

shire of eltham historical society

p.o. box 137, eltham, victoria, 3095.

newsletter no.13

july 1980

NEXT MEETING 8PM WEDNESDAY 9TH JULY, 1980

SHIRE OFFICES

895 MAIN ROAD, ELTHAM

SUBJECT: HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

SPEAKER: TED ROTHERHAM

The history of photography really commenced in the 1850's and the early development of this medium thus coincided with an important period in Australia's history. Many aspects of Australian history during the next 50 or so years were recorded on film. The subject of our meeting will be the birth of photography and its development over this period, with emphasis on the Australian scene.

Ted Rotherham is a man of many interests. He is perhaps best known to members as President of the Warrandyte Historical Society. He is, however also well known in the fields of photography and Australian plants. Professionally, he is a senior lecturer in the School of Photography at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. His involvement with a number of photographic and natural history organizations includes several years as President of the Melbourne Camera Club. Mr. Rotherham was chairman of the editorial committee of the well known Reed publication Flowers and Plants of Victoria and was responsible for many of the photographs in that book.

In conjunction with this talk Ted will show a number of items of early photographic equipment and some other items which he calls "images".

The subject of this meeting is sure to be of wide interest. Visitors and new members are welcome to attend.

LOWER PLENTY MONASTERY - INSPECTION

On Saturday 12th July at 2.30p.m. members of the society and their friends are invited to visit the monastery of the Blessed Sacrament Fathers in Bonds Road, Lower Plenty.

This building is a relatively recent part of the history of the area, having been built in three stages in the 1950's. It has however strongly influenced the character of the area and is considered to be of some local importance.

The monastery is at present un-used and is occupied by two caretaker priests. A proposal to use it as a drug rehabilitation centre is at present the subject of Supreme Court proceedings.

This is considered to be an appropriate time for a visit because of the possibility of a change of occupancy in the near future. The resident priests have been involved with the monastery since its inception and will be able to provide an excellent guided tour.

The monastery adjoins the Yarra River at the southern end of Bonds Road (Melway 33 B3)

MEETING VENUE

The Eltham War Memorial Hall is becoming increasingly unsuitable as a location for society meetings due to the operations of the after school childrens' playgroup. (This comment should not be taken as a criticism of the playgroup. They obviously put the hall to good use) It is considered necessary to find a new location for meetings, particularly where guest speakers are invited. The July meeting will be held at the Eltham Shire Offices. However as the meeting area cannot be booked on a regular basis it is necessary to continue the search for a more suitable "home".

SOCIETY OFFICE BEARERS

The matter of appointment of office bearers for this year has now been satisfactorily resolved. Following the filling of vacant positions at the Special Meeting of the society on 14th May, the complete list of office bearers is now as follows:-

President Kath Stephenson

Vice Presidents Betty Woodburn, Gr. Alan Baker

Secretary Russell Yeoman

Assistant Secretary Opal Smith

Treasurer Graham Deyer

Committee Members Peter Bassett-Smith, Gwen Baker, Joh Eboli, Phyllis Macdonald, Bruce Ness, Jim Sidwell
Ron Smith.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

The May meeting was held at Montsalvat and was addressed by Sigmund Jorgensen. He provided an interesting account of the founding of Montsalvat by his father, its development and the people who have been involved with it. Members inspected the Great Hall with its extensive collection of paintings by Justus Jorgensen.

On 25th May a group of society members visited four early Eltham buildings.

The tour started in Ely Street at the cottage originally owned by the Falkiner family. Mr. R. Maynard who owned the cottage until recently provided comments on its history. The next building visited was the former home and studio of artist Walter Withers in Bolton Street. This is now the home of the Wilson family who kindly gave permission for the inspection. The group then visited two houses in Main Road dating from the 1850's the former Jarrold cottage near Dalton Street and the Living and Learning Centre. At the latter former owner Mrs. C. Fitzpatrick spoke with the members.

A small group of members recently worked on cleaning up the surrounds of the Ely Street cottage. It is soon to be transferred to the Council and ownership at present is almost in a state of limbo. It was therefore thought that some responsibility should be taken for ensuring that the property retains a presentable appearance.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Society subscriptions for 1980 are now overdue. Payments have been more prompt than in previous years, but some subscriptions remain outstanding. Please complete the membership form and questionnaire which was enclosed with the May Newsletter and forward with your subscription to the above address. Subscriptions are: Adult \$3.00 Student \$1.00 Family \$5.00

INFORMATION REQUIRED

A request for information has been received from Patricia Fullerton who is writing a book about the artist Hugh Ramsay. He lived in Eltham with Harley Griffiths and Norman Carter in the 1890's. Anyone with information on Ramsay should contact the secretary.

LIBRARY REFERENCE SOURCES

As part of the establishment of an information system by the Shire of Eltham, the State Library of Victoria has supplied to the Council a guide to historical sources held in the collections of the Latrobe and Reference Libraries. It comprises a twelve page document which is primarily a guide to sources of historical information on the area within the present shire boundaries and other areas nearby or formerly within the municipality. It does not as a rule include information on the geographical or natural history aspects of the district. The sources are arranged in sections as follows:-

- Bibliographies
- Books and Pamphlets
- Serials
- Electoral Rolls
- Directories
- Statistical material
- Maps
- Pictorial material
- Manuscripts

A copy of the document is available to any interested member.

DIAMOND CREEK BASIN STUDY

The Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works has presented the society with a copy of its recent publication with the rather extraordinary title of "Diamond Creek Basin Study, Part 1. A Compendium of Factors Relevant to Stormwater Flows." Parts of this 189 page document are about as interesting as the title would indicate. Some of it provides interesting reading but its greatest value is as a reference source.

The book covers the whole of the Diamond Creek catchment from Eltham to Kinglake and includes sections on geology, soils, vegetation, conservation, historical development and detailed descriptions of existing conditions along the creek and its tributaries. It contains many photographs, both recent and historical and many maps illustrating various aspects of the report.

The study contains little original material of interest to society members but represents a very useful exercise in getting together a large amount of previously widely scattered information.

DONATIONS TO THE SOCIETY

The family of the late Eddie Anderson of "Yarra Vale", Mt. Pleasant Road, have donated to the society several old family implements including an early wooden washing machine and a pair of blacksmith's bellows. The donation resulted from a clean up of the property following its sale. The Anderson family are to be commended for their recognition of the possible value to others of these items no longer required by them. These implements are in need of some restoration and for the time being have been stored along with other society acquisitions.

COMMITTEE MEETING

The next society committee meeting will be on Wednesday 13th August. Business will include discussion of the society's contribution to the Eltham Community Festival which will be held this year from 24th to 26th October. Please contact a committee member if you have any ideas on the society's participation in the festival or any other business for consideration by the committee.

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