



# Shire of Eltham Historical Society

## NEWSLETTER

NO 61 JULY 1988

P.O. BOX 137 ELTHAM VICTORIA 3095

### NEXT MEETING

8 PM WEDNESDAY 13 JULY 1988

METZNER HALL

JUDGE BOOK MEMORIAL VILLAGE

DIAMOND STREET, ELTHAM

GUEST SPEAKER: SANDY ATKINSON

SUBJECT: ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

VISITORS AND NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

NOTE CHANGE OF MEETING LOCATION

---

### WORKSHOP MEETING

8 PM WEDNESDAY 27 JULY, 1988

YEOMAN HOUSE, 7 PETER STREET, ELTHAM

---

Sandy Atkinson is the Co-ordinator of the Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Unit of the Museum of Victoria. He is also a member of the Victorian Cultural Heritage Trust. The Trust acquires aboriginal items of historical and sacred importance which are placed on display in locations provided by the Museum

Sandy's work includes liaison with Aboriginal groups in Victoria to facilitate preservation of their cultural heritage. His talk will generally cover his work and his involvement with the Trust. The objective is to increase our awareness of Aboriginal heritage generally and hopefully to provide information on how we can best deal with the issue at a local level.

Little is recorded of local Aboriginal history and culture. This talk may fill in some gaps or, alternatively, may give us clues for further investigation ourselves.

#### RECENT ACTIVITIES:

At the May Meeting Kevin Patterson showed part of his most extensive and interesting collection of slides of his "Tall Ships" journey. Kevin's excellent photography combined with the dry humour of his commentary to provide a graphic account of this important Bicentennial event. It included much of the magnificent spectacle of the event but also the more individual aspects of life on a sailing ship. Comments from members indicate that this was one of our more memorable meetings.

The weather tried very hard to ruin our bus trip on May 15th. However, it stopped raining at just the right times, especially during our long lunch at Starling Gap near Powelltown.

Visits to the museums at Yarra Junction and Lilydale were of great interest. Members were most impressed by the professional standard of the display at Lilydale.

#### ELTHAM COURT HOUSE:

Over many years the Society has pursued an interest in obtaining use of the Court House as a meeting place and future museum. The Eltham Shire Council has supported our interests in the matter and made a submission to the Department of Conservation Forests and Lands.

The Department has now allocated use of the Court House to the Eltham Youth Resource Centre. It considered this use offered optimum benefits in terms of current government policies.

The Court House is one of the most important old buildings in Eltham. It was built in 1860 and is typical of a small town court house of the period. It is classified by the National Trust and included in Government List of protected historic buildings. Whilst it is disappointing that we have not been able to obtain the use of the building, the most important matter is that it is preserved and properly maintained. It is understood that the lease conditions require appropriate restoration and maintenance. The interests of the Society would now be best served by assisting in whatever way possible to ensure that the importance of the Court House is properly recognized.

#### OTHER SOCIETY ACTIVITIES:

Only a few members attended the May Workshop Meeting but that was an improvement. We will continue these meetings and the July Meeting will deal with the items we did not complete last time - that is, the filing of recently acquired material, photo album work and cataloguing of the Society's book collection.

The Society has conducted its own Bicentennial exhibition and has been involved in some of the other local activities. The Committee has decided that it would be appropriate to leave a permanent memorial of the occasion. It will be recalled that we were not able to hold the proposed Walter Withers exhibition. The Withers theme is to be pursued and we hope to place a commemorative plaque in the Walter Withers Reserve at the corner of Bible and Arthur Streets, Eltham. We will keep you informed of further development of this project.

Russell Yeoman,  
Secretary.  
439-9717

Sue Law,  
President.  
439-9520

Opal Smith,  
Treasurer/Membership Secretary  
439-8209