

PO.Box 137, Eltham 3095

NEWSLETTER

JULY, 1978

Next Meeting

The subject of bottle collecting is one which fascinates many people with historical interests. To some it represents a major interest involving significant historical research to determine likely locations for searching. An inveterate local collector is Ron Stoneman who regularly spends his weekends searching all over Victoria and beyond for further items for his collection. At the July meeting Ron will speak on the subject of bottle collecting and display some of his extensive collection. The meeting is at 8 p.m. on Wednesday 12th July in the War Memorial Hall, 905 Main Road, Eltham.

Kangaroo Ground Presbyterian Church

The Centenary of the building of this church was celebrated on 11th June, 1978 and the society has received a copy of the booklet produced by the Church for the occasion. The origins of the church are somewhat complex and the Centenary of the formal constitution of the church was celebrated in 1957. Earlier church services were conducted from the early 1840's and a slab building erected in 1851 served as church and school until erection of the present church in 1878. The Church of handmade bricks with a slate roof, forms an integral part of the trio of remaining early buildings in the Kangaroo Ground township. The others are the older part of the school (1873) and the store (1865). The other nearby public Buildings, now disappeared included Stevenson's Hall, the Kangaroo Ground Hotel and the Shire of Eltham Offices, originally the offices of the Evelyn Observer.

Research Notes

A further 141 pages of historical research notes have been received from Mr. K. Chappel, bringing the total received to 425 pages. Mr. Chappel's research has been mainly in the area of government department records concerning the Shire of Eltham, and in particular details of early crown grants in the shire, from the records of the Department of Crown Lands and Survey. The latest notes include details of grants in the crown township of Eltham and surrounding areas of the Parish of Millumbik, extending from Lower Plenty to Diamond Creek. Earlier pages of these notes have now been copied and are available for loan to members. There is a comprehensive index. The Committee has decided that in continuation of a decision made last year, Mr. Chappel should be granted honorary membership of the society for this year.

Henry Dendy

The last Newsletter contained an item on the opening of the Eltham Community Centre which referred to the ownership of part of the site of this building by Henry Dendy. Information was obtained in part from the book "Henry Dendy and his Emigrants" by L.A. Schumer. Mr. Schumer is at present overseas searching for additional information on Dendy. One area of enquiry is apparently the possibility of the naming by Dendy of St. Margaret's Church, Eltham, after a church he founded in England. The Society's Committee has agreed to request the Council to commemorate Dendy's important standing in the Eltham community of the 1850's and 60's. Possibilities are the renaming of Pitt Street west of Main Road to Dendy Street or the naming of the parkland below the Community Centre after him.

May Meeting - Tour of Historic Buildings etc.

The May meeting and the associated Society tour on 21st May, both suffered from a small attendance. The proposed itinerary covering an area extending from Lower Plenty to Kangaroo Ground proved too ambitious for a half day tour. The excursion visited historic buildings and sites generally along the line of Main Road and Old Eltham Road between Lower Plenty and Dalton St. Eltham. The balance will have to wait for another day (or days). Notes prepared for this excursion are available to members wishing to examine this area themselves.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions for this year are now overdue. 1978 membership cards have been forwarded to financial members. Do you have your card? Subscriptions are: Adult \$3.00 Student \$1.00 Family or Group \$ 5.00

The Importance of Old Papers.

The Society has recently received two sets of old papers saved from consignment to the incinerator. One set came from a thoughtful owner, the other from some diligent enquiries by our President. The subject matter varies from records of the Eltham War Memorial Trust to some early comments on Healesville (from the family of a former editor of the Healesville Guardian). Members should be continually vigilant for old documents in danger of being destroyed. Of course all old documents are not valuable but many items which are considered useless by their owners may provide important historical information.

The Society is more than happy to examine any papers for which the owners have no further use, with a view to preserving any of significance.

Eltham Court House.

The Eltham Court House has been classified by the National Trust. The citation states that it is an example of the simple form of early brick courthouse with gabled roof and porch. A court was first established in Eltham in 1858 and the present building dates from 1860. It is the oldest public building remaining in Eltham. In its early days the building was used as a meeting place and office of the Eltham District Road Board and as an overflow classroom for the local school.

Eltham Community Festival.

This year's festival will be held between August 4th and 12th. Major activity will be centred on the first weekend. It is intended that the Society be involved in two ways.

- (1) Promotion of a walking tour of historic buildings around Eltham. Notes will be provided for festival patrons to follow the tour in their own time.
- (2) Assistance with an exhibition to be arranged by the Warrandyte Historical Society. Members who may be able to assist with setting up or supervising this exhibition are asked to contact the secretary.

Coming Events.

Next committee meeting Wednesday 9th August.

Next meeting Wednesday 13th September.

Peter Bassett-Smith
President
7120260

Russell Yeoman
Secretary
439 9717