

HEIDELBERG: 'Eye Spy! Waking Our Secret Agents': 2pm to 5pm Sundays, until Saturday 26 November 2023. This exhibition features more than 150 rarely-seen objects from the Society's collection. They are our secret agents, full of intrigue. Bring the whole family to play the 'I Spy' game: can you identify the agents' A to Z directory? New research findings will awaken your curiosity. Recollections from our members and friends will enlighten and amuse. Entry \$5.00, children under 16 free. Group visits at other times can be arranged by contacting the Society: heidelberg.historical.society@gmail.com or 9455 2130. We are at the Old Heidelberg Courthouse, Cnr Jika Street & Park Lane, Heidelberg, <https://www.heidelberghistoricalsociety.com.au/>



KNOX: Since the second half of last year the committee have been working on re-accreditation, a process that happens every 5 years. This process takes about 2 years to complete but, in their report, last month, Victoria's Community Museum Accreditation Program commends the Society for: 'The thoughtful and supportive way it manages volunteers, its willingness to adapt and change as needed, and its aim for continual improvement, the outward focus on education and engagement of all visitors, the steady and methodical work being undertaken to check duplications and undertake ongoing digitisation'. Even though there is still a lot of work to do KHS is pleased to report: The outcome of this Reaccreditation is that Knox Historical Society maintains its status as an Accredited Community Museum. <https://www.facebook.com/Knox-Historical-Society-428659587253361>



MIDDLE PARK AND ALBERT PARK: We are pleased to advise that the Middle Park history group has expanded, and has been renamed to incorporate Albert Park. More information and events for the newly expanded and named Middle Park and Albert Park History Group can be found in our January newsletter on our website at <https://middleparkhistoryg.wixsite.com/mphg/newsletters>

NARRE WARREN FAMILY HISTORY: 'Pioneer Girls and Flappers: Australia's early female munitions workers': Saturday 15 July, General Meeting, 2 pm at L'Arté Central Social Enterprise Café Training Room, 65 Berwick-Cranbourne Road, Cranbourne & via Zoom. During World War II, tens of thousands of Australian women found work in the munitions industry in a period when women's industrial employment was regarded as a novelty. The stories of our mothers', aunts' or grandmothers' exploits in the new-found freedom of waged work, or the danger and monotony of the factory are a part of our family histories. Many don't realise that women's work in munitions began far earlier, all the way back to the 1880s when hundreds of young women worked at the Colonial Ammunition Company in Footscray. Their story is a rollicking tale of explosions, strikes, politics, picnics, and more. In this talk, historian and archivist Katie Wood will bring to life this fascinating history, which has touched so many families.

NILLUMBIK: Save the date ... We are 50 years old this year and will organise a special open day to celebrate on Sunday 6 August. Ellis Cottage and our barn will be open from 11am to 4pm. It will be more than our usual open days with talks, themed photo displays and more. Detailed information will be provided closer to the date on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/elliscottage or www.nillumbikhistorical.org.au/



PHILLIP ISLAND: The Society is delighted to announce the launch of its new website. This new website gives us plenty of scope to expand into the future with the possibility of digital exhibitions etc. Why not jump online and have an

explore of what we've achieved to date: www.phillipislandhistory.org.au

PORT FAIRY: The Society advises that the Museum in Gipps Street will close for an extended period from Saturday 8 April. This closure is occurring because the interior of the Museum is being painted. It's expected that this work will be completed in three months. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates: <https://www.facebook.com/PortFairyHistoricalSociety>

STAWELL: Stawell's Biarri Genealogy Group has officially called time on their genealogy work in the region. The group was actively involved in researching family history in the region for more than 30 years since its formation in 1987. In November 2021 the hard decision was made to disband the group and start to seek opportunities for their assets and monies. Written within the group's constitution was a recommendation that if the group were to disband, everything must be donated to a 'like' organisation in the Stawell community. Everything has now been donated to the Stawell Historical Society. 'We completed the winding up of the Biarri Genealogy Group with this final step. We've landed the group with heaps of work to continue on with. It's wonderful that the society can continue with that work and it just didn't stop even though we didn't exist anymore. We hope that the funds, and equipment and our research can be a big help in continuing to preserve the history of Stawell.'

TERANG: Our Museum is located in the former Dixie School building now located in the Terang College Primary Campus, School Road. Terang: turn left at the Presbyterian Church. The Museum is open on the 3rd Sunday of each month from 1 to 4pm or at other times by appointment. Entry charges: Museum: Adults \$2.00. Members free. Research: Adults \$5.00. Members free. We have a growing collection of photographs, newspapers, business ledgers, organisation minutes books, history books, cemetery records, maps and memorabilia relating to Terang and District.

We welcome donations of any of these items for our collection. We are also happy to borrow photographs in any format, or documents for copying.

Also located in our complex is the old Boorcan Railway Station building which has an array of railway memorabilia. <https://www.teranghistory.org.au/museum/>



WHITEHORSE: Thanks to all our wonderful volunteers who worked to install our new Visitor Centre Display before the official opening on Saturday 29 April. We then opened our new interpretive panel display and launched the fantastic new brochures that will be available free from the Schwerkolt Cottage Museum complex. The panels tell the story of the Whitehorse area and will be on permanent display. <https://www.facebook.com/whitehorsehistory>



Windows on history: The wreck of the *Jane Elizabeth*

St Paul's Anglican Church at Latrobe Terrace Geelong has a two-light Ferguson & Urie window dedicated to the memory of Frederick and Emma Hawkes who perished in the wreck of the *Jane Elizabeth* off the coast of Tasmania in 1867. The window, now over a century and a half old, has been subject to many detrimental repairs during its life and some original detail has been lost.

There are certain events in Australian history that generate a demand for memorial stained-glass windows. Wars sit at the top of the list, but the Ferguson & Urie stained glass company of North Melbourne didn't produce any war memorial windows in Australia, at all. The company's historical time frame places them in an era when maritime tragedies generated a demand for windows related to shipwrecks.

The visual story depicted in the Hawkes memorial window is Christ as the Saviour of the doomed at sea. Verses from Matthew are quoted on the window, and Ferguson & Urie's artists have visually interpreted the horror of shipwreck: the wild seas, whipping sails, panicked passengers and the terror on the face of St Peter as he reaches for the hand of Jesus his saviour.

On the afternoon of 17 April 1867, the schooner *Jane Elizabeth* left Circular Head wharf on Tasmania's remote North West coast. It departed at 1:30pm with a light westerly wind and was bound for Launceston. It was later seen off Table Cape and the wind had changed to west north-west. The storm quickly raged into a massive gale so severe that the entire ship was broken into pieces.

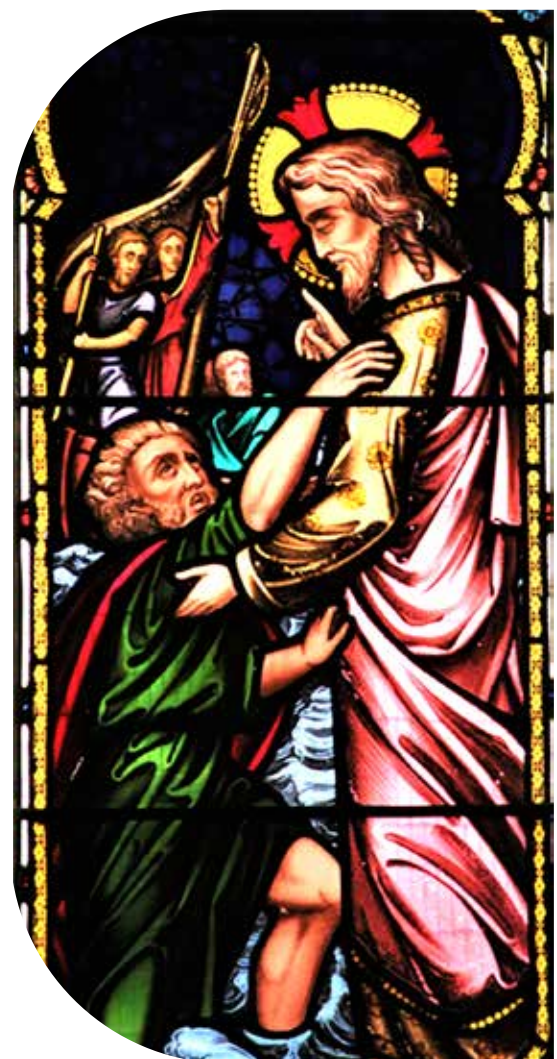
Hours later the Senior Pilot at the Heads messaged the Master Warden advising that at 4:30pm he retrieved a quantity of wreckage floating past Barrel Rock which included wood from a Jolly Boat that had the name *Jane Elizabeth* on it.

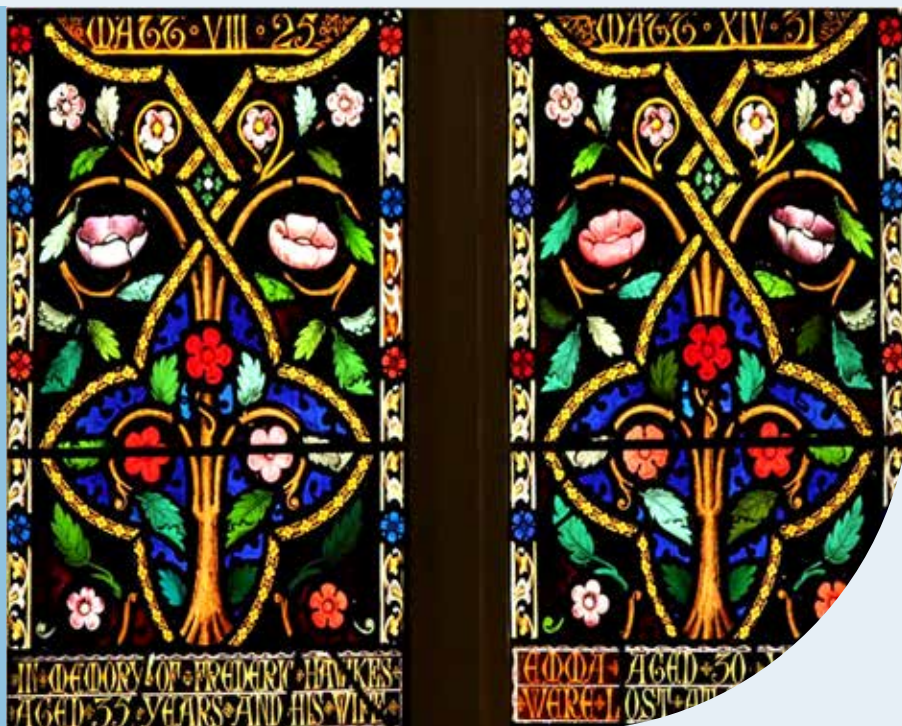
Amongst the passengers on the doomed schooner were the Geelong couple, Frederick Hawkes and his wife Emma, née Horwood, who had married eighteen months earlier in London.

Other flotsam retrieved, included a broken case containing various clothing which included a gentleman's shirt marked 'F. Hawkes' and a lady's handkerchief marked 'E. Horwood'. These were the only remaining identifying items of the couple. No survivors or bodies were ever found.

The following year it was announced that a memorial stained-glass window would be erected in St Paul's Anglican Church at Latrobe Terrace, Geelong. A detailed description was published in the *Geelong Advertiser* on 25 April 1868:

...The window is divided into two lights; in the eastern light there is an illustration of the narrative of the "Walking on the sea," as given by St. Matthew, in his Gospel, (chapter 14, verses 22—33). The artist has thrown into St. Peter's face an expression of terror as he feels himself sinking, and as we view the figure of the Saviour laying hold of the doubting disciple with His left hand, while he has the forefinger of His right hand erect, we feel that the illustration brings out the idea of the sacred words—"And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him, and said unto him, 'Oh thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?'" In this





At the top of these two lights is an angel with outstretched wings, holding a, scroll with the divine inscription, “The sea gave up the dead”.

light, of course, the chief figures are those of the Saviour— which is 3 ½ feet in length—and that of St. Peter, but in the distance can be seen the boat which St. Peter has just left, and three men, brother disciples, in charge of it. In the western light there is an artistic description of the miraculous “Stilling of the Tempest,” founded on the narrative of St. Matthew (chap. 8, verse. 23—28). The expression of the sleeping Christ in the fishing boat, weary with the toils of the day, is well given, and the fear in the hearts of the disciples, and the possible

consequences resulting from the “great tempest in the sea,” may be read from the marked expression of their countenances while we can well imagine their earnest words, “Lord save us, we perish.” At the top of these two lights is an angel with outstretched wings, holding a, scroll with the divine inscription, “The sea gave up the dead.” The filling up is good in design, and the colours harmonise well throughout. There are twelve figures in all in this window, with floral decorations. At the base of the window is the following inscription: - “ In memory

of Frederic Hawkes, aged 35 years, and his wife Emma, aged 30 years, who were lost at sea, April 17, 1867.

Frederick’s elder brother Thomas, a devoted member of the Anglican church, ordered the stained-glass window from Ferguson & Urie, the firm that had erected the *St Paul and St Peter* window months earlier. The brothers had been partners in the successful Geelong Hardware and Iron Mongers ‘Hawkes Bros.’ since 1857, a business that would live on for more than a century.

Extended information can be found at <http://FergusonandUrie.wordpress.com>

Ray Brown



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■ Alfred Bayliss, the 25,000th Maltese migrant to Australia and his wife Aida with then Immigration Minister Alexander Downer, March 1960. NAA A12111 1/1960/4/15.

Stories from the Archives (NAA): Marking 75 years of Maltese assisted migration

In May 1948, the Malta-Australia Migration Agreement was signed. This was one of the first assisted passage agreements signed by Australia after World War II (WWII). Between 1948 and 1965, more than 35,000 Maltese received assisted passages under this agreement. Many settled in Victoria, including in Melbourne's western suburbs and in the Latrobe Valley. Subsequent migration agreements were signed with Malta in 1965 and 1970. As a result, nearly 200,000 Australians now have Maltese ancestry.

To mark the 75th anniversary of the 1948 agreement, the National Archives of Australia partnered with the Maltese Community Council of Victoria Inc. (MCCV) and Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) to host a special commemorative event at the Victorian Archives Centre on Saturday 6 May 2023. Nearly 150 members of the Maltese community attended.

Amongst the special guests present were His Excellency Mr Mario Farrugia Borg, High Commissioner of Malta to Australia and New Zealand; Maria Vamvakinou MP, Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration; Dr Mary Elizabeth Calwell, daughter of former Immigration Minister Arthur Calwell, who signed the 1948 agreement on behalf of Australia.

Reflecting the historical significance of the 1948 migration agreement to Malta, the Maltese Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade provided a recorded message. The Minister spoke of the special bond that the 1948 agreement established between the two nations. Distinguished Maltese-Australian historian Dr Barry York OAM also gave

a fascinating keynote address about the 1948 Agreement. The Maltese Own Band Philharmonic Society provided entertainment onsite.

A special display, 'From Restricted to Assisted: Maltese Migration to Australia' was also unveiled. Through historic records and photographs, the display explores the fascinating history of Maltese migration to Australia. This includes how efforts were made to restrict the entry of Maltese before WWII. The display includes items from the National Archives, PROV and MCCV collections.

Amongst the records on display are some relating to Antonio Azzopardi (1805–1881) who was the first known Maltese resident of Melbourne. Having arrived in Melbourne in 1839, Azzopardi was included in T.F. Chuck's historic 1872 photographic montage *The explorers and early colonists of Victoria*.

Also featured in the display is a much later Maltese migrant, Alfred Bayliss, who was selected as the 25,000th Maltese migrant under the 1948 agreement. Alfred and his family arrived in Melbourne in March 1960 amid much fanfare and



publicity. Alfred's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren were present at the event.

The National Archives' partnership with the MCCV will continue over coming months with MCCV and other volunteers helping to complete the cataloguing of a key series of Maltese migration records: *MP80/2 – Personal and Medical Documents of Maltese Migrants, 1948 – 1952*. The volunteers will repackage each individual and family's application and list it in the National Archives' online RecordSearch catalogue. This will improve accessibility to these historically significant records.

'From Restricted to Assisted: Maltese Migration to Australia' is on display at the Victorian Archives Centre until 20 July. Admission is free.

Patrick Ferry

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



Top: Marking the 75th anniversary of the Malta-Australia Migration Agreement at the Victorian Archives Centre, 6 May 2023: (LtoR) His Excellency Mario Farrugia Borg, High Commission of Malta; Dr Mary Elizabeth Calwell (daughter of former Immigration Minister Arthur Calwell); Maria Vamvakinou MP, Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration; and Simon Froude, Director General of the National Archives of Australia).

Middle Left: The Maltese Own Band Philharmonic Society performing at the Victorian Archives Centre.

Middle Right: Antonio Azzopardi, the first known Maltese resident of Melbourne. From T.F. Chuck's *The explorers and early colonists of Victoria*, 1872. State Library of Victoria

Bottom: The children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of Alfred and Aida Bayliss at the event.



RHSV collections: Ingram collection scrapbooks

Did you know that there were fires at the Melbourne Town Hall, Block Arcade, Her Majesty's Theatre, the Olympic Park Grandstand and the St Kilda Road Police Barracks. William Ingram found, then 'cut and pasted' them all into scrapbooks between 1920 and 1950. We don't know why William Ingram was obsessed with fires but he collected documentation about fires across Melbourne for more than 30 years.

It is tempting to assume that access to digitised newspapers via products such as the Trove newspaper collection would negate the need to retain or preserve scrapbooks in collections and their value should be rethought. However, museum curators and others see these collections as statements of personal lives and interests, geography and politics. They have been described as the 'Pinterest' of their time, a way to select items of importance and give them permanence by pasting them into a book.

The RHSV has a collection of scrapbooks which had sat for some time waiting to be cleaned, catalogued and rehoused. They are a problematic set of material: unstable wood pulp paper, glue, sticky tape, metals such as staples and paper clips that rust. Occasionally other ephemera has been pasted in, such as business cards, photos and even flowers, which can negatively impact other items in the scrapbook. Newspaper clippings are often pasted in with no source noted, a major frustration which can now be mitigated by the use of Trove to identify them.

The cleaning process was a great exercise in lateral thinking, as we had to find a space with good ventilation in an historic building with constraints on our

space. We ended up using our garage where we could raise the door, put a large table out there, run a very, very long lead to the closest power point to run the special vacuum, provide a plastic bin and netting to hold the material while it was being cleaned. We were very lucky to have a couple of paper conservation students from the Grimwade Centre keen to do the work, which also included brushing the open pages with a Hake brush to remove more dust or dry mould. We all learned a lot in the process.

That process has identified material that should be digitised as it is fragile and sometimes mould-affected. We can also interleave acid free tissue paper between some of the pages to protect items and stop discolouration. We have enveloped them in acid free bags and manuscript boxes.

Thankfully, the stabilising conservation work ensures that a collection of unstable scrapbooks has now become usable. As they were catalogued, to our surprise, we discovered that we have a broad range of material which provide insights into the day-to-day lives and interests of a wide range of people.

So, back to William Ingram and his selection of news about fires. Whilst we

can now easily search fires on Trove, there is a real benefit in having a pre-prepared selection before us. Ingram has gathered a large number of clippings with photographs of the fires and damage. Most seem to have been sourced from *The Herald* or *The Sun*; *The Sun* still has very limited coverage on Trove. One example is a large photograph taken from the top of a building in Collins Street of the traffic, crowds, suggested to be 7,000 people, and the fire engine with ladders up and fire-hoses blasting a fire in the Stewart Dawson Building which was on the north corner of Collins and Swanston Streets. Stewart Dawson & Co. ran a watchmaker and jewellers on the ground floor. The upper floor was tenanted by J. J. Thompson, hairdressers, Mrs Stonham and Miss M. Ross Symons, estate agents and the Melba Photographic Studio. It is believed the fire started in the studio. The newspaper clippings in the scrapbook regarding this particular fire reveals stories of loss, bravery, detective work and resilience.

Jillian Hiscock

Collection Manager and Volunteer Co-ordinator

RHSV Council Declaration On The Referendum On The Voice

The Council of the RHSV stands for the principle of diversity. It affirms the RHSV's continuing efforts to reflect the diversity of cultures in our contemporary society through our various collections and their catalogues, our publications, our events and other aspects and endeavours of our Society.

The Council acknowledges Indigenous Australians as Traditional Custodians of Country; is enhancing our Indigenous history in our catalogues, lectures and publications; supports the aspirations in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and the Uluru Statement from the Heart (2017) and believes Australia's First Peoples should be recognised in the Constitution. How to vote on the question of the Voice itself must be a matter for each of our members. Because of the great importance of this referendum, the

Council urges that debates on the question(s) to be put to the Australian peoples, be both informed and respectful. The Council recommends the paper produced by the Australian National University, '[Responding to the Common Concerns about an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice](#)', 2023.

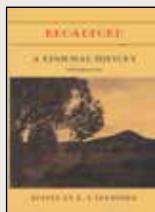
Richard Broome AM

President RHSV
4 May 2023

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Broadford: A Regional History: With Additional Notes

B. J. Fletcher, ed. (2023)
PB 252pp \$55

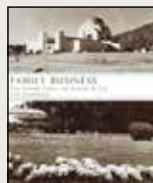
First published in 1975, this edition contains the original text plus a new section: the history of the earliest settlers and an update to the list of Shire Councillors to the time of amalgamation of Broadford with three surrounding shires, Kilmore, Pyalong and Seymour, to form the new Shire of Mitchell in 1994. Also included is a series of family histories, mostly written by family members, which detail some of the early settler families who contributed to the development of the town and region.



Early Days at Pentridge Prison

Don Osborne (2023)
PB 70pp \$15

Pentridge Prison was established in 1850 and largely constructed in the period between 1858-1864, becoming the state's most used prison of the 1900's. *Early Days at Pentridge Prison* tells stories using a collection of illustrations from the archives. It takes the reader on a journey through how and why Pentridge was built, the purpose of the panopticon airing yards, the floating prison hulks, the system designed to rehabilitate the prisoners and the stories of some of the people who worked and were imprisoned there.



Family Business: The Simmie Family of Simmie & Co and Harpsdale

Andrew Kilsby (2023)
PB 288pp \$40

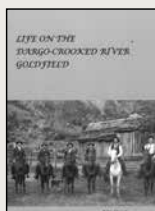
This is the story of the entrepreneurial family focusing on three brothers who came home from WWI and founded Simmie and Co in 1924. Constructing a range of works across Melbourne and Canberra, this was a highly successful building company. The other family business was Harpsdale, Victoria, purchased by Jock Simmie in 1940 and became a highly respected Dorset Horn Stud. This book is associated with the RHSV exhibition, 'Well Built: Simmie & Co. Master Builders 1924-1978' running from February until the end of June 2023.



Hanging Ned Kelly

Michael Adams
HC 384pp \$35

Hanging Ned Kelly looks at the life and times, crimes and demise of Australia's most famous antihero from a new perspective: that of the 'rogue and vagabond' who finally put the noose around his neck. Elijah Upjohn was the latest in a long line of flogging hangmen allowed to run amok because they'd do the dirty work that let officials keep their hands clean. Despite being duly appointed 'finishers of the law', Upjohn and his fellow boozing bunglers were so hated they were hunted by angry mobs.



Life on the Dargo-Crooked River Goldfield

Rob Christie (2020)
PB 272pp \$29.95

This collection of stories focuses on characters and events on the Dargo-Crooked River Goldfield between 1860 and 1900. Included are the stories of Constantine Shiraz Holme, a prominent citizen of the goldfield who worked for the community, bred horses and used his land for cultivation and grazing; Thomas Vernon Farr, a barman turned teacher; and Daniel O'Grady, a boot maker. Women on the goldfield also get a small mention, in what was an incredibly male dominated society.



The Flying Kangaroo: 100 Years of Qantas

Neil Montagnana-Wallace (2021)
PB 224pp \$35

Qantas has always been about connection. It began by connecting Australians across western Queensland's unforgiving terrain, and before long was connecting Australia with the world. Qantas' history is entwined with Australian identity, launching in the aftermath of World War I and the Spanish Flu, and soaring to match Australian ambitions in the one hundred years since. *The Flying Kangaroo* features never-before-seen photographs and historical detail from Qantas's archives, celebrating a century of Australian aviation and a nation that always reaches for the sky.



Transforming Lives: Alan Ramsay House Secondary Men's Teachers Hostel

Marilyn Bowler ed. et al (2023)
PB 198pp \$30

Transforming Lives tells the history of an enlightened government policy in the 1950s, '60s and '70s, in which young men and women were offered studentships that paid their university fees and gave them a salary to train as teachers. Those from the country were offered accommodation hostels. The Alan Ramsay House for male students was the largest of these. The studentships and hostels gave students from less privileged backgrounds, and rural origins, an opportunity to gain a tertiary education and a professional career.



Your Memoir Toolkit: A Professionally Prepared Resource Guide for Writing Your Own Memoir, Life Story or Family History

Emma Russell (2020)
PB 34pp \$45

Your Memoir Toolkit offers a DIY approach to writing your own memoir, life or career story or family history. It provides you with 13 sections and over 350 question prompts covering everything from birth to burial, the serious and fun things, the personal histories and the broader influences. It accommodates every style from light-heartedness to thoughtfulness, and from dot points to prose. The Toolkit is drawn from Russell's years assisting people from all walks of life with their memoirs.

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 shop catalogue.



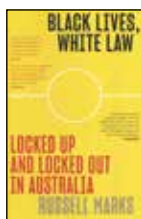
Great Australian Rascals, Rogues and Ratbags: Australia's Most Colourful Criminal Characters. Jim Haynes, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, 2022, pp. xi-291, ISBN 9781761067907.

Jim Haynes has specialised in titles of 'the great', 'the best' and 'the big book of' variety. In his introduction, he is at pains to point out a commitment to accuracy and disdain for the romantic and ill-conceived adulation of the criminal; he's no fan of the deification of Ned Kelly. Victorians will be relieved that his hit list of 15 rascals, rogues and ratbags mostly come from north of the border. Some stories have been well told before: Arthur Orton, the Wagga butcher and Tichborne claimant, and the thrice-transported James Hardy Vaux being two examples. Others are less known. Haynes' unravelling of the Terang-born WW1 poet, pathological liar and fake Gallipoli hero Tom Skeyhill is fascinating.



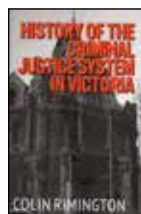
Aboriginal Peoples and Birds in Australia: Historical and Cultural Relationships. Philip A. Clarke, CSIRO Publishing, Clayton South, 2023, pp.v-332, ISBN 9781486315970.

This is a work of significant scholarship that examines the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and birds across Australia. It does so through the prisms of history and culture, with the aim of broadening the quantum and quality of ornithological knowledge by looking to alternative understandings. Aboriginal peoples have a long and complex relationship with avian fauna, beyond the utility of some species as food. Birds such as the emu have immense and broad significance across the continent as food, totems, in creation storytelling and for ornamental purposes. Some like the willy-wagtail are spirit birds, prominent in indigenous stories and messing with them might lead – at the twitch of a tail – to constipation!



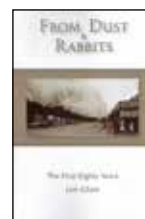
Black Lives, White Law: Locked Up and Locked Out in Australia. Russell Marks, La Trobe University Press, Collingwood, 2022, pp. 1-360, ISBN 9781760642600.

The sub-title of this work doesn't really do justice to the shameful treatment of indigenous Australians trapped in a criminal justice system that cannot serve their modern experience. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are twelve times more likely to go to prison than non-indigenous people. For women, the rate is twenty-one times higher. These are the highest incarceration rates in the world for indigenous people. "The brunt of Australia's carceral thrust has been felt by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, women, children, families and communities," Marks writes in an incisive yet appalling reckoning. In this book he investigates this epidemic of indigenous imprisonment as Australia's great hidden shame.



History of the Criminal Justice System in Victoria. Colin Rimington, Hybrid Publishers, Ormond, 2023, pp.vii-480, ISBN 9781922768049.

Billed as a comprehensive history of the criminal justice system in Victoria, this book is more by way of an ambitious compendium. With a divided focus between the courts and the penal institutions these served, the book moves in sometimes confusing interlocked circles. There is an emphasis on the physical facilities, in particular the old court precinct in Russell Street, to the extent of including the police garage, and a heavy reliance on biographical vignettes largely drawn from previously published sources. Yet there will be much in here as a reckoner to interest those who wish to explore aspects of Victoria's magistracy, judiciary, the court and penal systems in more detail.



From Dust & Rabbits: the first eighty years. Len Glare, Echo Books, West Geelong, 2017, pp. v-254, ISBN9780995436480.

The Glare family hailed from the poor, dry scrubland country of the Mallee, yet three sons and a daughter would rise from poverty to decades of community service. Middle son Kelvin became Chief Commissioner of the Victoria Police. Len, author of this memoir, was born during a Mallee dust storm during the Great Depression. He devoted 50 years to various arms of the Australian Public Service and became administrative head of the Family Court of Australia. It is a pity more long-serving senior public servants do not record accounts of their careers, for in the seemingly dry world of public policy can be found the underpinnings of Australian society beyond the political shopfront. Len Glare served under ten Attorneys-General. His stories are legion.



Becoming Australian: Bringing Music to the Colonies. Kara McDonald Davis, PenFolk Publishing, Blackburn, 2023, pp.vii-611, ISBN9781925467130.

This is a fine example of family history writing that will be of particular interest to those with ties to Gippsland. Its genesis was in one of those marvellous discoveries: a leather suitcase in the barn at a family homestead stuffed with forgotten letters and documents dating up to two centuries before. The author's forebears came as free settlers from Ireland, first to Van Diemen's Land, importing and selling pianos and teaching music, along with seeds, stationery and other merchandise. In 1845 they moved as squatters to South Gippsland, bringing with them a love of music and opera, and the first piano to Gippsland. The next generations would become settled as pastoralists.

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