



History News

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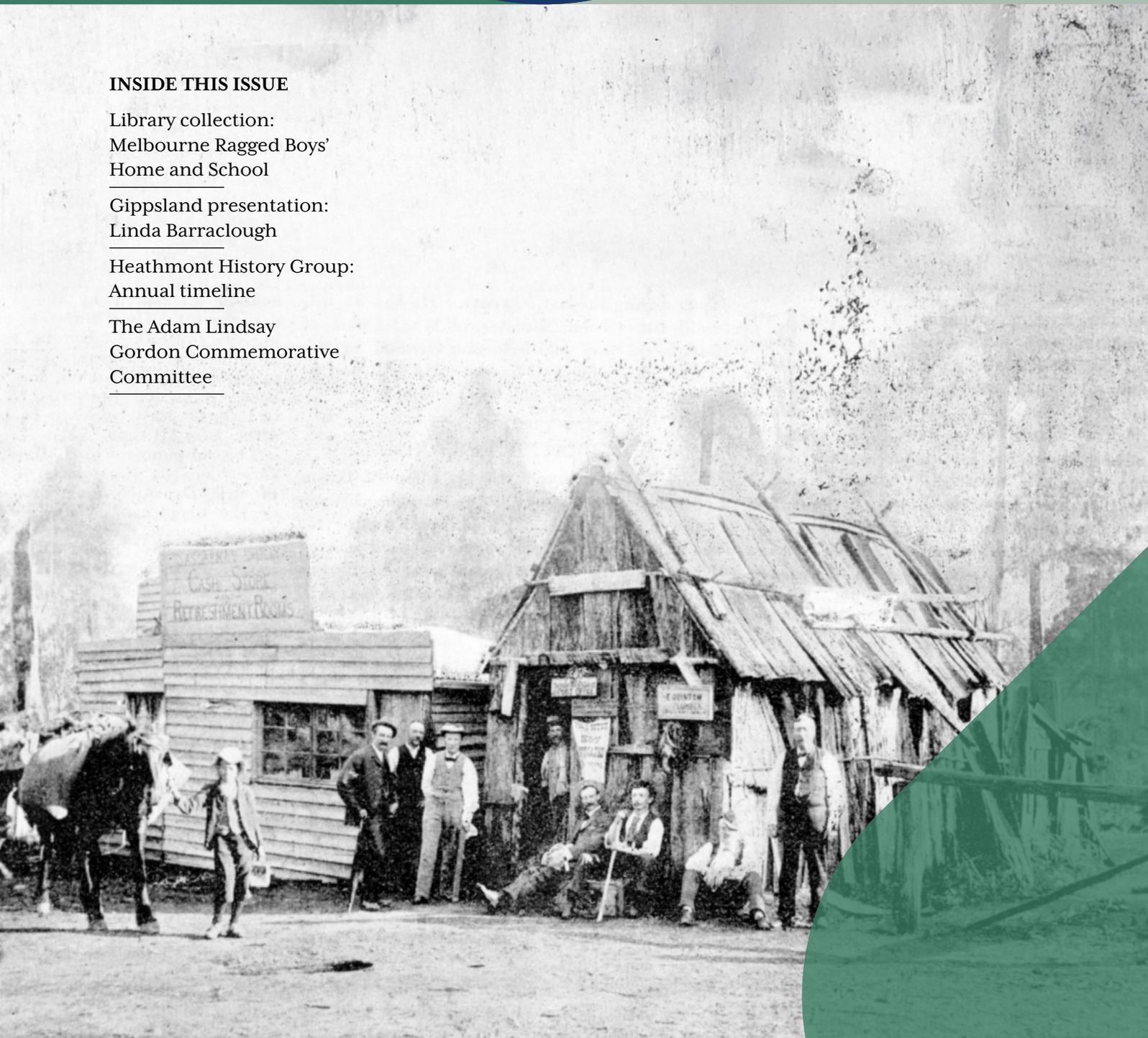
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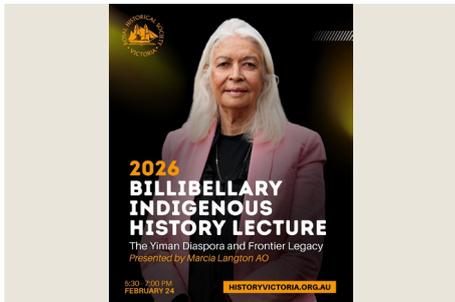
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Committee



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.



2026 BILLIBELLARY INDIGENOUS HISTORY LECTURE PRESENTED BY LAUREATE PROFESSOR MARCIA LANGTON AO

Date: Tuesday 24 February

Time: 5.30–7pm

Cost: \$10 / \$20

Event type: in-person and online

Bookings: essential. Book online at historyvictoria.org.au or call or email on +3 9326 9288 | office@historyvictoria.org.au

We are delighted to invite our members and friends to join us for the 5th annual Billibellary Indigenous History Lecture to be delivered by Laureate Professor Marcia Langton AO.

Marcia will be presenting, 'The Yiman diaspora and frontier legacy'

Reflecting on colonisation in the upper Dawson Valley in central Queensland, Marcia Langton AO developed a historiographic scepticism. Gordon Stephen Reid wrote about her people in his 1981 book, *A Nest of Hornets: The Massacre of the Fraser Family at Hornet Bank Station, Central Queensland, 1857, and related events*, in which he relied, necessarily, entirely on colonist records, yet acknowledged the Fraser family survivors, 'Their revenge against the Jiman, without prosecution, helped to set the pattern for white attitudes and colonial government policy towards the Aborigines of Queensland for 40 years'.

As David Marr demonstrated in his 2023 account *Killing for Country: A Family Story*, history has a way of both deceiving and enlightening us. In this lecture, Langton examines the issues that have troubled her about the accounts of violence in her grandfather's country.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: WHO? HESTER HORN BROOK AND HER LADIES: MELBOURNE'S FIRST SOCIAL CARERS IN THE 1850S AND 1860S, PRESENTED BY ROSLYN OTZEN

Date: Tuesday 17 March

Time: 5.30 – 7pm

Cost: \$10 / \$20

Event type: in-person and online

Bookings: essential. Book online at historyvictoria.org.au or call or email on +3 9326 9288 | office@historyvictoria.org.au

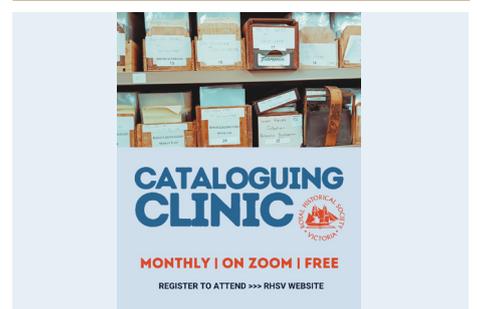
Each year, to celebrate Women's History Month, the RHSV offers our Women's History lecture, part of our Distinguished Lecture series.

For 2026, we are delighted to have Roslyn Otzen presenting, 'Who? Hester Hornbrook and her ladies: Melbourne's first social carers in the 1850s and 1860s'.

Roslyn Otzen completed her PhD on the 1854 origins of the Melbourne City Mission, and its founders, who included Hester Hornbrook. While researching Hester, and the many other women who worked with her, Roslyn uncovered a trove of unknown information, not only about the women, but the essential work they did in caring for gold-rush newcomers to Melbourne who were entirely unsupported when they fell on hard times. Together, those women, whom history has ignored and forgotten, created Melbourne's first social services. Roslyn had to find out why, and introduce them firmly into the story of Melbourne.

GUIDED WALKING TOURS OF HISTORIC FLAGSTAFF GARDENS

Our guided walking tours are currently on pause after the retirement of our beloved tour guide, Chris Manchee. We hope to revive them once a suitable replacement guide is found. Watch this space.



CATALOGUING CLINICS

Date: Thursday 26 February,

Thursday 26 March

Time: 11am – 12noon

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 on cataloguing whether you are using cataloguing cards or software.



History News

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COVER IMAGE: Edwin Sibly (1895) 'Country Post Office' [Sassafras], David Syme and Co., Melbourne, State Library Victoria <https://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/255381> See pages 6-7 Locations with botanical names: part six 'Sassafras' for more information.

Melbourne: Stillwell & Co. Image courtesy of State Library Victoria <https://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/167930>

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President's Report: Peter Yule

RHSV Councillor Peter Yule lives in a pretty, two-storeyed wooden house on the edge of Bass Strait at the windswept point where the Hopkins River empties into the ocean.

His second-floor library faces the other way, overlooking isolated open parkland, with a driveway that curves up from the main road. His property is big enough for his children to have thoughtfully built him a compact private golf course to survive the ennui of the recent pandemic.

Peter Yule sits in this library like a sentinel observing the rich tapestry of south-western history and life. To one side is Warrnambool, to the other the volcanic plains heading back towards Geelong.

He takes commissions to research and write his books from all and any who want their history recorded. Sometimes, as in the case of Koroit, he will begin with a local chronicle and make a cogent narrative of it. The existing published history of Warrnambool barely made it as far as the 20th century, requiring him to take the story forward into the world of wars and depression, Fletcher Jones, and the modern successful city that hosts its own university campus.

Peter Yule began his academic career as a tutor in a European History subject taught by Geoffrey Blainey, sharing with him a belief, following Carlyle, that good history is essentially the composite of numerous individual biographies. In his books, stories are driven by people whose lives, when well told, illuminate a period, a place, and a way of life. In terms of genre this style favours economic history ahead of social history, much like our former RHSV president A.G.L. Shaw: not entirely by coincidence as they are first cousins. Peter credits a great line of lecturers for teaching him the craft, beginning with his own father, George Yule, a scholar of the Reformation and the English Revolution, followed by many others, including our own Chips Sowerwine, who was then only in his second year at Parkville.

At last count, Peter is the author or editor of two dozen books. Western Victorian local histories figure prominently, as do hospitals, business leaders, and law firms. We have copies of many of them in the RHSV book collection.

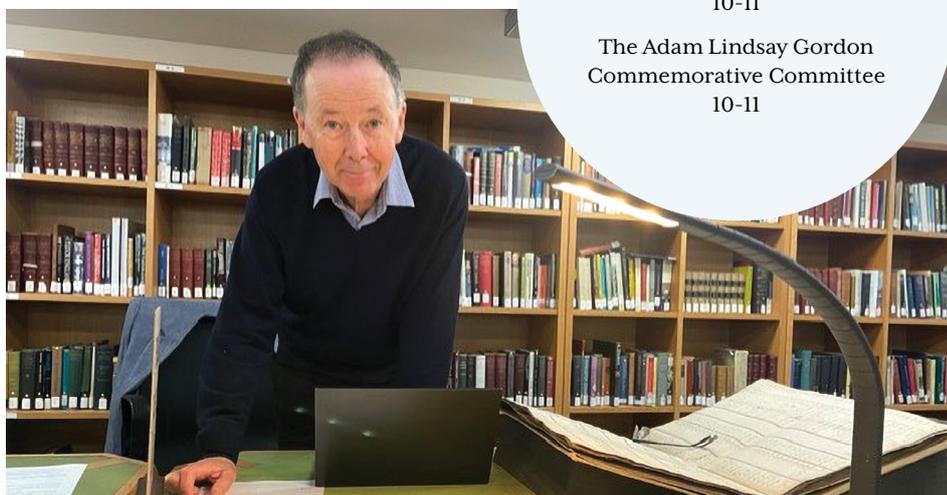
One of Peter's great accomplishments, in my view, is his edited history of Carlton (2004),

the Melbourne suburb on which every writer has a personal connection, and a strong opinion. The front cover of one edition depicts a line of seven women and young children grouped along the front veranda of a typical 1880s polychromatic terrace house. To marshal the authors in this collection of chapters was no mean feat. Apart from the Irish, Peter modestly says, everyone is here: he is being unkind to himself and underplaying his editorial skill. This book took out a best prize in the 2005 Community History Awards. The pages of his books are noisy with the hubbub of duelling lawyers, *Vic Bar: A History of the Victorian Bar* (2021), or fractured with the anguish of Vietnam War veterans, *The Long Shadow: Australia's Vietnam Veterans since the War* (2020); But there is a cheerful calmness about his persona as an historian.

Peter Yule accepts commissions to write books on the proviso that he will be led by the primary sources he uncovers, rather than be guided by preconceived social theory or the commissioning party's desire to whitewash the past. He works away quietly in his library among his books and notes, observing all the Gunditjmarra Country to the west and that of the Wadawurrung to the east. Just as stories stream down through the mouth of the river adjacent to his house, an estuary traditionally known as Wirpenung, the narratives of his landscape flow effortlessly across the pages of his manuscripts.

The splendid isolation of his house is his comfort.

Robert Pascoe



■ Peter Yule deep in the Colonial Office records of the West Indies in London, April 2025

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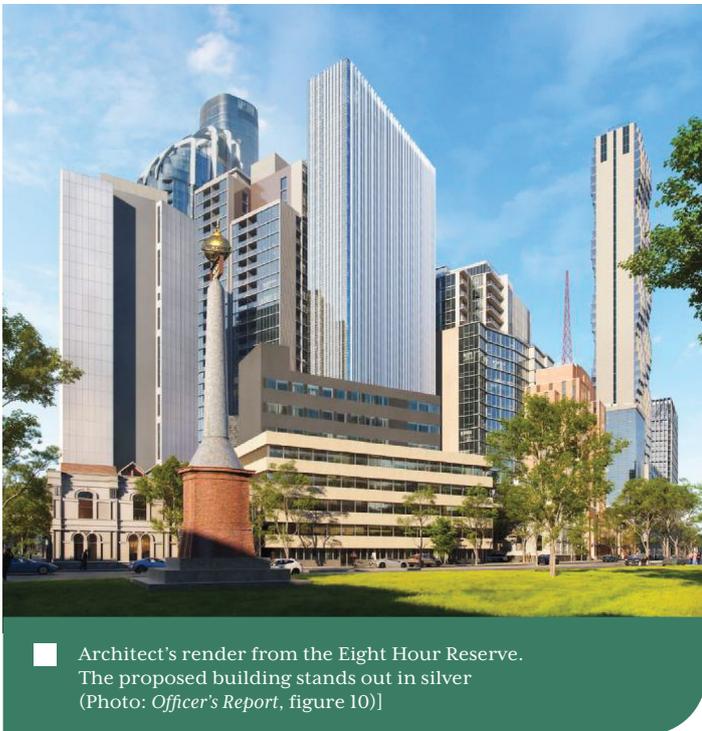
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Heritage report: 2026: Some good news, watch this space

The year opens with some good heritage news for a change. We faced a development proposal for student accommodation in the World Heritage Environs Area around the Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building. At 113 metres (roughly 35 storeys) it wouldn't have been the worst incursion into the area, but this was a test for the amended World Heritage Strategy Plan that the Minister gazetted in April 2025, which prescribed a mandatory height limit of 103 metres. Clearly the developer was testing the waters.



Architect's render from the Eight Hour Reserve. The proposed building stands out in silver (Photo: *Officer's Report*, figure 10)

The application did not follow normal planning procedures. The developer went straight to the Minister's new 'Development Facilitation Program', which concerned us since this seemed to mean virtually automatic approval of a proposal that failed at the first hurdle. We made a strong submission and then waited the outcome. As with much of the new planning regime, there is no discussion. The process is totally opaque. So, when I received notice that the permit had been granted, I assumed the worst.

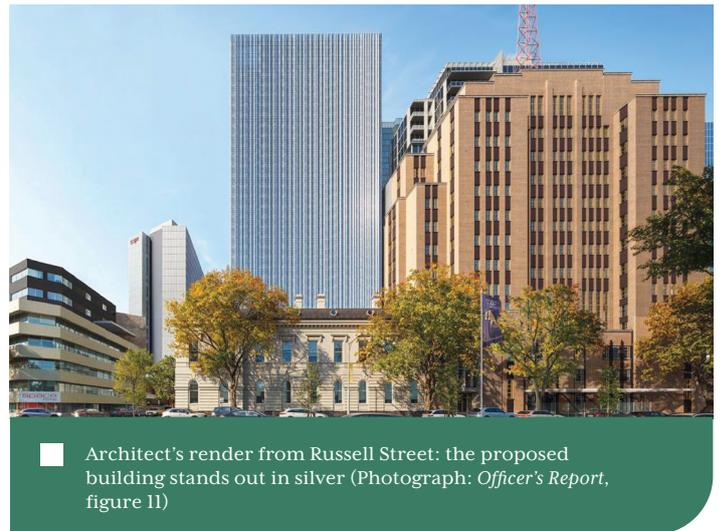
Imagine my surprise when my colleague Ian Wight contacted me to say he had read the fine print and the permit contained conditions that it conform to the requirements of the amended World Heritage Strategy Plan by reducing the height to 103 metres as prescribed! Victory! The Minister has held firm in protecting the World Heritage Environs Area. And the officer's report, now available on the Ministerial Permits Register online, is thorough and professional.

Holding this 'red line in the sand', as the report calls it, is crucial to the future of Melbourne's only World Heritage site. The significance of this site, which includes the Royal Exhibition Building, the Carlton Gardens, and the Environs Area, cannot be overstated. 'There is nothing like it anywhere else in the world today', wrote the eminent UK historian,

Professor David Cannadine in 2004. As the Australian Government Response to the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Assessment Report put it in 2004: 'The Royal Exhibition Building in its original garden setting is the most authentic remaining example of an *in-situ* Palace of Industry from a significant international exhibition' [emphasis added].

Sadly, much of this setting has already been lost as a result of Victorian government backsliding from the buffer zone as promised in its 2004 bid for World Heritage listing, backsliding that permitted the 65-storey Shangri-La Hotel and other high-rise where Victoria had promised 'to discourage the demolition of Victorian-era buildings and require any development to enhance heritage values'.

We at the RHSV, alongside our friends at the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), were engaged as stakeholders in developing the amended Strategy Plan, a process that began in 2018 and only concluded in 2025. In the process, a number of community organisations supported the new plan, particularly the Friends of the Royal Exhibition Building.



Architect's render from Russell Street: the proposed building stands out in silver (Photograph: *Officer's Report*, figure 11)

The amended plan plugged the gaps which allowed development that risked the future of the World Heritage badge. The new plan provided mandatory heights for the whole of the Environs Area. It is crucial that these heights be respected if we are to succeed in preserving what still remains of the authentic setting that led to obtaining World Heritage status for the site. The Minister's response means that we have won the first battle. But we are still awaiting action on the Management and Strategy Plans for the site.

The New Year offers a bigger challenge as the new planning regime is put in place. The Minister affirms that the Heritage Overlay will continue to apply but has not presented any indications how it will actually operate. In the new Housing Choice and Transport Zone (HCTZ) and Major Activity Centres (MAC), heritage and neighbourhood character are no longer included as aims, so the Heritage Overlay will not be supported, and under the Better Decisions Made Faster bill, the rights of heritage bodies to make representations will be curtailed, so mechanisms are required to ensure the Heritage Overlay actually works in the new system.

We are working on a campaign with other heritage bodies to ensure that in the implementation of the new planning regime heritage is taken seriously.

We will be asking for:

Consultation on Implementation:

The Department of Transport and Planning to consult heritage stakeholders: including the Heritage Council of Victoria, Heritage Victoria, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Royal Historical Society of Victoria, local historical societies, and local council heritage advisers and planners—during the development of implementation regulations and guidelines concerning the Heritage Overlay in the new planning;

Guidelines on the Interface between the HO and the new zones:

The Department of Transport and Planning to consult on, develop, and publish clear guidance on how Heritage Overlays will integrate with the new planning processes, including how they will affect complexity within the three planning permit assessment streams and Planning Scheme Amendment pathways;

Resources for Local Government:

The State Government to ensure that local governments receive the necessary resources to actively participate in the development of the new state planning framework, such as allowing appropriate timeframes for feedback as well as access to clear and transparent information on the planned implementation of these new laws;

Local Heritage Planning Unit:

The State Government to establish a dedicated local heritage planning unit within the Department of Transport and Planning, staffed with appropriate expertise to provide strategic and statutory guidance within the department, to ensure that heritage considerations are properly prioritised and integrated into the planning system with visibility and clarity to all those responsible for their implementation.

We will be asking for your help as we elaborate our strategy to ensure better heritage outcomes under the new system.

Charles Sowerwine

Chair, Heritage Committee

4 January 2026

Historical Society Matters



History and heritage news from around Australia

Welcome to 2026 and the latest edition of FAHS's Historical Society Matters

Issue 60 is both local and global in reporting. Tasmania celebrates a famous soprano and invites others to help her 'sing anew', while the Northern Territory recalls a Tiwi Island event of song and dance for different reasons. The Australian Capital Territory and South Australia showcase publication successes, while Western Australia recalls one town's visit by a hangman. New South Wales combines 'local' and 'global' by reporting on the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register, and the FAHS President shares how she will help seek solutions to challenges facing Australia's history and heritage groups by engaging in 2026 with equivalents in Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland, the United Kingdom and United States. This article is from Victoria but relevant to all of Australia's societies and offers strategies for attracting new visitors, members, volunteers and leaders.

<https://www.history.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/FAHS-Newsletter-60-December-2025-4.pdf>

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Rosalie Triolo

President: FAHS

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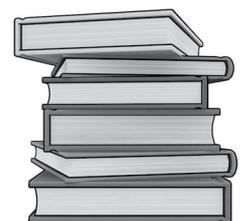
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Locations with botanical names: part six

■ Rose Stereograph Co., 'The Railway station, Tecoma' [c1925-1954] State Library Victoria, <https://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/60033>

In our October 2024 issue of *History News* we included Heathmont History Group's, 'Locations with botanical names: part one': Boronia, Box Hill, Clematis, and Ferntree Gully. Then, in December 2024 we had, Ferny Creek, Glen Iris, Hawthorn and Heatherdale. In June this year we included Briar Hill, Heatherton and Heathmont, then in October last we included Laburnum and Lilydale. In December 2025 we had part five: Montrose, Oak Park, Oakleigh, Rosebud, and Wattle Glen. In this issue we have Pines Forest, Pinewood, Sassafras, Wattle Park and Watsonia.

Pines Forest

Pines Forest, in Frankston North, was one of the many estates built by the Housing Commission of Victoria in the 1950s. The land had previously been a commercial plantation of Monterey pines (*Pinus radiata*) and the local secondary school is named Monterey Secondary College.

Pinewood

Pinewood, in the City of Monash, is located around the corner of Blackburn and Waverley Roads. It was developed from 1958 by A.V. Jennings as its fifth housing estate in Waverley. The name was derived from the pine trees which lined the driveway leading to an early farmhouse.

Sassafras

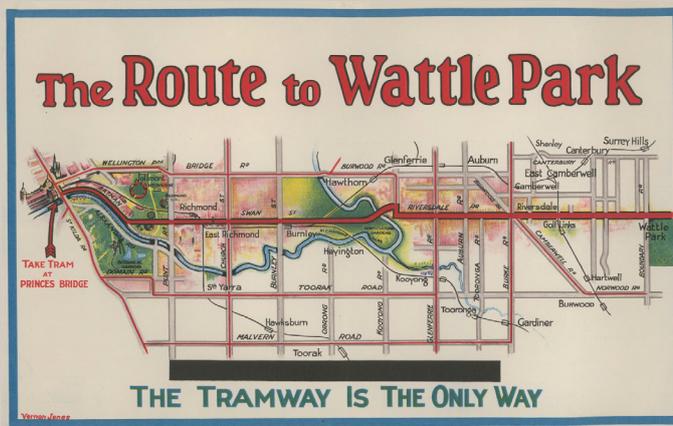
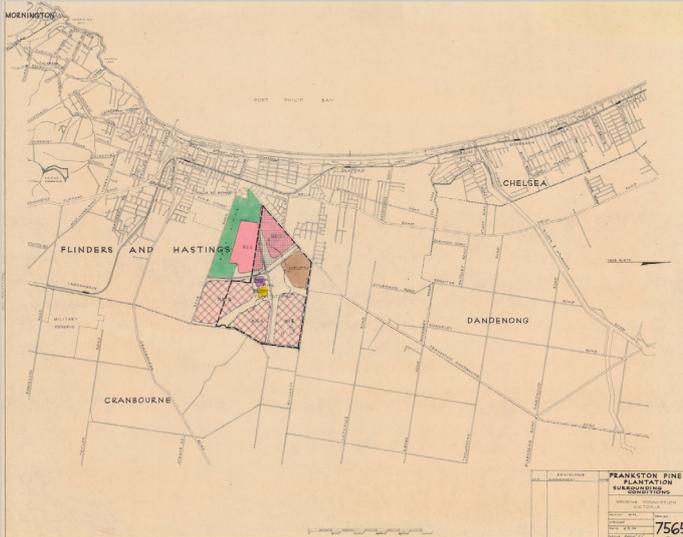
From early days the beauty of the "sassafras gully" in the Dandenongs was well known. The discovery of sassafras (*Atheroperma moschatum*) in that part of "the hills" was made by Ambrose Eyles, and immigrant chemist from England, and lessee of the 'Monbulk Run'. For verification he took some specimens to the curator of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens who confirmed that they were indeed sassafras. The name 'Sassafras Gully' was used for the post office established there by settler Arthur Goode about 1894 and remains the official postal name to this day. (see cover image)

Tecoma

Tecoma did not exist as a separate entity until 1924, when the provision of a railway station made a new name necessary for this early settled district. C.T. Alexander, who owned considerable land south of the proposed station, offered a prize of one guinea to the person who could suggest the most suitable name. Mrs J. Burke of Toorak won the prize.

Wattle Park

Although better known for the park itself than as a suburb, a justification for including Wattle Park as a suburban area is its inclusion in Melway's list of localities! There is also a Wattle Park Primary School, opened in 1914, and between 1962 and 1992 there was a Wattle Park High School. This large park is in Burwood within the City of Whitehorse. Approximately one third of the park is recorded as a heritage place by Heritage Victoria, and the National Trust has also classified the park. The park was first created when the Hawthorn Tramways Trust purchased 137 acres from Mrs Eliza Welch on condition that was used as a public park. The park opened on 31 March 1917 with the planting of a Golden Wattle by Sir Arthtur Stanley. In the period 1926-1928 12,000 wattle trees were planted.



Watsonia

There is a Watsonia plant, and this may have influenced the name, but the area is named Watsonia after Frank Watson. In 1924 he subdivided the areas for housing. To attract buyers Watson and fellow land-owners Jack Black and Wilkie Joules each contributed significant amounts and also lobbied local residents for contributions, and a railway station was built at a cost of £300.

Gerry Robinson
Heathmont History Group

Top left: Housing Commission, Victoria (1958) 'Frankston pine plantation surrounding conditions' State Library Victoria, https://find.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/61SLV_INST/1sev8ar/alma996901973607636

Top right: 'Shop at Pinewood' (undated) Blackburn Road. Photo courtesy of Phillip Mallis, Flickr <https://bit.ly/3Lrk8Mr>

Bottom left: Vernon Jones [c1930-1939] 'The route to Wattle Park - the tramway is the only way'. State Library Victoria, <https://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/214398>

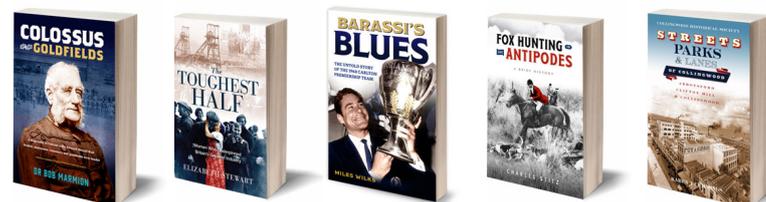
Bottom right: Soldiers from the Australian Victory Contingent with guns practising marching at Watsonia Camp [c1946] State Library Victoria <https://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/420760>

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HSSC: Hosting an RHSV seminar program

The RHSV's Historical Societies Support Committee has a number of roles but probably the most rewarding is the support it provides to historical societies, mainly but not exclusively in regional areas, to host seminar programs aimed at engaging with the many societies and their people in a region.

In the past 20 years seminar programs have been hosted at Yackandandah, Colac, Yallourn North, Bandiana Army Museum, Castlemaine, Beaufort, Kyneton, Horsham, Shepparton, Moe, Rutherglen, Narre Warren, Tatura, Euroa, Warragul, Warrnambool, Sale, St Arnaud, Yarram, Stawell, Birchip, Sorrento, Echuca, Kilmore, Bairnsdale, Ballarat, Nagambie, Morwell, Mortlake, Leongatha, Bendigo and Port Fairy. This roll call of host societies reflects the level of interest in history in regional areas but also the enthusiasm for historians at the local level to reach out to the broader historical communities.

How does hosting a seminar work?

Generally, the HSSC Chair reaches out to a number of historical societies to canvass the level of interest in hosting an event. Often there is concern at the local level that if a society is 'small' or has few active members the task is too daunting. This need not be the case as the HSSC provides a high level of support to the host society; communication is supportive and ongoing and the HSSC comprises people with extensive contacts and knowledge to support the development of a worthwhile program. Experience has shown that while there is much to be organised for these events to be a success and to attract attendees, the inherent organisational skills of historical society leadership 'kick in' and the organisation happens relatively quickly.



In more than twenty years of regional seminars, there has never been a 'bad' event — most host societies say it reinvigorated their group.



Once a society or group resolves at the committee level to host an event and a date is nominated, the other key decisions to be made are a venue, sometimes this can be a society's own rooms or perhaps a local hall, then the organising committee or leadership continues to liaise with the HSSC Chair to develop a program for the event. Currently these events are held on a Sunday with a local tour taking place on the Saturday afternoon followed by a dinner. The host society takes responsibility for organising and managing the local tour, often a walking tour, as well as the dinner arrangements and also organises catering for the Sunday program. The RHSV aims to compensate the host society financially for these outlays.



MAKING OURSELVES USEFUL
HISTORICAL SOCIETIES IN THE COMMUNITY

We all would like to think we are valued by our communities, in one way or another.

Join representatives from Shepparton, Kilmore, Daylesford, Benalla, Jeparit, and Bendigo as they share how they define being useful in their community, with real stories of successes and failures.

Sun 7 Sept 2025
9am-4.30pm

Shamrock Hotel
9-13 Williamson Street, Bendigo

Tickets \$33

This is an in-person only event.

Book online at www.historyvictoria.org.au

The Bendigo seminar was simply a triumph for all who attended.

The principal role of the HSSC is to support the organisers in sourcing presenters. This is made easier when the organisers have a sense of topics or themes they would like to include in the program: digitisation; staging exhibitions; engaging with First Nations groups; seeking grants; succession planning; fostering resilience; managing volunteers. There are, of course, many others.

Often, however, most groups don't need much support with this. There are always people at the local level who can present on worthwhile topics and so sometimes the HSSC needs to source only one or two presenters. We have found that most successful programs hold four presentations, or five shorter sessions, along with the all-important Forum at day's end which allows different themes to be addressed through questions and answers involving all attendees.

The guidance from the HSSC Chair is that the program should aim to offer attendees two or three 'how to' presentations and perhaps two sessions focussing more on local history themes. Of course, 'area' here relates more to a large regional area such as 'the Wimmera' or 'East Gippsland' rather than to a town or district because these events generally have a large catchment area; there may be thirty or forty historical societies in a region to which the program will appeal.

The host society need not worry about promoting the event. Once the program has been finalised by the organiser and the HSSC Chair, the RHSV handles everything else: ticketing; online

promotion; email communications with RHSV-affiliated societies and networks. The RHSV also provides the host society with updates on registrations and even provides gifts to presenters. The RHSV can also provide, if necessary, technical support such as a data projector and screen.

Let's look at a recent regional seminar hosted by the Bendigo Historical Society in September 2025. We aim for each seminar to have a theme and BHS selected 'Making ourselves useful: historical societies in the community'.

There were seven 30-minute presentations and a Forum at the end of the day. BHS took charge of developing the entire program through its extensive network. BHS also managed to keep the registration fee low through securing funding from the Bendigo City Council to stage the event. The keynote speaker was Fiona Kinsey, Senior Creator with Museums Victoria; other presenters were from the Bendigo Military Museum, Shepparton Heritage Centre, Benalla Historical Society and Costume Museum, Daylesford Historical Society, Kilmore Historical Society, the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum and Jeparit Historical Society and the City of Greater Bendigo's Heritage Collection Officer. The theme running through the presentations was 'achievements and hurdles', something which resonates with all historical societies. All presenters highlighted not only what they have been trying to achieve but some of the roadblocks to success as well. The main focusses were on collection management as well as working within the community, not as organisations separate from the community. The role of volunteers was another dimension to most presentations. The BHS-led event was, simply, a triumph for all who attended!

We are keen for other societies, associations or networks to 'put up their hand' to host a program in 2026 and beyond. Doing so may appear daunting but the level of support offered is high and the reality is that in some twenty years there has never been a 'bad' event and most host societies have reflected that doing this has reinvigorated their group and members.

Who will be next?

Craige Proctor,
Chair, HSSC
hssc@historyvictoria.org.au



Gippsland Presentation: Linda Barraclough

An icon of Gippsland's history network was honoured by RHSV at a gathering in Traralgon's historic Courthouse on Sunday 9 November 2025. Linda Barraclough was formally presented with her award, announced some time ago, as the first Associate Fellow of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, by Dr Judith Smart AM, FRHSV. Judith and Carole Woods OAM, FRHSV, both RHSV councillors, travelled to Gippsland especially to present the award to Linda who has been unable to make the journey to Melbourne to receive it.

The Courthouse, a heritage-listed building, was a fitting venue for the gathering. Linda has been a strong supporter of local community group Friends of the Traralgon Courthouse Inc. (FOTCH) who worked tirelessly for eight years to bring about the Courthouse restoration. Former president of the group, Jenny Hammett, spoke of Linda's unwavering support of local heritage projects and the significant impact Linda has had on the preservation, appreciation, and embracing of Gippsland's history by the broader community.

In making the presentation, Judith echoed Jenny's sentiments and outlined the specific projects Linda had undertaken working with historical societies and heritage associations throughout Gippsland. For over 30 years she has been increasing the knowledge of Gippsland's history through her publishing, writing, and establishment of social media platforms such as Gippsland History and Gippsland Genealogy. More recently Linda has worked actively with FOTCH to provide community access to significant private collections of written history and historical books through dispersal sales, with all funds going towards the restoration and development of the Courthouse precinct.

Surrounded by identities from Gippsland's historical and heritage societies, Linda, although not so well on the day, was able to enjoy the special occasion arranged to honour her contribution and achievements.

Jenny Hammett



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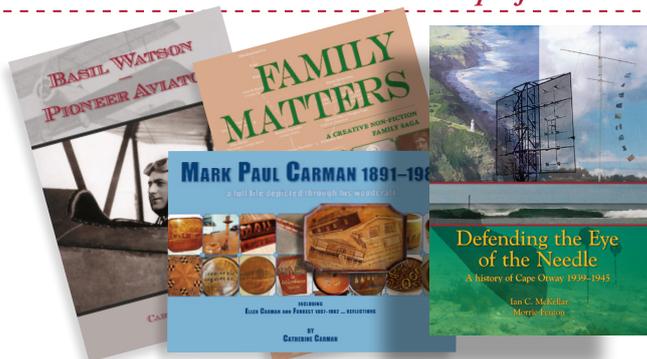
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Around the societies

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 April 2026 issue, please send details to office@historyvictoria.org.au by 24 February 2026.

CHELSEA AND DISTRICT: The Society is a local community organisation staffed by volunteers. We were established in 1963 to manage a collection of artefacts and photographs and with the aim of encouraging enthusiasm for local history, from Aspendale to Carrum including Aspendale Gardens, Chelsea Heights and Patterson Lakes. We are at The Chelsea Activity Hub, Showers Avenue, Chelsea. Open: Tuesdays 10am-1pm. We can be found on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1264258216996125/>



ESSENDON: The first 2026 monthly meeting will be on Tuesday 24 February with the launch of the 'Planes, Trains & Automobiles' exhibition with guest speaker Kath Feehan from Ryan's Buses. The Society's base is the Moonee Ponds Court House Museum at 768-770 Mount Alexander Road, on the corner of Kellaway Avenue. Our volunteers open the Museum every Sunday 2-5pm. You are welcome to peruse the exhibitions and ask questions of our expert volunteers.

esshissoc.org.au

FRIENDS OF ST KILDA CEMETERY: Talk: 'Ancient Mariners: Captains, Pilots and Steamship Owners' on Sunday 29 March 2026 at 2pm at St Kilda Cemetery, Dandenong Road, St Kilda East. Cost: Members free. \$10 non-members: includes afternoon tea. We meet at the Dandenong Road Gates at 2pm. Bookings required. Email foskcorp@gmail.com or phone Geoff on 0448 740 195. We go in all weathers, rain, hail or shine so please wear suitable clothing and footwear and bring an umbrella.

HASTINGS WESTERN PORT: Can you help with any of the following? Family histories: do you have any photos or family papers of interest that we could borrow to scan and file. It's good to keep in mind that what is happening now will be of historical value in the future. Newsletter contributions or suggestions: place in the Suggestions Box in the museum kitchen. Articles: short or long,

on local history. Used stamps: thank you for stamp donations, which Rotary sells to raise money for charity. Stamps need a good margin of envelope around to prevent damage. Damaged stamps or with pen marks or sticky tape across them have no value. Please, also place stamps in the Museum's Suggestions Box or post to HWPHS, 7 Marine Pde, Hastings, Vic. 3915. Volunteers: if you have talent or enthusiasm for gardening, maintenance, research, administration, or facilitating visits to the Museum, we will welcome your assistance.

hwphs.org.au



HAWTHORN: Join us for 'History and Wine', our first event of 2026, Thursday 19 February 5-7pm at The Kilburn bar, corner of Burwood Road and Glenferrie Road. The Kilburn, the former Commercial Bank, is a building with dark history. You will find out more on the day. Check our website for booking details and future events.

hawthornhistoricalsociety.com.au

HORSHAM: Guest speakers in 2026, on the second Wednesday of the month at 7pm: Wednesday 11 February Dave Lennon on 'Murtoa's Stick Shed'; Wednesday 11 March Bill Schmidt on 'Disability Employment'; Wednesday 8 April John Davies on 'Horsham Fire Brigade'. Join us at the Mechanics Institute Building, Society Room, 33 Pynsent Street Horsham.

horshamhistoricalsociety.org.au

KOO WEE RUP SWAMP: Meetings: second 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) 1.30-4pm, or by appointment.

facebook.com/kooweerupswamphistory

MALMSBURY: The restoration work of the iron entrance and memorial stone at Malmsbury Botanic Gardens is now completed and an unveiling ceremony was held on 28

November 2025 at the Gardens. The plaque honouring those from Malmsbury who made the ultimate sacrifice has been restored. Many of those named have descendants who still live in and close to our township. We will remember them. Our home is the Malmsbury Mechanics Institute located at 71 Mollison Street, Malmsbury. We are generally open on Friday mornings from 9am-12pm, except for school holidays. If you are planning a visit please let us know in advance so we can ensure that there is a volunteer present who is able to assist you.

cbyrnes101.wixsite.com/malmsbury-historical

MELBOURNE MARITIME HERITAGE NETWORK:

As 2026 begins we hope that you have enjoyed reading the MMHN updates during 2025. We aim to present information on an astonishing breadth of maritime heritage and other related maritime sector topics: past, present and future. Maritime enthusiasts and stakeholders support the work of MMHN through annual membership. If you have a particular interest in a stated MMHN objective or other maritime matter, please let us know. Visit our website for more information

mmhn.org.au

NILLUMBIK: 2026 Sunday events calendar: 22 March 'A History of Diamond Creek talk by Jean Verso; 17 May 'It's All Greek To Me' talk by Jan Bailey; 30 August 'Hurstbridge Wattle Festival'; 20th September Walk and Talk - Nillumbik Cemetery with Jean Verso; 29 November talk by Terry Phillips, please note this date is tentative.

nillumbikhistory.org.au



PORT MELBOURNE: Our exhibition on J Kitchens & Sons Pty Ltd is currently on display at the Port Phillip Heritage Centre at Emerald Hill Library, 195 Bank Street, South Melbourne. It is well worth a visit to see some of the labels, candles, soap and other products as well as some of the equipment used by the firm. Until 24 March.

pmhps.org.au/2025/12/nov-25-2025-mar-24-2026-j-kitchen-and-sons-1859-2013/



Heathmont History Group: Annual timeline

The Heathmont History Group has researched and produced a range of books, sometimes in collaboration with the Ringwood and District Historical Society, keeping the history of this region east of Melbourne alive:

Aringa Court (2007), *Banksia Court* (2007), *Mont Court* (2007), *Rawson Court* (2007), *Reumah Court* (2007), *Sheridan Court* (2007), *Treetop Court* (2007), *Burke and Hills: Canterbury Road Camberwell to Montrose* (2014), *Herman Pump Reserve: History and Photography* (2014), *H.E. Parker Reserve, Heathmont: History and Photography* (2015, 2018), *FJC Rogers Reserve: history and photography* (2016), *Wieland Reserve: History and Photography* (2017), *Heathmont Sketchbook: 2017* (2017), *Busch's Weir: the Private Weir on Dandenong Creek, Bayswater and Heathmont 1930s-1967* (2019), *Heathmont Street Names* (2020), *Heathmont's Olympians* (2021), *History of Bennett Avenue Heathmont 3135* (2023), *From Apples to a Second Coffee 2013-2024...* (2024)

At the end of each year, from the list developed over the past 12 months, we select four highlights for inclusion in our Heathmont Annual Timeline collection, which dates from the 1870s. For 2025, some of our highlights were: the closure of two shops, a change of Mayor, the alteration of our Federal electoral boundaries, the death of a prominent local resident. Also, on the list for consideration, were the construction of three new child-minding centres on Canterbury Road, the closure of the Uniting church, the success of Labor Party candidates in Deakin and Aston, the opening of our first Asian supermarket and the first premiership for the Heathmont Senior Women's football team. Deciding which highlights made our final four was a nice challenge.

For 2026 we expect a very obvious highlight will be the community centenary celebrations of the opening of the Heathmont Railway Station, 1 May 1926. Heathmont History Group meets each Tuesday morning.

Victorian Collections <https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/5c1835e46b785e0ebc9c776d>

Image courtesy of the Ringwood and District Historical Society.



The Adam Lindsay Gordon Commemorative Committee

The poet of Australia 1833-1870 who laid the foundations for literature and the arts. The grave of Adam Lindsay Gordon at Brighton General Cemetery has been renovated with five new plaques, the monument has been underpinned, and an adjacent information plaque has been installed. We really appreciate the generous support of the Vera Moore Foundation. The garden bed will be re-established as soon as possible. adamlindsaygordon.org



QUEENSLIFFE HISTORICAL MUSEUM: The museum is at 49-55 Hesse Street, Queenscliff. We are open daily from 11am-3pm. Free entry, and a small donation is welcomed. Follow our Facebook page, or visit our website to see upcoming events, talks and exhibitions.

facebook.com/queenscliffehistoricalmuseum



RICHMOND AND BURNLEY: We are planning the 2026 events and these will be on Saturday afternoons, rather than the Sundays in 2026. A newsletter will be out in late January and will provide the details of dates and times. Our website is also changing and will have the details of the events listed there. Thank you for your kind support and participation in our events in 2025. We look forward to seeing you at our events in 2026.

facebook.com/RichmondBurnleyHistoricalSociety



SURREY HILLS: We collect and preserve the history of Surrey Hills and Mont Albert in postcode 3127 for future generations and promote this to local communities. Regular

meetings with guest speakers are held on the third Tuesday of the month, from February to November, at the Maling Heritage Centre, 190A Canterbury Road, Canterbury. Regular meetings are free for members and \$5 for visitors. Contact Sue Barnett at shhistory3127@gmail.com We actively respond to research requests by appointment or in person, Mondays 10am-3pm (excluding public holidays) or Thursdays 10am-12 noon at the Maling Heritage Centre, phone 9969 2175. Our speakers at the 17 February meeting, are Helen Harris, OAM and Gary Presland, who will speak about the origin of street names in Mont Albert and Surrey Hills, as covered in their book *Street Wise: The Origins of Street Names in the Former City of Box Hill* (2025).

surreyhillshistoricalociety.org.au

YINNAR AND DISTRICT: The Historical Society and Museum group was formed in 1992. Meetings and the Museum are located in the old railway goods shed in Main Street Yinnar. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, and the museum is open on the first Sunday of each month or by appointment. Contact our secretary at yinnardhsm@gmail.com for more information.

yinnar.vic.au/shops/railway-goods-shed-museum/

WOADY YALOK: Visitor opening times at The Well, 19 Heales Street, Smythesdale. The Society is open to researchers 9am-3pm each Wednesday, except the first Wednesday of each month, when due to the commitments of members, we open from 1.30-3pm. The stables, lockup and gallows are open every third Saturday morning during the market except through winter months when only the stables are open. At all other times by appointment.

wyhs.org.au



Images courtesy of Dr David Smith imaginAction.

Windows on history: Lost and forgotten... almost

With so many churches sold, re-purposed and sometimes demolished, stained glass can be easily lost or forgotten, along with the long history of congregations and communities. Occasionally, a significant window survives, despite its removal from its original site and years in storage and neglect. One commemorative window, now located in the galleries at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance, has a remarkable survival story, only made possible by people who recognised its relevance at various stages of its long history and kept it safe over many decades.

The tall, three-light window was commissioned in 1903, and started its life about 150 kilometres north of Melbourne at St Paul's Anglican Church, Euroa, where it was installed as a tribute to Private John Charlton, who died from enteric fever during the Second Boer War.

John "Jack" Charlton (1878-1901) was the eldest son of Mary and Walter Charlton of Castle Creek near Euroa. Like many young bushmen around the Strathbogie district who were skilled horsemen and marksmen, Jack was keen to support the British fight in South Africa and volunteered early in the campaign, eventually enlisting in Victoria's Fifth Contingent. After training at the colonial military camp at Langwarrin, he sailed with around 1500 comrades on the *SS Orient*, arriving at Cape Town on 3 March 1901: a town already described as 'plague-ridden'.

News of Jack's illness and death was conveyed to the family by the Reverend Frederick Wray, vicar at St Paul's, Euroa, who knew the large

Charlton family well. He could also bring a personal perspective to the war as he too was hospitalised with enteric fever while serving as Chaplain-Major to the Victorian soldiers, returning home with several local men to a Castle Creek welcome celebration in July. St Paul's Euroa resolved to build a new enlarged chancel as a gift of thanksgiving for his safe return.

On 27 August 1901, the Reverend Wray led a sombre memorial service for Jack Charlton at the Castle Creek Hall. Despite a night of appalling wintry weather, returned soldiers, relatives and friends travelled by carriage, dray and horseback from across the district to mourn and to support the Charlton family.

Within weeks of his return home, Wray began giving illustrated lectures on his South African Boer War experiences, the first at the Chapter House next to St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne and at least 14 other venues listed in his 1901 diary. The Castle Creek Hall was the venue for 'Incidents of the War', one of Wray's popular and informative lantern slide lectures. All proceeds from those lectures are believed to have aided the memorial stained glass window fund in memory of Castle Creek's young trooper.

Officers who died in the Boer War were more likely to be remembered by a brass or marble tablet, wall-mounted in their local church but the new chancel under construction at Euroa, was a perfect opportunity for a stained glass window instead, and one of very few in memory of a trooper. It was a bold choice, as stained glass was a relatively new medium for commemoration and less than two dozen were installed across Australia after the Boer War, all of them in Anglican churches.



Melbourne firm, Brooks, Robinson & Co, ably designed and made the window, which was largely diamond-paned leadlight with a central burst of colour and light depicting the 'sword of faith', 'helmet of salvation' and 'sword of the spirit', part of the text from St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, as inscribed on the window.

The opening of the new chancel by Melbourne's Archdeacon William G Hindley on 13 January 1903 was preceded by the unveiling of the Charlton memorial window and witnessed by a large gathering from across the Strathbogies. Life expectancy for stained glass can stretch to centuries, but at Euroa it was cut short when the window was removed in 1929. Yet another new, larger chancel was under construction, designed by Louis R Williams, Melbourne's Diocesan architect. He replaced the large window opening with small slit-like openings set high above the altar, believing that stained glass should not be a distraction from the liturgy. However, the congregation did not forget Charlton, and a new single light window, *St Martin*, with the same inscription and text, was installed in the west wall of St Paul's, while the redundant window was carefully dismantled into sections, crated and stored under the new wooden chancel floor, where it remained for more than half a century.

It was not until the 1990s that a builder repairing the chancel steps discovered the large wooden crate. Once the window was identified (and that took a little digging into local memory) it began a long journey, passed from farm sheds to outbuildings across the district. Ending up back in church storage, it was donated to the Euroa Historical and Genealogical Society in the hope that it might once again be displayed.

Sadly, the expense of conservation and its 4.5 metre height made this impossible. After being 'saved' for so long, it seemed destined for the tip but was rescued again, thanks to the persistence of the Society's President, Jeff Sharkey, and two archaeologists, Maxine Boyd and Lynne Dore who immediately recognised its significance.

While Maxine found a temporary home in Caveat where the window could be laid out, cleaned and assessed, Lynne approached military and conservation specialists to join the Charlton Memorial Committee and then secured funding from the Victorian Government's 'Victoria Remembers' grant program for its restoration. With the expertise of Almond Glassworks, the meticulously conserved window was re-launched at Maygar's Winery, Longwood in 2016, before another serendipitous opportunity saw it unveiled at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance by Victoria's Governor, the Honorable Linda Dessau AC, the following year.

The Charlton window has been on permanent display at the Shrine ever since. Perfectly located at the junction of the Boer War and World War I galleries, it provides a segue between the colonial past and the so-called Great War of 1914-1918. Now, the South African War may be almost forgotten, but this window marks the moment when stained glass took its memorial place, not only by commemorating John "Jack" Charlton, but all Victorians who fought and died in the Second Boer War.

Dr Bronwyn Hughes OAM

Library collection: Melbourne Ragged Boys' Home and School

For volunteer Julie Bevan, it started with an 1800s photograph of a child in the middle of the street, selling newspapers. Then research on a photo of a café on La Trobe Street revealed the Ragged Boys Home was located nearby. She wrote the following text:

Although the name conjures Dickensian visions of large-eyed starvelings and thin gruel, the Ragged Home actually offered hope to those who otherwise had none.

The first Ragged School in Melbourne was started by Hester Hornbrook in Collingwood in 1859, and was modelled on the English Ragged School Movement which was intended to bring learning and salvation to the most destitute: deprivation and depravity being synonymous in the Victorian mind. The earliest Melbourne Ragged Schools emphasised religious teachings as the purpose of literacy, but by the time the La Trobe Street Ragged School opened in 1865, the approach had moved away from this to a model that favoured welfare over scripture. It started by providing breakfasts to children and sewing classes to women.

When William Minton became supervisor, he managed, to expand the services of the Ragged School to include the Ragged Boys' Home, which offered accommodation to homeless boys. The boys not only had a permanent home, they attended school and, from around 1910, had the opportunity to attend one of the first State High Schools, the Model School in Spring Street where the College of Surgeons now stands. Things improved further for the 'waifs and strays' in 1904 when Mr Minton acquired the Seaside Home at Frankston where some boys lived permanently and others were able to visit.

The Ragged Boys' School was an outward-looking institution that sought to advantage not just its own pupils, but the surrounding community. Boys and girls separately were able to attend a variety of classes ranging from athletics to juvenile choir, girls' sewing classes, Boys Brigade and even macramé.

The Ragged Boys' Home lads were well known for their annual Town Hall Concert, which also included girls who attended classes. The other highlight of the Ragged year was the annual picnic when local children would go to Sandringham or Mordialloc for an outing attended by up to 1,500 children.



Life in the Ragged system seems to have been rigid but not harsh, and to the community it served it offered advancement, aspiration, hope and longed for respectability. In truth it was a far cry from the imagined wraiths invoked in modern minds by its name.

As the synchronicity of this collection often works, in a set of ephemera donated by one of our councillors Michael Tonta, we found a single sheet of information and the photographs you see with this article. This had originally been printed in the *Northcote and Preston Times* in 1905.

For a more detailed discussion of the schools and their origins, it is worth reading Amber G Evangelista's "... From squalor and vice to virtue and knowledge ...": the rise of Melbourne's Ragged School system', in Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria, issue no. 14, 2015, available online on PROV.

On 9 September 1924 the Melbourne Ragged Boys' Home was closed and the service was transferred to Minton Boys Home in Frankston.

Julie Bevan
RHSV volunteer

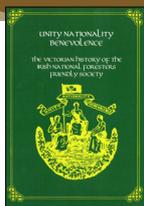


Books received

John Schauble

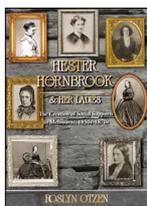
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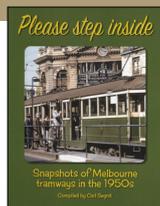
Unity, Nationality & Benevolence. James Nicholas, The author, Melbourne, 2025, pp.1-173, ISBN 9780646719665.

The Irish National Foresters Friendly Society (INF) was one of the largest of the almost forgotten friendly societies. These provided benefits such as health insurance, pensions, financial and social services and connections to groups often defined by religious, political or trade affiliations. Started in Ireland in 1877, it found root in Victoria in 1877 and then elsewhere in the colonies. Membership was defined by Irish origin, initially non-sectarian but eventually wholly Catholic. The INF in Victoria, through its lodges in the suburbs and towns, provided a focus for expatriate Irish through social gatherings and sporting events, along with medical and income services. The nationalisation of health services in the 1960s spelt the end of the friendly societies. By the early 2000s, the lodges disbanded. An interesting insight into an important social network now lost.



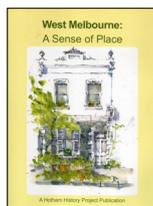
Hester Hornbrook and Her Ladies. Roslyn Otzen, Mono Unlimited, Ashburton, 2025, pp.iii-426, ISBN 9780648647669.

How precarious were the lives of so many in the early days of colonial Victoria. While the Australian colonies and the infant nation would eventually become leaders in the provision of basic social services, in earlier times it was every man and – in this case – woman for themselves. The gold rushes accelerated the suffering of aged, abandoned, disabled, ill or widowed women and their children. This was a time when there were few pensions and little formal social support. Hester Hornbrook, a founder of the Melbourne City Mission, pioneered assistance to women and children in particular. She achieved this with a small army of hitherto unrecognised women, and this is the story that Roslyn Otzen tells. Hornbrook's Mission continues its work to this day. A fascinating story.



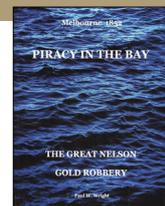
Please Step Inside. Gary Segnit, Caidex Communications, Burwood, 2025, pp.1-70, ISBN 9780909459291.

This slim volume takes its title from a sign on a W-class tram entreating passengers not to ride on the footboard or face a £5 penalty for doing so. Based on a collection of photographs and memorabilia purchased at the auction of a deceased estate, it provides “snapshots of Melbourne tramways in the 1950s”. This is a nostalgic ride for those who remember a time when the W-class trams were the height of modernity, albeit alternately sometimes a cold and draughty or hot and a bit whiffy modernity. There were other classes: SW, Q, T and Y among them. There were also three tram lines run by the Victorian Railways. Melbourne not only kept its trams but expanded the system, becoming one of the great tramway cities of the world. There is very little text here; the pictures tell the story.



West Melbourne: A Sense of Place. Hotham History Project Inc., North Melbourne, 2025, pp. i-255, ISBN 9780992297831.

West Melbourne is not a part of Melbourne that looms large in the imagination of many, other than those who have worked there or lived in the tiny enclave of housing that drops away from Flagstaff Gardens. Much of the postcode comprises docklands and industrial areas rising north from the Yarra River. In colonial times this was a wetland and lagoon that eventually became a swamp of the city's detritus and night soil. This anthology presents an overview of West Melbourne from pre-colonial times and the individual stories of some of those who have lived there in the intervening years. It also focuses on many early buildings, including Heffernan House the oldest pre-gold rush home still standing in the CBD. These well researched and curated stories comprise an important record.



Piracy in The Bay. Paul W. Wright, Inspiring Publishers, Calwell ACT, 2025, pp.1-130, ISBN 9781923250512.

With the Victorian gold rush in full flight in the early 1850s, it was inevitable that some sought to steal the precious stuff rather than dig for it. The Great *Nelson* Gold Robbery of 1852 was the most audacious crime in the history of the infant colony. Some 8,183 ounces of gold valued at £30,000 was taken when a gang of heavily armed thieves boarded the barque from two launches in Hobsons Bay. In modern terms the haul was a staggering \$35 million. Most of the gold was never recovered and while several of the raiders faced trial, with five convicted, the circumstances of the robbery have remained shrouded in mystery. This is perhaps not a definitive account but written by the great grandson of the ship's captain Walter Wright it sheds new light from different angles.



Line and Length: a History of the Geelong Cricket Club. Tony Joel and Matthew Turner, Slattery Books, [Geelong] 2023, pp. vi-738, ISBN 9780648621201.

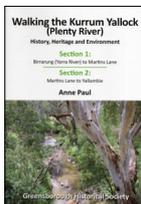
Who would have thought there was so much to say about a cricket club? Not even the authors when they embarked upon their history of the Geelong Cricket Club. Their focus was initially on its previous 30 years as a member of Victoria's premier league. That led to a deeper delve and the unveiling of a history stretching back to the 1840s ... and a book of more than 740 pages. This is a rich history and one promising more than just endless statistics (there are few relative to other club histories). It is an account that places the club in the context of the society and community around it. As might be expected from the pens of two academic historians, it is thoroughly researched, but also engagingly written. The GCC has produced many champions to Test team level. Strangely lacking an index.

Books received

John Schauble

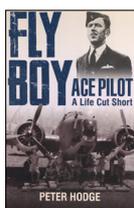
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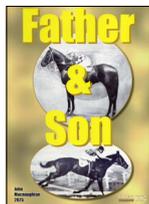
Walking the Kurrum Yallock (Plenty River). Anne Paul, Greensborough Historical Society, 2023, pp. 1-68, ISBN 9781922954441.

Melbourne has historically been unkind to its rivers, sometimes treating them almost with contempt – especially as their lower reaches headed into Port Phillip. The city's "third river" is a tributary of the Yarra, with a confluence near Rosanna. In more recent decades more care has been given, along with some restorative work done. The Plenty (or Kurrum Yallock to use its Woiwurrung name, meaning "muddy creek") has a "friends group" and some individual champions, among them Anne Paul who has led tours along its banks for many years. In a few short pages, this well-illustrated guide provides a wealth of pre-European and post settlement history which contains many keys to Melbourne old and more recent past.



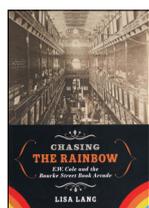
Fly Boy. Peter Hodge, Big Sky Publishing, Newport NSW, 2023, pp.1-146, ISBN 9781923300736.

Parker 'Joe' Hodge, like so many of his generation, lived a life of promise cut short by war. Born in Beechworth in 1913 and raised in Essendon, Joe was one of 14 children. His elder siblings had served in World War 1, but Joe determined on a different path by enlisting in the RAAF in 1935. Therein lies one of the more interesting parts of this story: an insight in to the formative years of the nation's air force. This story skilfully relies as much on the context of the historic events in which it occurred as on the individuals involved. Flight Lieutenant Joe Hodge would die when his Hudson bomber was shot down over the Netherland East Indies, not before ensuring most of his crew bailed out. Only one survived. This is a search for family lost, well told.



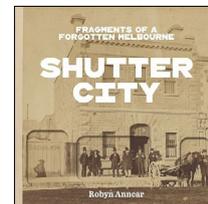
Father & Son. John Macnaughtan, The author, Summerton, 2025, pp. 1-104, ISBN 9780646719818.

Here is one for the aficionados. The father and son might be Solomon and Robert Green, bookmakers and racehorse breeders who with Norman Fraser Faulkner, sought to raise the standard of Australian thoroughbreds for the track in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. But the reference is actually to the most famous of their horses. One of these, Shadow King, raced six Melbourne Cups for two seconds, two thirds, a fourth and a fifth. Curiously, it is the father of this horse, Comedy King, which was the first European bred horse to win the Cup before siring multiple Melbourne Cup winners. If you are not interested in horse racing, there possibly isn't much here for you. But if you are, there's a tale to savour.



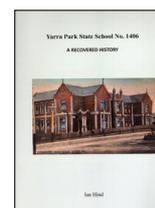
Chasing the Rainbow. Lisa Lang, Arcade Publications, Melbourne, 2024, pp.1-90, ISBN 9780980436709.

There have been a couple of recent studies of E.W. Cole, the eccentric 19th century Melbourne entrepreneur of book arcade fame. Perhaps it was the sheer fabulousness of his venture which has enthralled so many, even decades after it closed. Or perhaps it is memories of his *Coles Funny Picture Book* reproduced so many times, or the story of how he outrageously advertised in the newspaper for a wife (not so odd, perhaps, in an era of dating apps). Among famous visitors to the wonderous Coles arcade – at one time the largest bookstore in the world – were Rudyard Kipling and Mark Twain. This is another in the Arcade series of miniature tomes, reproductions of books long out of print. Lang's short biography first appeared in 2007.



Shutter City. Robyn Annear, Miegunyah Press, Carlton, 2025, pp.1-180, ISBN 9780522881776.

It seems Melbourne has been awash with books of early imagery in recent times (RHSV has made its contribution on that front), let alone the deluge that social media offers almost daily. So why another? Well, in the hands of Robyn Annear – an extraordinary interpreter of early Melbourne – this latest addition is no ordinary picture book. There are just 42 key images here, spanning the years 1856 to 1876. Annear has literally dissected them, zooming in on the extraordinary detail they contain to tell so much more than the individual photo might at first glance disclose. The possum rug seller, an early fire watchtower, early drinking fountains ... the signs, people and activity of a lost city you might never notice unless attention is drawn. The photographs are taken from three great public collections. This is magical stuff.



Yarra Park State School No.1406. Ian Hind, East Melbourne Historical Society, 2025, pp. i-233, ISBN 9781763558809.

These days Yarra Park State School on the corner of Punt Road and Wellington Parade has been repurposed as apartments. But this grand historic structure remains largely intact, one of the first schools built after the passage of the *Education Act 1872*. Serving most students from the other side of the road in working class Richmond, the school closed in 1987 as enrolments declined. Perhaps the school's most famous old boy was Sir John Monash. This is a detailed and extensive history of one of Melbourne's most important state schools. It will be of interest not just to those with a connection to the school itself, but with an interest in Victorian education history more broadly and the social history of the adjacent suburbs.