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CITY OF MOORABBIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Affiliated with the Royal Historical Society of Victoria

President

Mrs. C. Whitehead 93 2635 Laborate sent out exects obem ed of al boot solvines A

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Mrs. P. Brodie

Newsletter - June 1970

abloob laun broof spack yatemed and that the Country Roads Board aget decide The Society meets at the State School, Charman Road, Cheltenham Parace out of Tweede or expu eacted for Trans. And the following the file Next two meetings Thursday July 16th, on the 3rd Thursday in each month. 20th. Thursday August 20th. questioned the claim about

Save the Aboriginal Tree! Mis her,

The drivers of cars along the Nepean Highway between Devon Street and Evesham Road, Cheltenham are perhaps not aware that they are passing a silent piece of the past. This is the aboriginal tree, so-called by people interested in local history. It is a gum tree about forty feet high standing on rough ground between the centre of the Highway and the nature strips. We do not know how old it is but before the aboriginals disappeared from this area about eighty years ago it was large enough to have a canoe about four feet long cut from it by one of them. The evidence of this is clear on the side of the tree facing the centre of the road.

One might wonder why a canoe was cut from a tree which is so far from water. But in the early years of settlement in Cheltenham there was plenty of water there. A large swamp spread over the area. Josiah Holloway who in 1852 bought from the Crown 650 acres of land in Cheltenham is reported to have discussed the idea of draining the swamp by means of a canal. The swamp was popular with duck shooters. But it was a difficulty for travellers; the coach, coming from Melbourne along Pt. Nepean or Main Road, as it was then called, turned into Centre Dandenong Road to avoid it, then into Warrigal Road and so reached higher ground further south. Later when the swamp was drained many trees were doubtless removed. Fortunately this one was left.

After the First World War when trees were planted along the Highway in Moorabbin in memory of fallen soldiers this one received some