# TRIAL PROJECTS 2018

### **SEEDLINGS**

Members with green fingers are asked to kindly let a Committee Member know if you are willing to grow some herbs, flowers or veggies in small peat pots or seed trays — in your garden or on your window sill. The idea is that we donate the seedlings to BCM to sell on Open Days and help raise funds as well as reflect our market gardening heritage.



# MINIATURE FAERY GARDEN

The Fitzroy Gardens has Ola Cohn's Fairy Tree. The Royal Botanic Gardens introduced a Fairy Trail in 2015. There's fairy floss



available at Luna Park, and Rotary puts on a Fairy and Gnome Festival each year at Mordialloc. This year, Box Cottage Ormond trials a DIY *miniature faery garden* in its grounds for small and big kids. If you could add any miniature faery

accessories or plants, please email moorabbinhs@gmail.com.

# INFORMAL SOCIAL CIRCLE

Members who would like to occasionally attend local live theatre performances and exhibition openings with other CMHS members, or explore different heritage centres and museums, or visit historic churches and hotels, please email moorabbinhs@gmail.com.

Newsletter Team Frances Bader, Geoffrey Paterson.

Hard copies kindly reproduced by the office of Tim Wilson MP for Goldstein

# Morrabbin

Newsletter Box Cottage Museum (BCM) operated by the City of Moorabbin Historical Society (CMHS) Inc. A0020547E

# **2018 GREETINGS**

Welcome to the slightly revamped thirteenth issue of the *Moorabbin Mirror*, and thank you to Phil Rickard (pp.8 and 9) and Helen Stanley (p.11) for contributing articles.

The publication team wishes all CMHS members and friends a happy and healthy 2018 and looks forward to your feedback. We want you to let us know the topics you would like to see covered in future issues. Better still, contribute an article on the architectural heritage of your residence or some other subject connected with our area.

# FIRST OPEN DAY 2018

All CMHS members and friends are urged to attend our next informal general members' meeting at 1PM — prior to Open Day, 25 February.

Do come along and meet others who are really interested in the social history and community heritage of our local area. We can all help initiate steps that will enable our society to continue — beyond CMHS' Diamond Jubilee coming up in 2020.

#### ISSUE 13, FEBRUARY 2018



Image Mario Mirabile 2015

**'Box Cottage Museum'** 

# SUNDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2018 INFORMAL MEMBERS' MEETING

1-2PM

INCLUDES A TALK BY CAROL POOLE

GROWING UP IN MCKINNON DURING THE 1950s

2–4PM SUNDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2018 MUSEUM OPEN DAY 2

# BOX COTTAGE MUSEUM (BCM) OPERATED BY CITY OF MOORABBIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC (CMHS)

#### 2017–2018 CMHS COMMITTEE

President F. Bader
Vice-President D. Poole
Secretary-Treasurer C. Poole
Committee D. Moore, J. Moore
three vacancies

**Email** 

moorabbinhhs@gmail.com Phone/message Carol 9579 4467 Fran 9557 9465

Websites

http://home.vicnet.net.au/~cmhsbcm/

Victorian Collections Website https://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/box-cottage-museum

#### **COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEETINGS**

Committee meetings are held as necessary to manage the business affairs of the society. All members are welcome to attend these meetings which are held in the Grace Lewis Room. For dates, times or to submit a proposal or receive an agenda, please contact moorabbinhs@gmail.com.

In addition to Committee roles, members may take on other responsibilities, e.g. help catalogue museum acquisitions, act as a museum guide, and organise heritage events.

## **CMHS MATTERS**

#### CONGRATULATIONS

CMHS congratulates Mario Mirabile (Miralight Imaging) who very kindly photographs CMHS collection items for uploading to Victorian Collections website. Mario was awarded first prize in Week 4 of the recent Herald Sun I Am Summer photo competition with his entry, 'First Light at Cairn Curran'.

#### **GECC HISTORY & HERITAGE**

Rosemary Handscombe is Glen Eira's new History and Heritage Coordinator. She took up the position in October 2017. Rosemary was former manager of Museums Australia (Victoria), Museums Accreditation Programme. She took over from GECC's History and Heritage consultant Cameron Auty who was appointed manager of the Burke [O'Hara Burke] Museum at Beechworth.

CMHS Committee wishes Rosemary every success in her new role and looks forward to working with her in promoting Glen Eira's history and heritage.

#### **MEMEBERS' GENERAL MEETINGS**

Prior to open days on the last Sunday of February to November, CMHS members meet informally from 1–2pm in the Grace Lewis Room.

Should a member be willing to present a talk or read an article about our history or heritage for about 15–30 minutes during these informal meetings, please contact CMHS to arrange a date. Suggested topics may be: a not so well-known local settler; one's own house; a local heritage house; a vintage object, photo, or favourite history book.

## STREET FILES

by Helen Stanley

#### HIGGINS ROAD

Higgins Road, Bentleigh, formerly Brighton East, is named after the Higgins family, farmers, market gardeners and dairymen, who owned land in the area.

James John Clarke (J.J.C.) Higgins¹ (1850–1930) moved to East Brighton in 1873 when he married Ruth Simmonds (1852–1923) at the Methodist Church, 531 Centre Road. J.J.C. and Ruth Higgins lived on Jasper Road near the comer of Centre Road for the rest of their lives and had a family of eight children.

Their sixth child, Herbert John Higgins, known as 'Herb', was born in 1886. From the time Herb was married in 1913 to Victoria Matilda Long, known as 'Queenie'2, he was renting a property on Jasper Rd and working as a dairyman and farmer. Queenie and Herb would have five children.

Herb Higgins bought land on Jasper Rd in 1921. Metropolitan Board of Works plan 3220, Municipality of Moorabbin, shows that in 1928, Higgins Road was planned, and probably built soon after. Many years later, Herb sold the property in lots, some privately, others to the Shire of Moorabbin. Some lots became part of Hodgson Reserve and another lot, the Bentleigh Bowling Club. Dorothy Ruth, their youngest daughter, who passed away in December 2016, was the last member of the pioneering Higgins family residing on part of Herb's original property in Jasper Road.

- J.J.C. Higgins was a son of James Joseph Higgins, born Dublin, Ireland in 1821. He emigrated via Liverpool with his wife Ellen, and baby daughter Margarete, on the SS Intrinsic in 1841.
- <sup>2</sup> Queenie was the daughter of Charles John Long and Annie Matilda Allnutt. Queenie's mother was Helen Stanley's great aunt, her grandmother's sister.

More information and images were kindly contributed by Ron Higgins and Helen Stanley and may be viewed at Box Cottage Museum.

#### MYRTLE STREET

Myrtle Street was named for Myrtle Higgins, born 1908, daughter of dairyman, Albert William Higgins (1876–1966) (Victoria's Death Register shows he died at Trafalgar) and Mabel Maria Higgins, (1879–1946) née Bent. Mabel Maria Higgins was the daughter of George Bent, brother of Thomas Bent.

Albert W. Higgins was the second of five sons and three daughters born to James John Clarke (J.J.C.) Higgins (1850–1930), and Ruth Higgins née Simmonds, (1852–1923). (Refer Column 1, paragraph 2)

The Bentleigh Dairy was located at the corner of Myrtle and Centre Road, Bentleigh. At the back of the home there was a bricked dairy yard with refrigeration plus stables for the horses. On the opposite side of Myrtle Street were paddocks for some way, and this is where the dairy horses were kept. The horses were all half or quarter bred Clydesdales or similar heavy breeds. In the late afternoon, a rough gate in the paddock was opened and the horses would walk/trot across by themselves into their stables — to be fed and made ready for the night deliveries.



Image: courtesy Helen Stanley
The old original weatherboard home and dairy signage which faced Centre Road with Myrtle Street running north.

# HONOUR FOR KINGSTON HISTORIAN

#### DR GRAHAM WHITEHEAD

Transcribed from http://www.kingston.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Media/Media-Releases/Graham-Whitehead-award On 2 December 2017 Kingston Council paid

tribute to City Historian Dr Graham Whitehead who has dedicated 20 years of service to celebrating the area's rich history. Kingston Mayor Steve Staikos formally thanked Dr Whitehead and presented him with a certificate of appreciation at the 12 December Council meeting.

"For the past 20 years Graham has shared his great passion and talent for local history with our community to ensure our rich past is celebrated and remembered," Cr Staikos said.

"We thank him for helping to bring Kingston's past to life and keeping these important stories of days gone by fresh in our memories."

Dr Whitehead was appointed as City Historian in October 1997 following his retirement from the Department of Education and brought a strong background in research and project management to the role.

"His achievements have included the launch of Kingston's Historical Website – a collection of over 650 articles and numerous photographs capturing Kingston's long and colourful past," Cr Staikos said.

"Dr Whitehead has also written a number of books on Kingston's history, and managed a Narratives project that many local residents participated in."

"He has made an incredible contribution to the Kingston community, working closely with the area's historical societies to showcase our history."

View the Kingston historical website at http://localhistory.kingston.vic.gov.au/home.htm

# LOCAL HERITAGE

#### ARCHITECTURAL HOMEWORK

As we are all aware, more and more local dwellings and premises are being demolished or remodeled.

Members are requested to let a Committee Member know if you are willing to help document and photograph the architectural heritage of your own street or nearby streets.

#### WHAT HOUSE IS THAT

Take a look at Attachment 2, What House is That — copy of a booklet that was onforwarded to BCM late last year by GECC History & Heritage Officer, Elle Credlin.

#### SANDS & McDougall

Thanks to Jason Brack, Team Leader, Monash City Council Library, who let us know that the State Library of Victoria has digitised one in every five Sands & McDougall Directories between 1860 to 1974.

The Directories are a vital source for everyone researching the history of Victorian properties, businesses, industries, residents, and streets. They are indexed and divided into sections by location, name, trade and may be accessed for free.

Copies of the actual Directories may be viewed in the State Library's display, *The Changing Face of Victoria* alongside photographs that take us behind the scenes to show how the Directories were made.

#### BENTLEIGH SANDS & McDougall

CMHS' Collection holds three handwritten volumes containing local names with Bentleigh addresses — transcribed by hand from Sands & McDougall directories. These volumes were kindly donated to CMHS by Alan Clarke in 2016 and may be viewed in the Grace Lewis Room

# VALE LAURIE LEWIS 25 DECEMBER 2017 R I P

Even if one never met him personally, nearly everyone in Ormond and probably further afield knew of timber specialist, Mr Laurie (Laurence George) Lewis, who passed away on 25 December 2017. Those of us who were into building extensions or period home renovations would almost certainly have visited his timber warehouse on Jasper Road, and possibly encountered one of South Glen Eira's most unforgettable, some say, mercurial characters.

His business, Lewis Timber Pty Ltd, founded by his grandfather, Abraham Lewis in Glen Huntly during 1905, has been in Ormond since the 1920/30s. And, unlike some other business people, Laurie Lewis maintained an enduring interest in preserving our local heritage as well as CMHS. His funeral service, held 4 January 2018, was attended by CMHS members Fran, Carol, Daryl and Frank.

Laurie Lewis appreciated the significance and potential of a rundown *circa* 1850s cottage on the property he purchased from the Rietman family in 1970. Along with CMHS members and others, he successfully persuaded Moorabbin City Council to have the cottage dismantled and salvaged, relocated and re-erected nearby as part of Victoria's 150th Anniversary in 1984.

The cost of the rebuild, about 250 metres



Laurie Lewis
Maynard, D., Bader, F.,
The Story of Box
Cottage booklet,
funded by GECC 2015

from its original site, was met by Victoria's 150th Committee, a small grant from the City of Moorabbin, and by Laurie Lewis. He donated the timber needed for the reconstruction — thereby providing CMHS with a much-needed home base.

BOX COTTAGE - 1850 - RE-ERECTED - 1984

OFFICIALLY OPENED ON 18 NOVEMBER 1984
TO PERPETUATE THE EARLY SETTLERS

RE-ERECTED BY THE CITY OF MOORABBIN
IN CONJUNCTION WITH VICTORIA'S
ISOTH ANNIVERSARY BOARD

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTSA LEWIS AND COMPANY,
FOR PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION.
CITY OF MOORABBIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BUILDERS - MOODY AND SMITH.

## **ANNIVERSARIES 2018**

#### FIRST AUSTRALIA DAY 1818

Having accepted Matthew Flinders' suggestion to name our continent 'Australia', Lachlan Macquarie, the fifth Governor of New South Wales (1810–1821), decreed 26 January 1818 as the very first 'Australia Day'. The date marked the thirtieth anniversary of Captain



Arthur Phillip's raising the Union Jack at Port Jackson after an epic voyage of over 20,000 kilometres.

Captain Arthur Phillip (1718–1814) had successfully led a fleet of eleven sailing ships containing 323 officers and ships' crew, 245 marine guards, 27 marines' wives,

14 marines' children, 543 male convicts, 189 female convicts and 14 children of convicts [exact numbers unverified].



Governor Macquarie (1762–1824) who was born in the Inner Hebridean isle of Ulva, is known as the 'Father of Australia'. He was unusual in that he believed in a *fair go* and second chances for emancipated and/or pardoned convicts — provided they



cooperated with his progressive vision for the development of the colony. He also attempted to integrate both convicts and original inhabitants into colonial society.

Such behaviour put him at odds with prevailing official British government attitudes. In 1819, they dispatched Commissioner John Thomas Bigge to investigate Macquarie's administration of the colony as well as criticisms that transportation was failing to generate enough 'salutary terror'. (Clark, C.M.H., *A History of Australia*, 1981, Reprinted 1985, Melbourne University Press, Vol.1, p.334. [Images above reproduced from Wikipedia.]

#### ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL 1858

One hundred and sixty years ago in 1858, the foundation stone for St Patrick's Cathedral East Melbourne, was laid by Augustinian friar, James Alipius Goold, the cosmopolitan Catholic bishop of the Melbourne diocese, (1848–1886, archbishop from 1874). In later life, while residing in Were Street, Brighton,



assassination attempt wood engraving by David Syme and Co., September 2, 1882. Illustrated Australian News. NLA. Libraries Australia ID 49350025.

Goold (1812–1886), survived an assassination attempt by solicitor P.A.C. O'Farrell in 1882. The would be assassin had owned/leased land near Boundary Road, former East Brighton, during the early 1850s.

# **Human Rights 1948**

Seventy years ago, the milestone Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 (General Assembly resolution 217A).

## CENSUS, VICTORIA 2016

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Census, held 9 August 2016, counted 5,926,624 usual residents of Victoria. These included a total of 47,788 (0.8% population) having Aboriginal/ Torres Strait Islander origins. 44.1% of Victorians had both parents born in Australia and 38.5% had both parents born overseas. More than one in four Victorian residents (28%) were born overseas. On Census night, 12.6% of employed people used public transport to get to work and 68.3% used a car (either as driver or passenger). 19.2% of people did voluntary work through an organisation or group.

Source: www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\_services/ getproduct/census/2016/guickstat/036

# PLATEWAYS AROUND MELBOURNE (continued from p.8)

Rickard, P

#### POINT NEPEAN ROAD

Construction started towards the year's end on the formation, almost three kilometres long, by well-known contractor David Munro and Company. The actual plates, 1148 of them, arrived from England in late January 1885. The line was opened on the 23 March with some fanfare. Cost of construction was £2408 per mile — a figure that would be reduced on subsequent lines. Only a single-line track was laid, on the eastern side of the existing roadway, commencing from the municipality's northern boundary at Glen Huntly Road, Elsternwick, and heading south, probably to Union Street. This first stretch proved successful and soon the surrounding councils were emulating Brighton, which also extended its own line further southwards. Some 6½ kilometres of Point Nepean Road was in the Brighton municipality or jointly shared with neighbouring councils. Within a short period the plateway had been extended the full distance to Brighton's south-eastern corner, at South Road, South Brighton (today's Moorabbin)...

#### **CENTRE ROAD AND OTHERS**

In Moorabbin that shire raised a loan in mid-1885 which included £3800 for its Point Nepean Road plateway and £1425 for the Centre Road plateway. In August 1885, tenders were called for 240 tons of 'tram plates' with the condition that they 'must be rolled in the colony'. Council must have quickly realised the impossibility of this, calling new tenders a month later. The following February, with the plates to hand, tenders were called for the construction of 122 chains of plateway on Point Nepean Road. The Centre Road works, initially isolated from the Point Nepean Road system, started from the Brighton/Moorabbin boundary at Thomas Street. Heading eastward along Centre Road, the line crossed the Mordialloc railway at East Brighton (today's Bentleigh) station. Continuing over Jasper Road, it reached East Boundary Road in 1890. A further eastward extension to McGuiness Road is thought to have been made the following year. By this time around £6000 had been expended on almost five kilometres of steel tram in Centre Road. The Town of Brighton finally built the missing 400 metres, possibly in 1893, to connect the Centre Road line to the Point Nepean Road line.

Further south, in 1890–91, the Moorabbin council was extending the Point Nepean Road line from South Road to Centre Dandenong Road (Cheltenham), a distance in excess of 4½ kilometres. The period 1885 to 1893 was the 'plateway boom' on the sand belt — a period that ended with the deepening of the 1890s depression. In the early 1890s South Road (about a kilometre), Cheltenham Road (Wickham Road East from 1915, about 1½ kilometres) and probably Cummins Road (500m) all received steel plateways. Plans were also made to lay a plateway at the northern end of Bluff Road but were rebuffed by ratepayers. Fragmentary snippets also suggest that North Road, which was the boundary road between Moorabbin and Caulfield Shires, received a short stretch of plateway. In 1889 Moorabbin approached its northern neighbour to jointly construct about half-a-mile of plateway along North Road at "Reid's Hill" (exact location unknown). Caulfield declined to assist but despite this it seems Moorabbin may have proceeded alone as several council resolutions refer to providing road metal for the 'North Road tram'... By 1896 the Moorabbin Shire had 107 miles of normal metalled roads in various conditions of which just over ten miles of the heaviest trafficked roads had a plateway on which some £19,000 had been expended. It was also in considerable debt — the Depression had slashed property valuations...

The entire Plateways Around Melbourne article with images may be purchased from www.lrrsa.org.au

# PLATEWAYS AROUND MELBOURNE

Rickard, P., Plateways Around Melbourne. Part 1—Sarah Sands to the Sand Belt, *Light Railways* Magazine No. 258 December 2017, pp.3–15.

Extract reprinted with kind permission of Phil Rickard.

The entire article, images and sources may be purchased online from www.lrrsa.org.au

#### POINT NEPEAN ROAD SYSTEM

As well as the increase in brick traffic on the Sydney Road, the rapid expansion of Melbourne in the 1870s and 1880s also caused growing pains to the south of the Yarra River. There, the demise of market gardens close to the city was evident as the suburbs started their inexorable sprawl. Yet, conversely, with the population rapidly growing there was an urgent need for more market gardens. Lying some 15 to 25 kilometres south-east of the city is a large, flat to gently undulating area characterised by deep soils of a sandy loam nature. In the 1830s it was considered as 'the wastelands' but by the mid-1840s supported some pastoral, agricultural and viticultural pursuits — albeit on the areas closer to Melbourne, like Brighton! By the 1930s it was being referred to as 'the sand belt', a name that has stuck to this day. In the 1880s this area fell largely within the Shire of Moorabbin — formed in 1871 from the old Moorabbin Roads Board — and soon to become home to vast acreages of market gardens, poultry farms and small holdings.

The shire's primitive roads were not equipped for the movement of market drays, being dusty in summer, muddy in winter and invariably deeply rutted. The traffic was not all heavy dray-loads of vegetables heading north to the City markets — heading south every night were increasing numbers of horse-drawn wagons heavily loaded with iron tanks containing night-soil. Most of this traffic was along the Point Nepean Road which traversed several municipalities including St Kilda, Brighton and Caulfield before reaching Moorabbin. The colonial government gave little assistance for roads apart from occasional special grants — local shires were expected to maintain roads from local rates, a near impossible task, made harder following the abolition of toll gates. The success of the Melbourne City Council's iron plateway along Sydney Road did not go unnoticed and soon led the four councils to propose that such a solution would also work on their much abused outer suburban and semi-rural roads. Ultimately this led to the largest system of such plateways in Australia, extending alongside some 24 km of 'roads' through the sand belt.

#### POINT NEPEAN ROAD

Along its route from Melbourne to Moorabbin the Point Nepean Road undergoes several name changes. Known generally today as the Nepean Highway, in the 1880s it was, successively from the city, St Kilda Road, High Street, Brighton Road, Arthur's Seat Road and Point Nepean Road. In early 1883 the Moorabbin Shire requested other councils along the road to join with it and build a plateway similar to that on Sydney Road, each council to construct the section within its own boundary. The first section to come to fruition was that passing through the Brighton municipality. During 1884 planning by that shire for a steel (rather than iron) plateway commenced. Active lobbying of the government by the Brighton mayor (Thomas Bent), resulted in Brighton securing a government grant of £800 to supplement the funds from a municipal loan it had raised. In late July 1884, tenders were called by Brighton for 200 tons of tram plates for the first section of line along the Brighton Road in the suburbs of Elsternwick and Brighton.

On request, a copy of Light Railways, Issue 258, may be read in the Grace Lewis Room.

# CMHS @ BCM

#### **OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE REPORT 2017**

CMHS Members were formally thanked by Open House Melbourne (OHM) for supporting their 10th Anniversary program — by acting as building hosts Saturday and Sunday, 30–31 July 2017.

OHM's media campaign generated a reach of 16,569,012. Public relations value exceeded \$8 million, and 157,548 visitors accessed the OHM website from 1 January to 28 August 2017 with 85,748 visits recorded overall. The number of visitors to Box Cottage over the two OHM days were 166 in 2017 with 243 in 2016.

#### **APOLOGY**

Moorabbin Mirror apologises to Kerry whose name was inadvertently omitted from the list of OHM Melbourne volunteers in the hardcopy of Issue 12.

#### SAND BELT QUERY

CMHS Members are asked to let us know if you have any information as to who is reputed to have first used the term 'sand belt' to describe our region, and when?

Phil Rickard, author of 'Plateways Around Melbourne'<sup>1</sup> (refer pp.8–9), believes that Mr J.M. Dillon, *Sporting Globe* golf journalist, with, if not coining the term, spreading its use<sup>2</sup>.

1 Lght Railways Magazine, December 2017, published by the Light Railway Research Society of Australia (LRRSA) 2 Sporting Globe, 2 June 1928.

#### REID'S HILL

Should someone be able to pinpoint the exact location of "Reid's Hill" in North Road, please contact CMHS.

#### FLOODING

A huge thank you to Daryl and Carol Poole who checked the Box Cottage Museum during the end-of-year break and found the grounds between the Cottage and Grace Lewis Room 'like a mini-swamp'.

Carol and Daryl proceeded to dig out a narrow trench to release the water which fortunately had not flooded the Museum or the Grace Lewis Room. GECC Buildings and Properties Department told them later that the flooding was caused by a leak in the Bowling Club's large water tank.

CMHS is most grateful to Carol, Daryl and David for all the extra hours of volunteer work they put into alleviating the problem, and thanks GECC's Buildings and Properties Department for fixing it.

As of early February the mature tree next to the Grace Lewis Room is dying and the roses have black spot due to the extra amount of moisture.

#### **AUGUST RIETMAN EXHIBITION**

Around forty guests attended the launch of BCM's exhibition, titled August Rietman, Unknown Stone Carver, on 18th October 2017. As this was the first time August Rietman's WW1 memorial works were shown as a cohesive exhibition, it was a significant moment for Box Cottage Museum and for August's descendants, some of whom were in attendance. (Images of the launch may be viewed on pp.6–7.)

The exhibition was open to the public on 15, 28 and 29 October and 26 November. A scaled back version may be viewed from 2–4pm, Sunday 25 February.

# **RIETMAN EXHIBITION LAUNCH 18 OCTOBER 2017**



Left to right: Carol Poole, Frances Bader, Cr Jamie Hyams delivers the opening address, 18 October 2017.



Above: August Rietman's descendants at the launch of *August Rietman, Unknown Marble Car*ver, Ormond 1917–1951.







**Above:** Kitty Owens, Museums Australia (Victoria) Roving Curator.

**Above Left:** Marble offcuts donated by James McAuley, current WW1 Memorial Restorer.

Left: Frank Thatcher, Joan Moore.

Below: Special guests.

