



History News

ISSUE 378 | JUNE 2025



Library collection:
West Brunswick
community ethos
revealed by embroidered
address, 1903

Is History like golf?

Victorian Community
History Awards

Locations with botanical
names: part three

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.

GUIDED WALKING TOURS OF HISTORIC FLAGSTAFF GARDENS

Date: Every Monday (excluding public holidays) and at other times by arrangement

Time: 11am–12.15pm

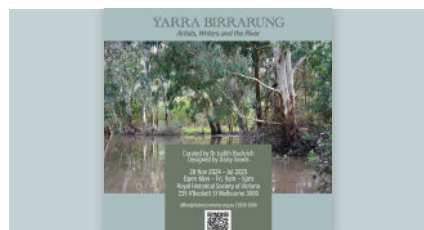
Cost: \$10

Event type: in person only

Guide: Chris Manchee

Bookings: essential on +3 9326 9288
office@historyvictoria.org.au

Join expert tour guide, Chris Manchee, on a guided history walking tour through the beautiful Flagstaff Gardens – the historic heart of the city. Visitors will climb Flagstaff Hill to consider its place in Melbourne's topography and pre-European history as well as its early role as a burial ground, flagstaff signalling station and magnetic and meteorological observatory. An absolute 'must do' walk for understanding the history and character of Melbourne.



CURATOR'S TALK: 'YARRA BIRRARUNG: ARTISTS, WRITERS AND THE RIVER EXHIBITION'

Date: Tuesday 10 June

Time: 11am–12pm

Cost: Free

Event type: In person

Join curator, Dr Judith Buckrich, as she examines life on the Yarra through the lens of artists and writers in our current exhibition, 'Yarra BIRRARUNG: Artists, Writers and the River'. The exhibition explores how life has flourished on the river, including recreation, industry and land use, as well as infrastructure, natural history and social history. Despite much despoiling, our river remains the vital artery of the city and beyond to the Yarra Ranges. Just as it was the fulcrum of Wurundjeri life, it continues to inspire and fulfil our lives. From the Heidelberg School to the MCG, the river has been a centre of Australian arts and culture for decades.

HISTORY WRITING GROUP

Date: Tuesday 24 June, Tuesday 22 July

Time: 11.30am–1pm

Cost: Free

Event type: Hybrid, both in person and on Zoom

Information:

office@historyvictoria.org.au

Join the talented and experienced Dr Cheryl Griffin as she guides a group of authors of history through the challenges that they face in bringing history to life.

CATALOGUING CLINICS

Date: Thursday 26 June,

Thursday 31 July

Time: 11am–12pm

Cost: Free

Event type: Zoom only

Join Jillian Hiscock, the RHSV Collections Manager, each month in this informative and easy-going Zoom forum on all aspects of cataloguing collections for historical societies. Jillian has a different topic each

month and is happy to be guided by those who attend as to what they would like covered in upcoming clinics. Bring your questions, no matter the topic; this is an interactive space where questions are encouraged. The RHSV does not endorse any particular cataloguing software as we believe it is horses for courses and Jillian will talk about issues that impact cataloguing whether you are using cataloguing cards or software.



Kate Auty
Photo courtesy
Janet Fogarty

PAUL MULLALY LAW + HISTORY LECTURE

'Squatters, Snodgrass, and the spoils of colonialism in Victoria – law, land, and corruption'

Date: Wednesday 16 July

Time: 5–7 pm

Cost: \$10/\$20

Event type: hybrid – both in person and Zoom

We are delighted that Professor Kate Auty will deliver the Society's second Paul Mullaly History and Law Lecture. In this paper Professor Auty will link the current critically important discussion about a First People's Treaty in Victoria to the historical theft of country (1838–1869). Her paper has specific reference to the theft of Taungurung people's country.

Professor Auty will first discuss Legal Status and the general legal contempt



History News

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COVER IMAGE: Jordan, Alan. Gordon House, Melbourne. ca. 1967 – ca. 1969. From *The Story of Melbourne's Lanes* p43 (Courtesy Caroline Jordan and SLV) see page 14
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EVENTS ASSISTANT Johnny Yuen

History House 239 A'Beckett Street
Melbourne 3000

Office & Library Hours: Monday to Friday
9am to 5pm

P: 9326 9288 W: www.historyvictoria.org.au

Email: office@historyvictoria.org.au

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What's on at RHSV

for the rights of First Nations people by reference to a few contemporaneous criminal law cases and the economic histor, the manner in which squatters routinely co-opted the law and used their position in society to advance their economic interests.

And then Professor Auty will focus on the role of Peter Snodgrass, MLC, MLA, Commissioner for Crown Lands, duellist, and punitive party member, as an authorised but nevertheless corrupt 'trustee' of Taungurung land (1850-), and as an unauthorised and criminally dishonest lobbyist for Hugh Glass and others in respect of the Duffy Land Acts (1860s).

It is her contention that as lawyers, historians, and community members, we need to critically examine the land theft upon which our prosperity has been built. This theft was both authorised and unauthorised. We need to consider the history of land theft to promote a thoughtful discussion about reparations and to undertake the truth-telling that the Yoorrook Justice Commission, the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and all First Nations people are urging upon us.

Kate Auty

Barrister, historian, environmentalist, active community member in regional Victoria, and author, Professor Kate Auty is passionate about diversity and inclusive community development. She is involved in a number of community-based intermediary organisations in respect of environment, climate change, energy and Indigenous matters. She is a member of the Australian Accountability Roundtable; co-chair of the Australian Open Government Partnership Multi-Stakeholder Forum; chair of the governing board of the Victorian Environmental Protection Authority; Professorial Fellow School of Law University of Melbourne and Senior Research Fellow with Melbourne Energy Futures.

RARE BOOK WEEK: SCAPEGOATS OF THE EMPIRE

Date: Tuesday 29 July

Time: 12.30-1.30pm

Cost: FREE

Event type: In person only

Recently, the library of esteemed historian Weston Bate was donated to the RHSV. Amongst the many gems was a very rare book, *Scapegoats of the Empire: the true story of the Bushveldt Carbineers*, written in Lancefield and published in 1907 about military crimes half a world away in South Africa. The author, George Witton, was the 3rd defendant in the military trial for murder brought against Breaker Morant and Peter Handcock. Morant and Handcock were executed by firing squad and Witton was jailed for life. Less than three years later he was released and returned home to Australia to write his controversial memoir.

Join distinguished historian Dr Andrew Lemon AM as he explores not just *Scapegoats* but looks to the rich literature that is spawned when the truth gets murky.

Andrew Lemon is a multiple award-winning Australian historian, best known for his three volume *The History of Australian Thoroughbred Racing*, joint winner of the 2009 Australian Society for Sports History biennial book prize. He has written biographies, local, company and school histories, and co-authored *Poor Souls, They Perished* on Australia's worst shipwreck, winner of the 1986 FAW Wilke Prize. His book *A Great Australian School: Wesley College Examined* (2004) was shortlisted for the New South Wales state Premier's History Award. In 2005 the University of Melbourne awarded Andrew the degree of Doctor of Letters for his published work. In 2012 he was a John H. Daniels research fellow at the National Sporting Library and Museum, in Virginia, USA. Andrew is a former President of the RHSV.

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Heritage report: Housing Heritage, Density: Vibrant neighbourhoods or Hong Kong without the view?



■ Camberwell heritage streetscape in the area proposed for high density. Image courtesy Christina Branagan.

This was the title of an RHSV event held on 28 April. A full house heard from four speakers: Christina Branagan (Boroondara Heritage Group for Advocacy and Protection), Michael Buxton (Emeritus Professor of Planning, RMIT), James Lesh (Historian, 'Heritage Workshop: Next Generation Conservation') and Mike Scott (senior Town Planner and Co-Founder Planisphere).

This event was particularly topical because the government's 'Plan for Victoria' was then being debated in the Victorian Legislative Council: the Opposition and the crossbench proposed a motion to disallow the planning amendments for the Plan. The RHSV made a submission to Parliament, available on the RHSV web site; unfortunately, we were not heard by the Select committee. By the time you read this, the vote will have taken place. If the amendments stand, we face an unprecedented threat to our heritage.

The distinguished urban historian Dr Chris McConville (Victoria University) attended the seminar and here offers a response.

A recent RHSV forum brought the increasingly conflicted ideals of heritage conservation and developer-friendly planning into sharp focus. To state government planners, countering unaffordable housing demands dense

clusters of high- and medium-rise apartment blocks, concentrated around rail corridors within some of Melbourne's most expensive suburbs. The panel highlighted the threat that increased residential densities pose for Melbourne's unique built heritage.

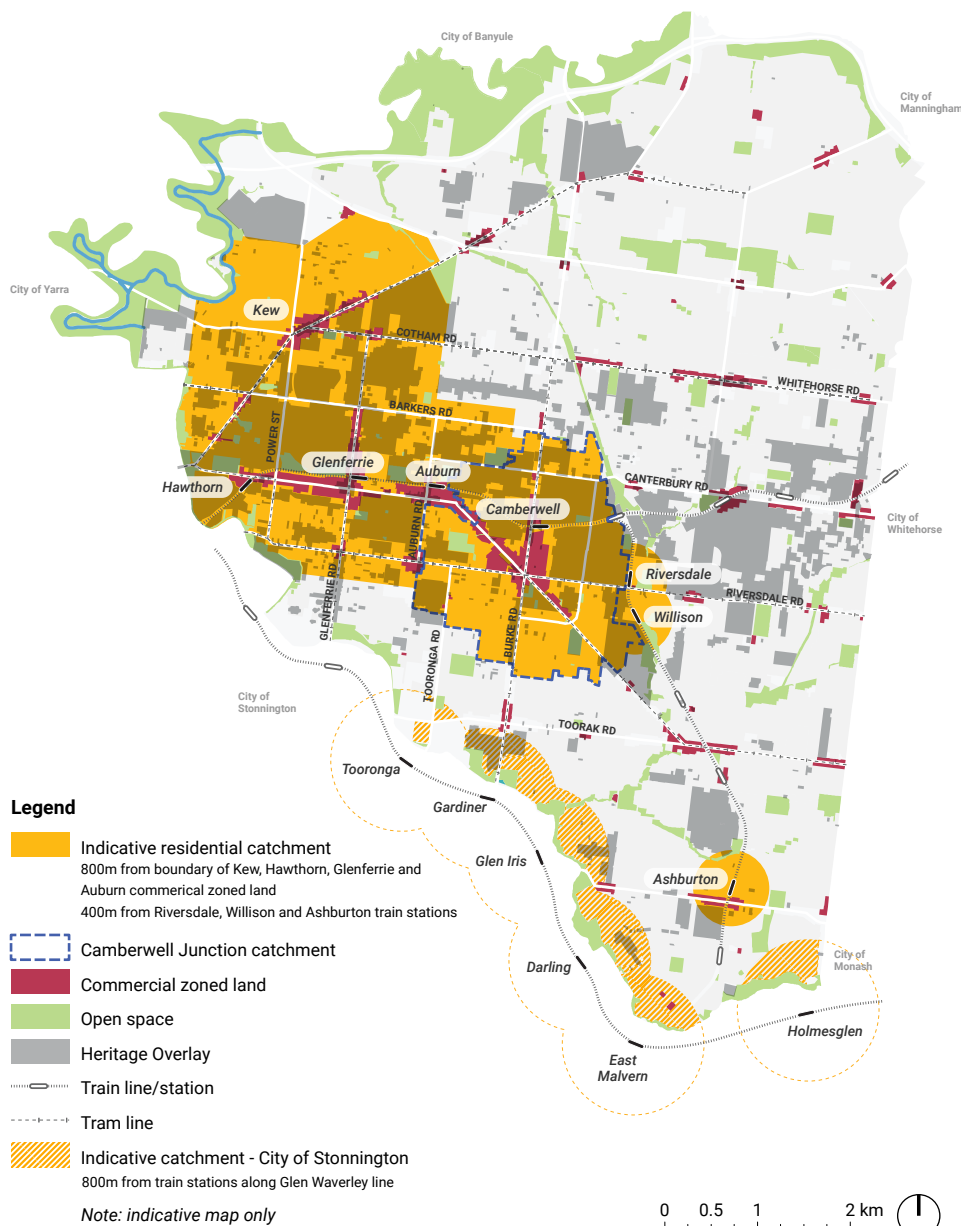
Melbourne has experienced at least three decades of intensive apartment building, with, as the speakers pointed out, no noticeable impact on price rises. For obvious reasons, residential towers enable investors to park money while they await more profitable opportunities. In a global economy, the supply of investment funds is limitless, so increasing the supply of apartments, especially in the form of high-rise towers, provides no magical answer to rising prices.

As both Michael Buxton and Mike Scott noted, apartments in towers fill the lower rungs of the housing market. If homeowners, rather than investors, preferred the apartment to the detached house, apartment prices would be rising more quickly. Furthermore, these densifying schemes assume that both homebuyers and renters must give up on a house and settle for an apartment. Outside the inner city and now the middle-ring suburbs slated for increased densities, Melbourne is a city of detached houses. Densifying, especially in a building form for which there is limited demand, will not change the overall housing market. Perhaps medium-density developments, humanely-designed, spread across the urban area rather than clustered in a

few locations, and set in communal neighbourhoods, might do so.

Resident fears about increased densities around railway stations in Camberwell or Brighton might not garner much sympathy across the rest of Melbourne. But top-down planning imposed on residents by remote bureaucracies does anger people. The forum spoke to the difficulties that residents and local councils have in responding to these plans. As James Lesh reminded the audience, Victoria's Housing Commission demolished whole neighbourhoods in Fitzroy, Richmond and Carlton in the 1970s. One positive consequence was a resident reaction which led to planning in which resident voices were heard, heritage controls reduced demolition and local councils could designate heritage zones.

Loss of this local democracy and the marginalising of heritage matter to everyone in Melbourne. If unaccountable planning schemes can be forced on the wealthy and influential, they can be forced on the entire city. Melbourne prides itself on a place atop global rankings for liveability. Heritage has been a bedrock ensuring this liveability. Heritage restoration and controls have led to medium-density, affordable living in factory and warehouse conversions or shop top renovation. These are proven starting points for an urban liveability that can underpin affordability. Any worthwhile planning system ought to ensure both.



Map of high-density areas for proposed Camberwell Activity Centres in yellow; grey represents existing Heritage Overlay. Where they overlap, density is likely to override heritage considerations. About 9000 heritage houses will be in the yellow high-density area. Image courtesy City of Boroondara, 'Urban Planning Delegated Committee' Agenda 24th March 2025, Attachment 3.1.5 pl64 <https://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/media/105911/download?inline>

Christina Branagan reminded the audience that densities around railway stations and permissions for medium-rise apartment blocks in nearby streets would inevitably destroy the coherence of some of Melbourne's most attractive streetscapes. Heritage planning has always had difficulties with streetscapes. The historic streetscape can easily be dismissed as an aesthetic preference, enjoyed by a few and irrelevant to affordable living. Far easier to protect places site by site or building by building. But the streets now threatened by densification are a product of shared concern for a local environment, a sense of local identity and often as well a desire to work towards sustainable localities.

Widescale demolition followed by high-

rise building undermines sustainability, which is why some critics have called the high-rise tower 'fossil fuel architecture'. The streetscape is more than aesthetics. It draws on residents prepared to work for sustainability. The street expresses community identity and is critical to liveability. Integrated into these essential elements of a humane urban existence, the streetscape is not something to be simply discarded.

Michael Buxton ran through the planning paperwork with which residents need to grapple if they are to comprehend the future planned for their suburbs. Faced by this avalanche of documents, residents can often feel bamboozled, if not entirely overwhelmed and powerless. That is not

the message we should take from this very important RHSV forum.

The successful heritage campaigns of the 1970s, the heroic era, as defined by James Lesh, succeeded in protecting historic environments and much else besides. Creating a sustainable, liveable and affordable Melbourne in the 21st century requires another collaborative effort, one too easily undermined by advocates for affordability, intolerant of heritage and dismissive of local democracy. The lesson of this forum is that heritage is essential in any humane city and that it can be protected through communal action in answer to bureaucratised planning.

Chris McConville,
1 May 2025

Is history like golf?

Richard Broome AM, who last week retired as President of the RHSV after six years and twelve on Council, recently donated \$50,000 to the Society. He said: 'history has been his profession and not being good, indeed hopeless at golf, his retirement hobby became history'.

In 2013 Richard decided to spend time at a good club (aka historical society) and served on the club's committee (aka RHSV Council). He likened his recent donation to back-dated 12 years of 'fees' at this great club, in appreciation of the rewarding hobby he had experienced - and to help the club into the future.

The wonderful thing is that a long-standing RHSV member and generous donor recently agreed to match Richard's donation. Other RHSV friends donated as well to bring the total so far to about \$115,000.

If you would like to join Richard's giving, or join the RHSV's annual tax deductible EOFY giving appeal, please go to the donations page on the RHSV website www.historyvictoria.org.au



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Historical Societies Support Committee (HSSC): a spotlight on networks

We have begun a movement which is important and may give fresh impetus to the study of local history.

Les Blake, inaugural President, Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies Inc., 1963

We are all familiar with the valuable work undertaken by Historical Societies far and wide. Indeed, most people reading this article will be members of at least one society or heritage body. Some will be less familiar with the important and complex work undertaken by Historical Society Networks across the State. In July 2024 the HSSC staged its first Network Leaders Seminar Day in Melbourne and by the time this goes to print, we will have held the second Seminar Day on 23 May, providing network leaders with an opportunity to meet, share, learn and, ideally, to feed ideas and strategies back to their members.

Networks: there are approximately eighteen networks or associations or groups affiliated with the RHSV, covering most geographical regions in Victoria. These are generally 'umbrella organisations' of local historical societies, museums, genealogical groups and other heritage bodies or 'niche' special interest groups. Some networks have memberships of six to nine; one has at least 50 member groups. Most come together in formal meetings three or four times a year.

The concept of an Historical Society Network is not a new one. Among the earliest Networks established were the Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies (1963), with nine founding members; this has grown to around 50 members today. The South Gippsland Historical Network was founded in 1964 and has about twelve members today and the South Eastern Historical Association, established in 1965, currently has around 26 members. Clearly, even in the 1960s there was interest in and enthusiasm for individual societies and groups joining forces through formalised networks. This also means that several generations of heritage-minded enthusiasts have steered these ships both in metropolitan and regional areas. Just consider that some of the leaders of these early-formed Networks would have been born in the early 1900s or even in the 1890s! The Gippsland Association of Affiliated Historical Societies (GAAHS) was formed in 1976 with six members but today there are 29 members divided into further sub-groups, covering the vast area from Warragul to Mallacoota. Some networks

have come into existence in more recent times such as the Wellington Shire Heritage Network in Gippsland, formed in 2009, and the Australian Alpine Snowsports History Association as recently as 2014.

The Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies (WVAHS), whose membership base stretches from the coast to the northern Mallee, from the South Australian border to the central goldfields' region, has, since 1976, been divided into three zones which have the opportunity to come together twice each year. The zone structure was introduced not to differentiate between or to separate regions but to enable individual member Societies to travel shorter distances to zone-specific events; it appears however, that long distances do not inhibit members from the Mallee, Wimmera, Murray regions with far south-western Victorians travelling to the AGM in Geelong in April this year: testament to the value some member groups still see in being part of this Network.

Despite their geographical spread and diversity in member groups, networks have common goals: to provide a valuable framework and networking capacity for their members, to support the preservation of local history and, ideally, to advocate for the viability of their members often through engaging with Local Government Authorities. There is much value-adding among some networks through staging conferences. The Association of Eastern Historical Societies (AEHS) holds a major conference every second year, the theme of the 2024 conference being 'The Value of Local History – into the future' with 13 speakers. Five new members joined the Network as a consequence of that conference which is gratifying. The AEHS has also embraced Zoom to enable speakers to address meetings and also to enable members unable to attend meetings to participate. Other networks reach members through their online presence via websites or social media including Facebook pages. Some networks still produce newsletters for their members documenting the initiatives undertaken and the resources developed over many years.

The WVAHS has produced almost 250 issues of its newsletter over 62 years; what an extraordinary repository of local history for the western half of Victoria this has become. While the fifty member groups come from areas very different in terms of geography, the newsletter enables people in the Wimmera and Mallee to be kept informed of what groups in, say, the Otways or the Central Highlands, are achieving. Increasingly,

the newsletter has become a platform and arena for groups to promote their activities and publications but also to share their expertise in key undertakings such as collection management, funding opportunities and grant submissions.

The Association of Eastern Historical Societies makes available through its Facebook page some of its member groups' newsletters, reflecting a 21st century way of communicating, sharing and 'doing things'. The South Eastern Historical Association Inc. posts on its website not only its newsletters but other information relating to heritage preservation including Council reports and an array of other reports on heritage workshops such as textiles conservation. The Mornington Peninsula Local History Network, with 24 members, offers an online bookshop of publications by its members while the Western Metro Historical Societies Network deploys its Facebook page to showcase an array of the western metropolitan area's heritage, events, historic photos and other information for its members. Utilising online platforms is an obvious way of Networks contributing to a digital archive. The breadth of content available on these platforms is, quite simply, astounding.

Of course, not all historical societies and museums or family history groups are members of networks or associations. There are many reasons for this including dwindling memberships and resources. Some groups have let their memberships wane while some have rejoined after a hiatus. The leadership of a network could actively encourage lapsed members to rejoin as much is happening in the constantly-evolving heritage space from which they can benefit, and also approach recently-formed societies or groups to consider joining the network. This becomes a marketing strategy, the success of which comes down to the extent to which the network can 'sell' membership as worthwhile.

I hope we all appreciate that each historical society and similar heritage bodies can learn from others. It is desirable, however, that networks themselves learn from what other networks have achieved and are continuing to achieve. We can only hope that networks and associations continue to 'strive and thrive' but also that the lines of communication between these bodies might develop further as all have much to offer and to share. *How?* is the question.

Craige Proctor
Chair, HSSC
President, WVAHS

Victorian Community History Awards

The writing of History is a truth-telling, evidence-based enterprise. This is a commonplace statement and something historians always strive for, and something we can all accept. However, what is the truth and how do we get to it are difficult questions.

When I first encountered academic history as a postgraduate in the late 1960s, a debate about historical facts was being played out between two historians. E.H. Carr, a historian of Russia, published *What is History* from a series of lectures given at Cambridge University in 1961 and Geoffrey Elton partly replied to these lectures in his book *The Practice of History* (1967).

In essence Geoffrey Elton argued that events in the past had occurred as an objective reality and facts about these events could be discovered by rigorous historical analysis. Historical facts were independent of the historian and could be found by careful and impartial historical research. There was, he said, a “dead reality independent of the inquiry” and it could be found by objective research: or that was the goal.

In opposition to Elton's view, E.H. Carr had argued that the historian played a much greater role in the historical enterprise than finding facts. Indeed, he disputed that facts had an objective reality independent of the historian. He argued there were facts and historical facts. As the blurb on the eighth reprint of his book in 12 years stated: ‘millions have crossed the Rubicon, but the historians tell us only Caesar's crossing was significant. All historical facts come to us as a result of interpretative choices by historians – choices as to what is significant’.

Carr reminded us of how our view of a mountain changes as we move around it. That perspective is important in

how we observe things and the facts we gather. He used another metaphor saying the facts are not like the fish on a fishmonger's slab, facts lying there to be gathered, which the historian takes home and cooks as he wishes. Instead, Carr wrote, ‘They are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ocean, and what the historian catches will depend partly on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use – these two actions being, of course, determined by what kind of fish he wants to catch.’

This means that history is not the past, but historians representing the past to the present, the writing of history, is an interpretive creation. It is a creative act, for historians make history in the second sense of representing something about the past and writing it up into an interpretation.

Historians are therefore so-called ‘creatives too’. What are the creative steps they follow?

- They choose their topic due to a buzzing in their heads about something;
- They are imaginative in the way they research their topic
- They are creative in how they make arguments and interpretations they see in the facts they have chosen;
- They are creative in the way they write, to make vivid, accessible and engaging histories;
- They are creative in the way their histories make meanings for their audiences.

History is manufactured, but not in the sense of being made up, not fictional like a novel. In general, it is a much harder and a longer process to write history, than to create something from your mind without having to worry about facts and historical facts.

History is painstakingly manufactured and shaped by the mind of the historian in their engagement with the evidence of the past, which they find and select. And the need to be truth tellers, puts the onus on historians to seek facts far and wide, compare them and treat them as fairly as possible. But we are all partial to a degree and open to chance finds. Historians must also recognise there can be various truths about the past, as in the history of colonisation, or for instance, the histories that will be written about the war in Ukraine.

History then is the attempt of a historian to understand and represent human thinking in the past and show it to the present. It is thus a performative act to reveal meaning and therefore it is a hard task.

It is always bemusing to me that the Victorian literary awards for literary creatives has a first prize twenty times the value of the Victorian Premier's History Prize. It is our challenge to raise the profile of History *viz a viz* literature, as historical writing is often foundational and inspirational to creative literary and other artistic endeavours.

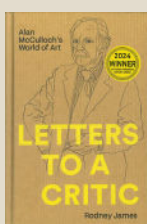
The VCHA was first held at Toongabbie, Victoria by Information Victoria in 1998 with the assistance of RHSV's John Henwood. It has been held annually except in 2006 when funding faltered. Since 2011 the RHSV has administered the competition in partnership with the Public Record Office Victoria. The competition has, over time, lifted the standard of community history massively and stimulated a great diversity of entries beyond books.

In this context, we need to honour the achievements of those historians entered in the 2024 VCHA.

Emeritus Professor Richard Broome AM

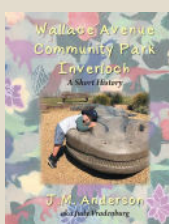
Victorian Community History Awards' Winners 2024

The Victorian Community History Awards are proudly presented by Public Record Office Victoria and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. The Awards recognise excellence and originality in historical storytelling. The range of award categories reflects the variety of formats that can be used to enrich the lives of Victorians through history. The 2024 Victorian Community History Awards ceremony was held on Monday 24 March 2025.



Victorian Premier's History Award - Winner **Letters to a Critic: Allan McCulloch's World of Art** Rodney James

Letters to a Critic makes an important contribution to the history of Melbourne and Victoria's art worlds and creative life through a detailed examination of the art critic Alan McCulloch, who was a significant voice in the second half of the 20th century. It follows McCulloch's commitment to the development of improved arts awareness and to encouraging and promoting emerging Australian artists. His reviews and critiques of emerging artists, who were often working within new and experimental modes, provided important support for their careers.



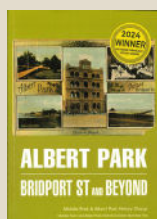
Collaborative Community History Award - Winner **Wallace Avenue Community Park: A short history** J.M. Anderson

Wallace Avenue Park Inverloch was almost lost to development. This small book, full of colourful

photos and illustrations, details an exciting success story of a passionate community who sought to save it. It is an inspiring story of collaborative community action which enriches the history of the area and its local community.

Commendations

- *Kal Angam-Kal: Stories from West Papua* by Cyndi Makabory, Yasbelle Kerkow and Folole Tupuola
- *The Years of Terror. Banbu-deen. Kulin and Colonists at Port Phillip 1835-1851* by Dr Marguerita Stephens and Fay Stewart-Muir



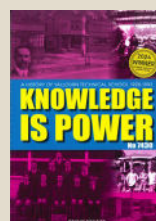
Local History Project Award - Winner

Albert Park: Bridport St and Beyond Middle Park and Albert Park History Group

This project, by members of the Middle Park and Albert Park History Group, takes a thorough, detailed and highly contained approach to local heritage and their surrounding suburbanscape. It examines key examples of built heritage by revealing previous occupancies, evaluating relevant documentation and unlocking local memories. *Albert Park: Bridport St and Beyond* is a pleasing example of a polished, well-structured and engaging collaborative local history publication.

Commendations

- *Dhoombak Goobgoowana: A History of Indigenous Australia and the University of Melbourne - Volume 1: Truth* by Ross L Jones, James Waghorne and Marcia Langton
- *Plaques documenting the fishing families of the Queenscliff Fisherman's Flat Reserve* by The Fisherman's Flat Fishermen and Families Study Group, in association with the Queenscliffe Historical Museum



Small Organisation History Project Award - Winner **Knowledge is Power: A History of Yallourn Technical School 1928-1993** Graham Goulding

Knowledge is Power is the poignant and highly significant story of a school that rose and died with the birth and waning of the electricity industry. The blend of thorough understanding of the changing history of technical education, wonderful anecdotes from participants at all levels of the school and outstanding illustrations contribute to an important history record of education in this region.

▶ Victorian Community History Awards' Winners 2024 are continued on pages 16-17

Around the societies

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

We welcome societies to submit an article or event details of around 50 words or email your newsletter to us and we will write up around 50 words for you around twice per year. If your Society has a logo you would like attached to your information, please send along a high-resolution image. For the August 2025 issue, please send details to office@historyvictoria.org.au by 24 June 2025.

APOLLO BAY AND DISTRICTS: Thanks to our volunteers who allowed us to open Wednesday afternoons along with our usual Museum weekend openings during January. We received comments from many satisfied visitors impressed by our collection and displays, which tell the history of Apollo Bay and surrounds.

We have been pleased to start our 'Local Identity' feature with a display featuring two different, but important, aspects of life in Apollo Bay's history: the CFA and Sporting Clubs. We thank the Apollo Bay CFA and community members who have loaned items to add to our own collection for the display. We are sure many memories will be rekindled after a visit to the Apollo Bay Museum.

apollobaymuseum.com.au



CIVIL AVIATION: The Airways Museum is an aviation museum, but with one difference: there are no aircraft! Instead, the Museum houses a collection of national importance that traces the development of Australia's civil aviation airways system through innovation and technical development from its beginnings in the 1920s to today. The story is told through artefacts and photographs and illustrates how Australia has often played a leading role internationally in aviation development. Tours of the Airways Museum are available on Tuesdays 9am-3pm and at other times by appointment. Groups are welcome and a meeting room is available. Entry is by gold coin donation for individuals, \$4 per head for group tours, these include tea/coffee & bikkies. The Museum is located at Essendon Airport, Melbourne, Victoria, at the rear of Building 44. Enter via Edgar Johnston Lane.

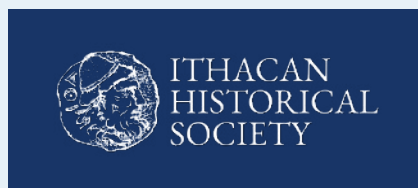
facebook.com/airwaysmuseum



EAST MELBOURNE: Wednesday 18 June 2025 at 7.30pm at the East Melbourne Library, 122 George Street, East Melbourne: 'St Patrick's Cathedral: its history and architecture' presented by conservation architect Arthur Andronas. Arthur has worked on the restoration and upgrading of St Patrick's Cathedral and has extensive knowledge of its history and architecture. He will share with us some insights and little-known facts about the cathedral which his work has revealed. Entry fee: Members free; non-members \$5.00.

ITHACAN HISTORICAL: The Society aims to promote the history of the island of Ithaca in the Ionian Sea, its region, and its people, from antiquity to modern times. The Society is active in Australia and Greece and has a global network. Society has developed a significant collection of photographs, documents and historical information and artefacts relevant to Ithaca and in particular Ithacan migration and settlement in Melbourne and Victoria. Find more by visiting

ithacanhistorical.org



KOO WEE RUP SWAMP: Our meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of each month, February to December at 7.30pm at our Headquarters and Museum, Mallow House, 325 Rossiter Road, Koo Wee Rup. New members welcome. The Museum is open the second and fourth Sundays of the month, February to December, from 1.30-4pm or by appointment.

facebook.com/kooweerupswamphistory/



LILYDALE AND DISTRICTS: Uncover the untold stories of a global icon, Dame Nellie Melba. *A Toast to Melba* shares rarely seen objects, photographs, and personal treasures from Coombe Yarra Valley, Arts Centre Melbourne and Yarra Ranges Regional Museum: brought together for the first time in this dynamic new exhibition. The exhibition will run until Sunday, 29 June at the museum at 35-37 Castella Street, Lilydale. The opening hours are Wednesday to Sunday 10am-4pm and entry is free.

facebook.com/

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



MALDON MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES: We hold wonderful collections of artefacts, photographs and historical records that tell the stories of the Maldon District. The Museum is open every Wednesday and Sunday 11.30am-2pm. The History Research Centre is open Fridays 10am-1pm by appointment only. Please note the Museum will be closed from 31 July until 7 September 2025. Visit our website at maldonmuseum.com.au or follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057499207961>



MELBOURNE MARITIME HERITAGE NETWORK: In April, the MMHN won the Victorian Community History Award for a Small History Publication for our first children's maritime heritage book, *River to Bay: Victoria's Maritime History* by Carole Wilkinson and Pru Pittock.

In 2024, MMHN was awarded the National Children's Non-Fiction Award for this same splendid book. Be reassured adult readers report having learned a lot from reading this work too. So, if you haven't bought a copy, please consider doing so by emailing info@mmhn.org.au or from the RHSV bookshop.

facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090742014848



MORWELL: Our continued good relationship with Latrobe City has resulted in the Society being consulted on community proposals. We have recently completed Morwell Parks and Reserves and Street names origins for Council. A mammoth effort went into this document, a copy of which will be available for members and visitors to view. It is pleasing to see the number of visitors who visit our rooms and exhibitions, participate in our 'Step Back in Time Café' and provide us with artefacts and information. Our upcoming open days are 4 June, 18 June, 29 June, 2 July, 16 July and 27 July. 11am-2pm at 12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell.

facebook.com/morwellhistoricalsociety



PORT MELBOURNE HISTORICAL AND PRESERVATION: We have a growing collection of photos and ephemera, maps and plans, and maritime, church and Council records. Depending on their time and interest, members help with the items which come in for cataloguing or to participate in their conservation. We also receive many requests for information and enjoy undertaking a bit of detective work. You never know what you are going to find out! Some members make submissions to heritage/planning authorities regarding the preservation of historic places. Some raise funds for conservation work by selling at festivals and street stalls. To find out more about what we do visit our website at

www.pmhps.org.au



ROMSEY AND LANCEFIELD: The Society strives to engage with our local community through education and social activities. We offer an informative Newsletter four times per year, quarterly talks and speaker meetings. Our long-awaited book *Lancefield: from Potatoes to Pinot Noir* by Fay Woodhouse is a comprehensive look at Lancefield from c1840 to 2025 covering the land, the lifestyle and the people who built the town. Available from at Lancefield courthouse 55 Main Rd. Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays 10am-3pm.

facebook.com/historyatlancefield/



WHITEHORSE: Upcoming diary dates: Saturday, 7 June at 1pm General Meeting, 'Gregory Hill: Nunawading's Earliest Potteries & Porcelain Works'; Saturday, 16 August at 10pm Annual General Meeting, Anne Payne: History of Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. Meetings are held at the Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex.

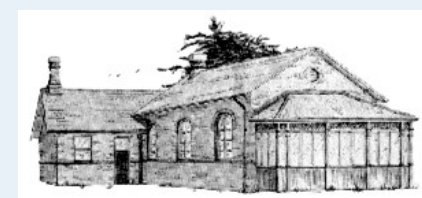
whitehorsehistory.org.au



WOADY YALOOK: The Society is open at The Well, 19 Heales Street, Smythesdale to researchers 9am-3pm each Wednesday, except the 1st Wednesday of each month, when, due to the commitments of members, we open from 12:30-3pm.

The stables, lockup and gallows are open every 3rd Saturday morning during the market except during winter months when only the Stables are open. At all other times by appointment. Visit our Country Market 3rd Saturday of the month at the Historic Precinct, Brooke Street, Smythesdale 9am-1pm.

wyhs.org.au



Windows on history: the luck of Edmund Parkes



In early 1888, a four-light stained glass window was erected at the liturgical west end of Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Balaclava, where it remains to this day. The window is the work of Gibbs & Howard of Fitroy Square in London and depicts The Four Evangelists. It is not immediately obvious as a memorial, but a modest brass plaque below indicates that it was erected to the memory of Edmund Samuel Parkes, Superintendent of the Bank of Australasia, who died 11 May 1887.

There is a lot more to the story about Edmund. He married Nancy Lawry at London in 1855, and they came to Australia aboard the *Damascus* in 1867. He would consider himself lucky to have escaped serious injury from a train wreck in Melbourne in 1881, but being involved in two train wrecks in six years is extraordinarily bad luck.

On the morning of the 30 August 1881, Edmund escaped his first train disaster near Jolimont when the Brighton Express met its demise. The *Argus* graphically described the event the following day as a 'Terrible railway calamity' when the 'nine o'clock Brighton Express had been hurled down an embankment'. The train was three minutes from Flinders Street Station and, as it passed the Richmond platform, an observant gent noticed 'one of the carriage wheels turning awry'. After Punt Road Bridge, the situation came to a head when jolting and thumping from beneath the carriage floors began making noises described like 'the report of a canon'.



Main: Ashton, Julian Rossi (1881) 'The accident to the Brighton Express: General view taken within half an hour of the occurrence.' Alfred May and Alfred Martin Ebsworth, Melbourne. Courtesy of SLV <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/257927>

Inset: 'The Brighton express - scene of the recent fatal accident' (1881) David Syme and Co, Melbourne. Courtesy of SLV, <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/253104>

The first- and second-class smoking carriages took the brunt of the disaster but fortunately, when the central carriage fell and dragged those on either side with it, the couplings broke and saved the rest of the train. Four people were killed and 39 were injured. Edmund was in the last carriage and escaped injury. He was conspicuous in his efforts to provide aid to the unfortunate sufferers and he participated as witness at the subsequent inquest.

In July 1886, Edmund's wife Nancy died, leaving Edmund as the single father of ten mostly adult children, but the worst of his luck was yet to come. On the evening of the 11 May 1887, '...The 5:30 ordinary train from Melbourne had left Prahran, and was in a cutting about 300 yards from Windsor station, when the hose pipe of the Westinghouse brake broke, and brought the train to a standstill...' (*Argus* 17 May 1887)



Left: Holy Trinity Church, Balaclava and Elwood, Melbourne

Above: Edmund Samuel Parkes, from WikiTree <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Parkes-445>

The express train from Melbourne was close behind and completely unaware of the situation. At this point, all of the railway's safety 'block system', which should have prevented a collision, failed due to human error. As the train rounded the bend towards Windsor station the engine driver W. Frederick Maskell saw the impending disaster, applied the brake, and held his ground. It was a valiant attempt, but he and his fireman James McNabb were killed instantly as their engine ploughed into the back of the train. More than 150 people were injured and six people were killed. Edmund Samuel Parkes became one of the six. Edmund was in a rear first-class carriage which took the brunt of the collision from the express train. When he was extracted from the wreckage he was partially conscious and requested to be taken to the Alfred Hospital, but the fatal decision was to take him to his home! Dr. Fitzgerald was summoned and it was determined that both his legs had been severely mangled and he had sustained other serious injuries. The only chance of survival was to amputate both legs. Later that night Dr. Fitzgerald administered chloroform and performed the operation, however the shock was too great and Edmund died before midnight.

On the 18 May 1887 the Vestry of Holy Trinity at Balaclava accepted the offer from the Officers of the Bank of Australasia to give some 'tangible form to their respect and affection' to Edmund, formerly an active member of the church and described by the church guardians as 'one of its most devoted and generous supporters'. They consented to a stained glass window to be commissioned to replace the plain diamond-quarry window at the west end of the church.

Early in 1888 the Gibbs & Howard memorial stained glass window was erected by his friends and colleagues in the Bank of Australasia. The window depicts the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, in each of the four lights. In the small panels below each figure is their attribute, a winged creature: St Matthew, the Angel; St Mark, the Lion; St Luke, the Bull; and the Eagle for St John.

A stone reredos was also erected to his memory behind the altar of Holy Trinity, the gift of his personal friends. His family gravestone at the St Kilda Cemetery is no longer the pristine white marble monument it once was, and the grey ravages of time make it hard to read, but his stained glass window has been lighting the western end of the church for 135 years and will continue as a lasting reminder of the man.

You can get lucky in your first train crash, but apparently not your second!

Further details can be seen at: stainedglassaustralia.wordpress.com

Ray J Brown



The Story of Melbourne's Lanes: the images

■ p. 63 C. G. Roeszler & Son photographer. [The manager's office at C. G. Roeszler & Son, 289 Little Lonsdale Street], ca. 1900. (Courtesy Gary Tregoney, C. G. Roeszler Engraving)

When Richard Broome invited me to contribute to the reimagining of *Essential but Unplanned: The Story of Melbourne's Lanes*, I was delighted for three reasons. I've long admired the book as a definitive history of Melbourne's much-loved lanes. As an architectural history teacher with a 30-year career in heritage, I thoroughly endorse Weston Bate's premise that the built fabric of the city can be read as an historical source, just like archival texts. I also anticipated the pleasure of collaborating with a diverse and dedicated team: from RHSV volunteers, to the staff of SLV and the City of Melbourne, and my fellow authors Richard Broome, Andrew J. May and Nicole Davis.

My role had three parts: to source Bate's original images and suggest replacements where needed; to edit images by removing blemishes (like dust spots and scratches); and, with Nicole Davis, to obtain permissions from street artists to use photographs of their work.

The Power of the Image

Weston Bate recognised the power of the image to both intrigue and inform. They are given great prominence in his book, undertaking a more significant role than simply illustrating his text. Often the images take on a life of their own, diverging to tell parallel stories to the written account on the page, whether it be further investigating the historical uses of a particular lane, or delving into the

biographies of its residents, or describing trades once practised there.

In his generous captions, Bate might point out unusual building types to be aware of, noting the curved roofs of prefabricated iron buildings for example, or describe how a house has been converted into a factory. At other times, the image captions take on a more nostalgic turn, when he reminisces about personal experiences, such as the aroma of roasting peanuts from Ted's factory in Guildford Lane.

Interpreting the City's Layers

Bate described Melbourne as being like 'an organism, growing and changing. Like a snake it shed skins. Like a coral reef it grew more strongly here and there according to the eddies in Victoria's economic and social tides' (p 55).

To understand these changes, meticulous primary source research was required. Bate acknowledged in his introduction the work of RHSV researchers who investigated street directories, municipal health reports, and Council records. Their research enabled Bate to successfully unpeel the layers of Melbourne's historic lanes and analyse the book's historical photographs with a detailed knowledge of the transformations of the city.

Weston Bate turned 70 the year *'Essential but Unplanned'* was published. I read his charming and wry writing style as being informed by his fond attachment to the city he grew to know over many decades. He very much takes the reader by the hand and walks them through Melbourne's lanes asking, "have you noticed this?" and "did you know that?", drawing attention to historical details with sharp insight.

I became attuned to the layered history of Melbourne's lanes in the mid-1980s when house-sharing a semi-converted warehouse in Hardware Street. Over the previous 50 years, it had been the business premises of Dominion Hardware Products, the Sun Electric Company, and Patterson Shugg process engravers, before becoming home to the Marian Centre Art Gallery, and the rehearsal space and recording studio of the band Hunters and Collectors. When I lived there as an undergraduate History student, the city still emptied after 5pm during the week and the nearest place to buy milk was the Myer food hall.

Bate analysed such changes in the use of Melbourne's lanes over 150 years, paying particular attention to the city's multicultural diversity. In the caption to the Chung Wah Café photograph, he reveals that in the 1990s Heffernan Lane had an Asian supermarket, a Greek restaurant, and an Egyptian club. When describing the 1958 Strizic photograph of the backyards off Crossley Street, he traces its transformation from Romeo Lane, a prostitutes' working street in the 1860s, to a Chinese cabinet-makers quarter, to a post-war Italian hub, home to the Viggiano Social Club, Pellegrini's Espresso Bar, and Florentino restaurant's storehouse.

Immensely useful additions to the new book, continuing Weston's investigation of these layers, is Nicole Davis' table of lane names and their origins, and her index to lanes and arcades which traces when they emerged, transformed and disappeared over time.

Diversity of Visual Sources

Weston Bate had a great eye, selecting high quality images and a rich diversity of image types. The range in type, period and scale of the 120 images in the original book enables its powerful visual storytelling.

It contains many maps and plans, created for different purposes. From Proeschel's 1850s map for gold rush immigrants, to the MMBW's 40 feet to the inch sewerage plans from the 1890s. Plans vary from those on real estate auction leaflets, to Mahlstedt's fire insurance plans.

Art is used in the book, including the 1866 De Gruchy and Leigh lithograph showing an isometrical view of the city, an 1880s woodcut by A.C. Cooke depicting the bustling activity of McCracken's City Brewery on Collins Street, and Tony Irving's beautiful 1990 etching and aquatints of Melbourne's lanes.

The photographs in the book range from fine art images to Weston Bate's own photographs, all committed to recording what he described as 'the textures of time'. My favourites are the 19th century panoramas: Charles Nettleton's 1867 view looking north-east across Little Collins Street, with Mrs. Brown's Servants Office in the foreground; John Noone's panorama of 1869 looking west from Lonsdale Street showing a vineyard and orchard in the city, and the Paterson Brothers' 1875 view of the Eastern Market and its surrounds taken from the Scots Church tower.

Some photographers in the book are household names, such as the striking modernist photographers Mark Strizic and Wolfgang Sievers. Others are forgotten, but produced memorable images, such as Charles Barber. He captured impoverished men whose 'homes' were meagre box beds in the

cavernous dormitories of the Central Methodist Mission in George Lane.

There are fascinating rare images, such as a photograph of the remains of Fawkner's printing works, and workmen busy inside the C. G. Roeszler & Son's engraving factory at the turn of the century. Newspaper images are included, such as a 1908 photograph from *The Australasian* showing Kytes Lane, home to Chinese Australians many of whom are likely to have worked in the 3 furniture factories there.

Weston Bate used the work of three young contemporary photographers: Matt Irwin, Stuart Murdoch and Adrian Flint. Their images are some of the most arresting of the book, showing the working lanes of Melbourne in all their shadowy, rubbish-laden grime, highlighting their gritty textures of bluestone, brick and iron.

Piecing Together the Puzzle

Sourcing Bate's original images proved to be challenging. While his book credited owners, it did not include titles, accession numbers or other unique identifiers. While some images had been digitised and were online and relatively easy to find, many were not. Two collections had lost records of the images we needed. Some images that had not been catalogued in 1994 were still not catalogued in 2024, making them impossible to find without the assistance of eagle-eyed librarians. The RHSV images team persisted in its efforts, however, with the result that only a very small number of the original images could not be sourced. The great support offered by all holding institutions, particularly SLV and the City of Melbourne, and all copyright owners, was greatly appreciated.

The original edition drew from 16 collections or individuals; our expanded edition draws from 21. New images

became available in the interim, such as Wolfgang Sievers' dramatic photograph of Stubbs Lane, and Alan Jordan's moving 1960s photographs documenting the lives of Melbourne's homeless. Another benefit of time has been digitisation, which has made available sharper versions of Bate's image selections.

Finally, the second half of the book has a magnificent collection of new images taken by 16 members of the Hawthorn U3A Camera Group. Under the guidance of Richard Broome, they comprehensively recorded the lanes of Melbourne for the new book. Weston would have approved heartily of this very productive collaboration. With the addition of Professor Andrew J. May's new chapters on the history of the lanes from 1994 to the present, the original size of Bate's book has been doubled.

Gaining copyright permission from the street artists whose work the U3A photographers captured was also a challenge, as it involved identifying and tracking them down principally via Instagram. Fortunately, they were unanimous in their enthusiasm for being included in the book and we thank them for their support.

Though challenging, sourcing the images was highly rewarding. Having reviewed a vast majority of the images of Melbourne's lanes available in publicly accessible collections, I have a deepened respect for Bate's selection of images. His carefully curated collection of maps, art and photographs remain an essential foundation for understanding the rich, evolving story of Melbourne's lanes.

Helen Stitt

Co-author

The Story of Melbourne's laneways (2024)

The Story of Melbourne's Lanes: Essential but Unplanned

Everyone needs a copy of this gorgeous lavishly-illustrated hardback publication from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria (in partnership with the SLV). This book reimagines a popular but now well out-of-print book by historian Weston Bate, *Essential but Unplanned. The Story of Melbourne's Lanes* (1994). The new book (280pp) more than doubles the size of the old with extra chapters to bring the story of Melbourne's lanes up-to-date. There is a multitude of new photos – both new and old, both colour and black-and-white – and more comprehensive indices.

"Melbourne's laneways have always been dynamic and always great survivors. Robin Boyd wrote in *Victorian Modern* in 1947 that, 'The little lanes were the honest streets of Melbourne'. This book proves that still to be the case." Philip Goad



\$49.95 Available via delivery or click 'n' collect. Come and browse our other 1,400 titles – all Victorian and Melbourne history.



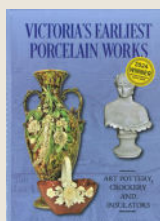
Have you thought about the gift of RHSV membership? Starting from \$40pa membership connects people passionate about Victoria's history. Scan the pink QR code to organise gift membership.



Enquiries: office@historyvictoria.org.au
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continued from page 9



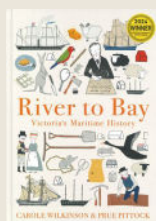
History Publication Award – Winner

Victoria's Earliest Porcelain Works
Gregory Hill

Richly illustrated, the book features photographs of finished products, makers' marks, and rarely seen images of potters, workers, and their workplaces. Set against the broader social history of the period, this story weaves together many elements, including technical skill, changing materials and production processes, evolving popular tastes, and artistic expression, offering a compelling insight into Victoria's ceramic heritage.

Commendations

- *Whistles Through the Tall Timber: Warburton – Powelltown – Noojee* by Nick Anchen
- *Kondak: William Buckley Revealed: Victoria's First European Resident and Conciliator* by Paul Cogle
- *Along the Road to Gundagai, Biography of Jack O'Hagan and Birth of Australian Pop Culture* by Jo Gilbert



Small History Publication Award – Winner

River to Bay: Victoria's Maritime History
Carole Wilkinson and Prue Pittock

Beautifully produced and thoughtfully written, *River to Bay* tells First Nations, European and shared maritime histories of Port Phillip Bay's waterways. Vividly illustrated with visual historical signposts, the accompanying historical prose offers nuanced viewpoints about Victoria's history. The authors' approach both educates and invites the young reader to form their own opinion about key moments in the history of the Yarra River and Port Phillip Bay. The illustrations and maps enable the reader to geographically navigate how the Yarra River and Port Phillip Bay developed over time and how both were central to Melbourne and Victoria's development. Written for a young audience this book is sure to attract a wider readership.

Commendations

- *The Woodlanders of Walden Hut* by Janice Newton with Karen Phillips, Paula Herlihy OAM and Mount Evelyn History Group
- *Revealing Stories. The Hidden History of the Performing Arts Scene in Geelong* by Janine Barrand and Dianna Wells
- *Down the Line Racecourses: Richfield, Mentone, Epsom, Aspendale* by John Macnaughtan
- *The Standard: History and Heritage of the Benambra, Ensay, Omeo, Swifts Creek Districts* by Debra Squires and Omeo Historical Society



Digital Storytelling Award – Winner

Faces of Peace
Bendigo Military Museum

The Faces of Peace Storytelling Project exemplifies the best of local history projects. The use of narrators from the local area – in this case Central Victoria – is particularly critical to the success of the project. Through these narrators we learn how the values and experiences gained growing up in their local community were applied to their peacekeeping roles overseas. Equally, the viewer sees how experiences gained in broader global events are brought back home to colour life in the local community. The personalised storytelling, done with care and professionalism, offers direct insights into the impact of conflict.

Commendations

- *Extraordinary/Ordinary* by Lisa D'Onofrio
- *What's in the Box?* By Bendigo Historical Society



Oral History Award – Winner

Women, Conscription, War
Alexandra Pierce

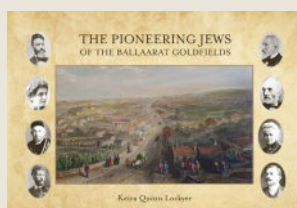
This 15-episode podcast tells the story of the Melbourne women who opposed the Vietnam War and the National Service Act from 1965–1972. Each thematic episode weaves together narratives from 58

Victorian Community History Awards' Winners 2024

oral history interviews conducted by Alexandra Pierce for her project, while also including, through the website, contemporary archival documents, photographs, protest ephemera and invaluable bibliographies of primary and secondary source material. Created as a response to a gap in the historical record, this podcast series fills that gap and then some. The podcast approach makes the women's stories and the wider history accessible to a wide audience. The fact that this history podcast was produced by a solo oral historian without institutional support is truly inspirational.

Commendations

- Remembering Ash Wednesday: An Oral History of the 1983 Bushfires in Aireys Inlet and District by Alexander Watkins
- In The Footsteps Melbourne Holocaust Museum, by Lead Curator Jayne Josef
- The People's Movement: The Birth of Selby Community House Selby Community House and commissioned creators filmmakers Tadj Ulrich, Lia Hills, and podcast producer Riley Jordan



Community Diversity Award – Winner

The Pioneering Jews of the Ballarat Goldfields

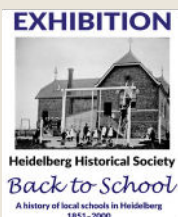
Keira Quinn Lockyer

The Pioneering Jews of the Ballarat Goldfields by Keira Quinn Lockyer began as a personal family history journey and finished as a work to which more than 70 people have contributed. The work recounts a period when the Jewish community engaged at a high level in the local political, business and charitable institutions of Ballarat. Indeed, seven of the early mayors were Jewish and the earliest institutions such as the hospital, orphanage, fire brigade, Mechanics Institute and Benevolent Asylum were inaugurated

and/or given starting finance by the Jewish pioneers. The author considers the role of Jewish women and includes comprehensive notes on all traceable Jewish pioneers and their family members, as well as useful notes on her research sources. The book is lavishly illustrated with many significant artworks and photographs from the Gold era.

Commendations

- *Personal Politics: Sexuality, Gender and the Remaking of Citizenship in Australia* by Leigh Boucher, Barbara Baird, Michelle Arrow, Robert Reynolds
- *Transgender Australia: A History Since 1910* by Noah Riseman
- *A Secretive Century: Monte Punshon's Australia* by Tessa Morris-Suzuki



History Interpretation Award – Winner

'Back to School': A History of Local Schools in Heidelberg 1851-2000

Heidelberg Historical Society

'Back to School': A History of Local Schools in Heidelberg 1851-2000 was a comprehensive exhibition curated by Heidelberg Historical Society with involvement from Greensborough Historical Society. The histories of some 72 schools, large, small, government and private, were included in the exhibition. A wide number of sources were used to compile these histories. In addition to its nostalgic appeal for locals, the histories were firmly placed within the wider context of the Victorian government education system. The lasting value of the exhibition is that it has made the various school histories available for the future through a number of databases.

Commendations

- Resisting Conscription in World War I Australian Living Peace Museum in conjunction with Soundtrails

- Walking Early Box Hill Box Hill Historical Society



History Article Award – Winner

A Community in Crisis: Dr Deery and the Healesville Hospital Dispute, 1961-62

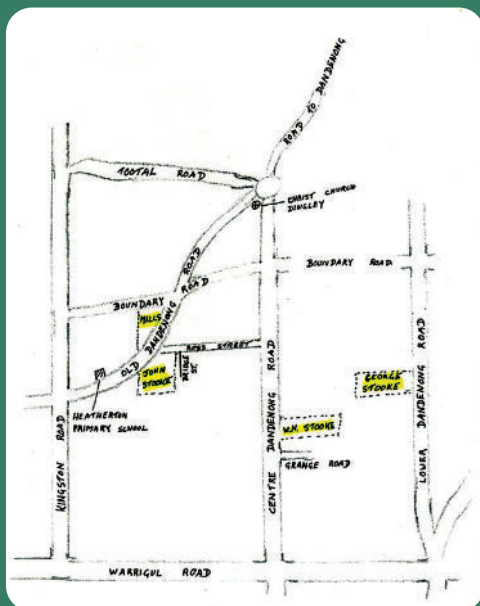
Phillip Deery

Phillip Deery is arguably Australia's foremost historian of the Cold War years. He has a knack for using biography to elucidate the bigger sweep of history, based on deep research into often arcane archives which he deploys with a light but masterful touch.

Commendations

- 'The Fencer's Manual' and 'William Clarson: the Publisher's Tale' in the *Journal of the C J La Trobe Society*, vol. 22, No. 3, November 2023, pp32-45 Andrew Lemon
- 'Unemployed Breadwinners' and 'Working Mothers': Male Breadwinner Nostalgia and the 1990s Recession in Australia' in *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol 54, No.3, pp 424-442 Joshua Black
- 'Mining the Yarrowee: Environmental Change on the Ballarat Goldfield' in the *Victorian Historical Journal*, Vol. 94, No. 2, December 2023, pp. 433-451 Susan Lawrence, Peter Davies, Greg Hil, Ian Rutherford, James Grove, Jodi Turnbull and Mark Macklin (The Rivers of Gold research team)
- 'The Unusual Australian Football Scoring System: Six Behinds to a Goal' in the *Victorian Historical Journal*, Vol. 95, No. 1, June 2024 Graham Pilkington





Sketch map showing location of the farms of John, Harry, and George Stooke in Heatherton, 1973. Courtesy of Kingston Heritage Collections via Lois Reynolds, City of Kingston.
<https://localhistory.kingston.vic.gov.au/articles/679>

EIGHTPENCE a day buys Block, Heathmont Station Estate. Secure block for your child. Costello, 128 Queen st.

Eightpence a day buys Block, Heathmont Station Estate. Secure block for your child.
 From the Argus 1 November 1922, p17
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/1851872?searchTerm=%22heathmont%22#>

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JF 1207
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BRIAR HILL TIMBER AND TRADING CO. PTY. LTD.
 SHERBOURNE ROAD, BRIAR HILL (NEAR GREENSBOROUGH)

Briar Hill Timber and Trading Co Pty Ltd. Frederick and Hazel Squire established this company in 1934 and their properties covered approximately 15 acres, on either side of Sherbourne Road. Their large timber mill started in 1941 processed timber from Kinglake, Flowerdale and the Otways. The company was noted for supplying timber to the Australian government for construction during World War II, as well as joinery for the Heidelberg Olympic Village in the 1950s.
 Image courtesy of The Eltham and District Historical Society <http://www.elthamhistory.org.au/> and collection at:
<https://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/eltham-district-historical-society#collection-records>

Locations with botanical names: part three

In our October 2024 issue of History New we included Heathmont History Group's, 'Locations with botanical names: part one': Boronia, Box Hill, Clematis, and Ferntree Gully. Then, in December last we again heard that readers had enjoyed, 'Locations with botanical names: part two': Ferny Creek, Glen Iris, Hawthorn and Heatherdale. In this issue we have part three: Briar Hill, Heatherton and Heathmont.

Briar Hill

This area, between Eltham and Greensborough, has no railway station: recognition of its existence dates from the opening of the Briar Hill Post office 1 September 1925. I have not yet discovered who suggested the name. There is a Briar Hill in Northamptonshire, England.

Heatherton

One the least densely-population suburbs in Melbourne, Heatherton had its own Post Office from 1885 to 1973. The heather grows well on the sandy soil, and the sand belt is the basis for its best-known facility, the Kingston Heath Golf Club.

Heathmont

Heath on a mont, not ferntree in a gully nor lily in a dale! The name was decided

in 1923 at a meeting of the local Progress League. At once, estate agents used the attractive name as they subdivided orchards near the railway line, where the station opened in 1926. The 'mont'

can be seen clearly from the Knox Hospital to the south and from Heatherdale Road to the west and

car traffic notices as they travel eastward along Canterbury Road over Wantirna Road and into Heathmont. The heath is no longer prolific, nor do the field naturalist groups hike through the area as they did in previous eras when the wildflower beauty made the district so appealing.

Gerry Robinson
 Heathmont History Group

Library collection: West Brunswick community ethos revealed by embroidered address, 1903



We enjoy telling you about happy discoveries from our collection, this one was buried away amongst our backlog cataloguing.

It is an embroidered address, and a very personal change from the usual illuminated addresses which were usually presented to commemorate special occasions and or to recognize outstanding service. These are known for their Moroccan leather binding, gilding, painted flora, fauna, borders or calligraphy. They would have been expensive and often well beyond the financial ability of the working classes. In 1948 one organisation was advised by a printing firm that the cost of such addresses ranged from 85 to 250 guineas. This embroidered address is very different. Firstly, of course, it is hand embroidered in silk on a linen backing. A small cardboard plaque recording the event sits in the middle of an opening curtain surrounded by roses and what look like pansies in rich colours. Due to the storage in a dark

place for many years, the silk embroidery colours are still vibrant.

In July 1902, the West Brunswick Mutual Improvement Society was launched at the Methodist Church, corner of Victoria and Daly streets, West Brunswick. The Society was formed with the intent of giving the young people of West Brunswick an opportunity of attending and taking part in debating as well as literary and social entertainments.

The newspaper report made special note that, 'Although it was a wet night the church was crowded to the doors, which clearly proved the interest which the residents of West Brunswick take in the movement'. (*Coburg Leader*, 26 July 1902)

Scottish born Mr. David Methven, councillor of Brunswick and M.L.A. for East Bourke Boroughs, was asked to formally open the Society and was presented with the address. In the announcement about his death 16 years later he was described thus:

'His life and character may be summed

up in the words, ... to all classes he was "Dave". With a rugged personality, and a frame hardened by years of the hardest toil in the roughest countries, David Methven had a great and kindly heart, and hence he was poor to the last'. (*Brunswick and Coburg Leader*, 29 Nov 1918)

The 1902 address had been designed and worked by Miss Edith Parkhouse, of Burnell Street, West Brunswick. She was a master craftswoman, the back of the work is as neat as the front, and her use of colour is bold. I have only found one more mention of her, when she married George Deeble in 1905 she is reported to have made the point lace for the bodice of her wedding gown.

In researching the object and the event it reminds us of community history, the ethos of 'make do or mend' and education and improvement. As always it reminds me that items have many stories.

Jillian Hiscock

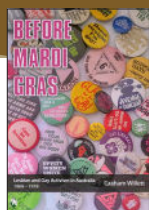
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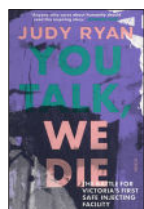
Authors, publishers and Historical Societies are invited to contribute books to the RHSV for the library and for consideration for inclusion in 'Books Received'.

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



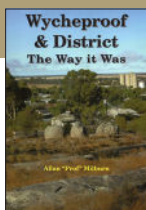
Before Mardi Gras: Lesbian and Gay Activism in Australia, 1969-1978. Graham Willett, Interventions Inc., Melbourne, 2024, pp. 1-226, ISBN 9780648641629.

At a time of rising political and social intolerance, it is illuminating to read and reflect upon the rise of gay activism in the 1970s and into the 1980s when gay and lesbian Australians found a political voice. These were, of course, years of immense social change more broadly in Australia. It meant the climate was right, briefly, for acceptance that would have been unthinkable two decades earlier. That did not make for an easy passage from illegal homosexuality to tolerance and equal rights. Nor does it still. Graham Willett is a pioneer of queer history in Australia. This book was previously published in 2000 as the opening chapters of Willett's *Living Out Loud*. An exceptional primer.



You Talk, We Die: the Battle for Victoria's First Safe-injecting Facility. Judy Ryan, Scribe, Melbourne, 2023, pp.1-298, ISBN 978192258581.

For most Victorians, drug abuse is an out of sight, out of mind issue. Not so for Judy Ryan, living in the inner suburbs of Melbourne where the trade and use in illicit substances coalesce. She had found people collapsed near her home more than once. But it was coming across a young couple *in extremis* one afternoon in 2017 and the death of the woman from a heroin overdose that led her to decisive action. This is the story of how Melbourne's first safe injecting facility came to be. It is a deeply contested space; the facility is proximate to a school: a story of struggle and NIMBY-ism, but also one of compassion and community.



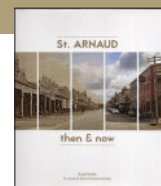
Wycheproof & District: the Way it Was. Allan Milburn, Wycheproof & District Historical Society, Wycheproof, 2023, pp. 1-512, ISBN 9780958142922.

Allan Milburn and his wife used to run the newsagency in the Wimmera wheat town of Wycheproof, and this book is largely based upon the various compilations of the *Wycheproof Ensign*. It begs the question for future local historians of how they will compile the stories of the next 50 or 100 years as local newspapers, and newsagencies, steadily disappear, sometimes to be replaced by online versions or by nothing at all. This book is more a compendium, a record rather than an analysis, of Wycheproof's past. Aside from a couple of AFL footballers, the town's most famous daughter is Peta Credlin, who left at a young age, descendant of a prominent local family.



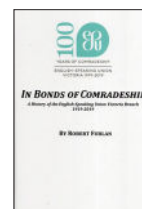
Leo and Mina Fink: for the Greater Good. Margaret Taft, Monash University Publishing, Clayton 2022, vii-238, ISBN 9781922464866.

The Jewish diaspora that flowed from the Nazi occupation of Europe in the 1930s and after World War II is fairly well documented but there are many stories still to be told. Leo and Mina Fink were not part of that exodus: they had already established lives in Melbourne from the early 1930s. But their lives would become pivotal in those of many of the 17,000 Holocaust survivors who followed them to Australia. Leo was a passionate Zionist and Mina would champion the establishment of a Holocaust Museum in Melbourne in the face of deniers. But at the core of their lives was work to improve the lives of Jewish Australians.



St Arnaud Then and Now. Scott Smith, St Arnaud & District Historical Society, St Arnaud, 2024, pp.iii-243, ISBN 9780648361794.

St Arnaud was built on gold in the 1850s until the early 20th century. Named for Jacques Leroy de Saint Arnaud, a French military leader during the Crimean War, it transitioned successfully into an agricultural centre. The wealth generated by the gold rush is reflected in a rich legacy of 19th century architecture preserved in the town. Author Scott Smith is a graphic designer with an interest in history, so not surprisingly this is an intensely visual book which juxtaposes that legacy against the modern, while also harking back to the intervening years. Oddly paginated but beautifully produced, this book may well become something of a benchmark for other similar community history projects.



In Bonds of Comradeship: a History of the English-Speaking Union Victoria Branch 1919-2019. Robert Furlan, English Speaking Union (Vic.), Ascot Vale, 2024, 1-455, ISBN 9781763721616.

This centenary history of the English-Speaking Union Victorian Branch, speaks to an Australia that vanished decades ago. In its day, the union included many eminent Victorians. The ESU was founded in England in 1918, the Victorian branch a year later, with the lofty aim "to unite the English-speaking peoples in order to re-establish and preserve world peace". The vision of unity and peace was not based upon language alone. English-speaking people were specified as those from Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States, united by British kinship and race. One quarter of a multi-racial Australian population is now born in a non-English speaking country. The ESU survives as an educational and cultural charity.