

SHIRE OF ELTHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 137 Eltham 3095

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1978

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Society will be at 8p.m. on Wednesday 8th November, in the War Memorial Hall, 605 Main Road, Eltham, and will be the last meeting for 1978.

Guest Speaker at the meeting will be Mr. Irvine Green, President of Doncaster & Templestowe Historical Society. Mr. Green will speak on the history of Doncaster and Templestowe, our neighbouring municipality. Although just to the south of the Yarra River it has remained largely isolated from Eltham over many years and many aspects of the history of the two areas are quite different.

OTHER COMING EVENTS

1. Eltham Living Forum. Society President Peter Bassett-Smith will be one of three speakers at a forum to be held at the Eltham Community Centre from 2 to 5 p.m. on Sunday 5th November. His subject will be "Exodus to Eltham". Other speakers will be Alistair Knox and Janet Blagg, Co-ordinator of the Eltham Living and Learning Centre. Members are invited to attend.

2. Historical Exhibition. On Sunday 12th November the Society will hold an exhibition in conjunction with a display by the Anti Ring Road Organization (A.R.R.O.). The Theme of the total display will be Eltham's past, present and future.

The Society's participation in this event does not indicate support or otherwise for A.R.R.O.'s views on the government's ring road study. Any member who can assist with setting up the exhibition on 11th November should contact the secretary.

3. Smiths Gully Excursion. On Sunday 26th November there will be an excursion to visit historical sites in the Smiths Gully area. We will be accompanied on this excursion by two members of the Joyce family, one of the earliest families in the district. Mrs. Lucy Henderson and Mrs. Flabbie Joyce were both born in Smiths Gully and have lived there many years. They can recall the days early this century when Smiths Gully was still a mining township and the family operated the Goldfields Store. The excursion will be private car with frequent stops at points of interest. The area to be covered extends easterly from the Main Road midway between Panton Hill and St. Andrews. Commencing point is the St. Andrews Hall (opposite the St. Andrews Hotel) at 2 p.m. Those members taking a picnic lunch should meet at the wayside stop adjoining the hall from about 12.30 p.m. This excursion will be the last society function for 1978.

4. Committee Meeting. The last committee meeting for the year will be held on Wednesday 13th December.

5. Next Year. The first meeting for 1979 will be held in February. The Annual General Meeting will be in March and meetings will then follow at two monthly intervals.

EARLY ELTHAM HOUSE, ELY STREET.

The society is investigating means of preserving a timber cottage in Ely Street probably dating from the 1850's and believed to have been owned by the pioneer Falkiner family. The land on which the cottage stands is soon to be sub divided into residential lots. With the consent of owners the society has applied to the Historic Buildings Preservation Council for assessment of the building and inclusion on the Register of Historic Buildings.

KINGLAKE NATIONAL PARK

The society will be represented by the President at a function on November 17th to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Kinglake National Park.

KANGAROO GROUND SCHOOL

The Centenary of the Kangaroo Ground School was celebrated by a function at the school on 7th October. The 1878 school building remains as part of the present school. It replaced an earlier school which Andrew Ross opened at Kangaroo Ground in 1851.

PIONEERS AND PAINTERS

Alan Marshall's popular book on the history of the Shire of Eltham has now been out of print and unavailable for quite some years. Pioneers and Painters was produced for the centenary of the Shire in 1971 and the two printings sold out very quickly. The Eltham Shire Council has now agreed to call for quotations for further printing of the book because of continuous enquiries from prospective purchasers. It is likely that the book will be again available by about Easter 1979.

RAILWAY TRESTLE BRIDGE, ELTHAM.

The Eltham Shire Council has received advice from the Railways Dept. of a proposal for replacement of the railway bridge over Diamond Creek in Eltham Central Park. A previous proposal for replacement by an embankment and culverts was abandoned following community and Council protests.

The new proposal, which is apparently a preliminary stage, involves replacement with a shorter bridge and lowering of the railway to just above the park level.

The existing timber trestle bridge is a significant feature of Eltham's character and visible history and forms part of the classified park landscape. This matter was considered at the last Committee meeting when it was agreed that the society should express its concern at any proposal which involves destruction of the existing bridge.

LOCAL HISTORY SERIES.

Due to time constraints it has not been possible to continue the series of articles on the history of small areas of the shire. It is intended that the next article cover the history of the area between Main Road and Rosehill Road, Lower Plenty. It will include details of the history of the Heidelberg Golf Club which this year celebrated the 50th anniversary of its foundation and occupation of its Lower Plenty site.

YEMMERRAWANNIE

No evidence is available to conclusively establish the origins of the name of Eltham but it is widely believed to have been named after Eltham in Kent. An interesting early connection between Australia and its English namesake has been found in Chisholm's Australian Encyclopedia. The encyclopedia records that an aboriginal named Yemmerrawannie, about 18 years old was taken to England with another named Bennelong by Governor Arthur Phillip in 1792. The story of Bennelong is quite well known and he is commemorated by Sydney Harbour's Bennelong Point. (of Opera House fame).

Apparently Phillip's intention was that the aborigines' would gain knowledge to help their fellow tribesmen. However the climate proved too severe for Yemmerrawannie and he died in London on 18th May 1794. He is buried at Eltham, Kent where a stone commemorates his grave. Bennelong returned to Australia in 1795.

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