



Shire of Eltham
Historical Society
Incorporated
P O Box 137, Eltham, Victoria, 3095

NEWSLETTER
No. 104 SEPTEMBER 1995

NEXT MEETING

8 P.M. WEDNESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 1995

ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE

MAIN ROAD ELTHAM

(ENTER FROM SHIRE OFFICE DRIVEWAY)

GUEST SPEAKER - TED HOWARD

"MUD AND MAN"

SPRING EXCURSION

"EXPLORING THE UPPER YARRA"

SUNDAY 22 OCTOBER

STARTS 9 A.M. AT SHIRE OFFICE, ELTHAM

MORE DETAILS INSIDE

SEPTEMBER MEETING

“Mud and Man” is the title of this talk and of Ted Howard’s book on the history of earth buildings in Australasia. Ted originally intended to produce a world history of earth building. After ten years of research he realised that the magnitude of the task was too great. He concedes that even in restricting his area to Australia and New Zealand there is far more material available than he has been able to incorporate into the book. His talk will include some of this material he has not previously used. Ted is an Eltham resident and naturally the talk will include some of his research into local mud brick buildings

Eltham and nearby areas probably contain the highest concentration of earth buildings in Australia. This talk will place our local buildings in wider context and should prove most interesting.

Ted will have copies of his book available for any member wishing to purchase one.

EXPLORING THE UPPER YARRA

Our excursion on 22 October will follow the Yarra River as closely as practicable by coach, heading upstream from Eltham to the Upper Yarra Dam. Where possible we will visit river locations off the main roads. The points of interest will relate as much to the geography or physiography of the river and its valley as to its history.

Many of the locations we will visit are included in three books on the area. Two are titled “Secret Places of the Upper Yarra Valley” and are written by Luke Steenhuis. One deals with Historic Sites and the other with Beauty Spots. The third book is “The Bridges of the Yarra” by Dacre Smyth. This 1979 publication includes paintings of all of the bridges along the river with poems and brief descriptions of each one. Some of the bridges are in out of the way locations and are not very well known.

Cost of the trip is \$16 payable with your booking. To book please complete the attached form and return to the September meeting or send to the Society’s post office box.

If there is enough interest we will have lunch at the Reefton Hotel, McMahons Creek. This very old pub provides an excellent roast lunch for about \$10 (not included in the trip price). Indicate on the booking form if you would like lunch at the pub so we can make a booking. The alternative is a BYO lunch at Upper Yarra Dam.

Assume that the pub lunch is available unless we notify you by phone that you need to bring lunch.

We will be leaving from the Shire Office at Eltham promptly at 9.00 am. Please be there about 10 minutes before that. To get the best value from this trip there will be a number of short walks to places of interest. Wear appropriate shoes if you intend to walk. If you prefer to remain on the coach then that is OK

ALAN MARSHALL SCULPTURE

In our last Newsletter brief mention was made of the bronze sculpture of Alan Marshall outside the Eltham Library. Sculptor Marcus Skipper has now completed the installation of his almost life-size work. The setting and location are ideal and Marcus has really captured the typical Marshall character. It has attracted much favourable comment since its completion.

Most members are generally familiar with Alan's life and work but for those not so familiar and for the sake of the record we include these brief biographical details.

Alan Marshall, A.M., O.B.E., Hon.LL.D. (1902-1984) was born at Noorat, Victoria and became one of Australia's most famous authors. His association with the Eltham area began in 1920 when he started his first job as a junior clerk at the Eltham Shire Offices, Kangaroo Ground.

In the 1940's he spent some time living at Research. From 1955 he lived in Eltham for nearly 20 years. Disabilities resulting from polio as a young child did not prevent a wide range of experiences. Alan's occupations have been listed as clerk, night watchman, fortune teller, freelance journalist and author. He has been patron of many disadvantaged Children's Societies.

Alan's books are numerous and include novels, short stories, children's books, history and travel. Among the best known are his autobiographies "I Can Jump Puddles" and "This is the Grass". Others include "These are My People", "Ourselves Writ Strange", "People of the Dreamtime", "The Gay Provider" and "Wild Red Horses". In 1971 he wrote the Centenary History of the Shire of Eltham, "Pioneers and Painters".

OTHER NEWS

As a result of municipal restructuring and centralization of Council services, a number of buildings owned or occupied by Nillumbik Shire Council may become vacant. President Harry Gilham has initiated discussions with the Council regarding Society use of an appropriate building. At this stage we have no plans to change our meeting venue. Rather, we are seeking a suitable repository for Society records and which could also serve as an information centre. Negotiations are at a very early stage. We will keep you informed on progress.

OTHER NEWS cont.

The panel of writers at our July meeting provided a wide ranging view of the literary arts in Eltham. Members were introduced to a number of participants in this field, either in person or as subjects of the discussion. Gwen Ogden supplemented her talk with videos of writer/artists Janet Boddy and Myra Skipper. John Weaving talked of the wider literary arts scene and his own experiences. Archimede Fusillo read one of his short stories. Ted Middleton talked mainly in historical vein about writers of the past, notably, of course, Alan Marshall.

Harry Gilham
President

Russell Yeoman
Secretary

Gwen Orford
Treasurer/Membership

Phone 9439 1175

9439 9717

9439 8642



*A fine fat trout was rising here
As I stood painting on the bank.
A sheepdog's barking rent the air;
The trout he flipped his tail and sank.*

From "The Bridges of the Yarra"

by Dacre Smyth

32. HENLEY BRIDGE

A privately owned wooden bridge, with wooden decking, on the Yarra west of Yarra Glen, Henley Bridge was built in 1935 to replace one nearby which had been washed away in the 1934 floods. It is at the end of Henley Lane, and leads to Mr R. Oliver's farm, whose farmhouse (seen in the painting) is an old wooden slab building, dating from the 1860's, which was at one time the old Yering Post Office. The picture was painted from the river flats of Killara Park (Mr. C. Davison).

ELTHAM DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPRING EXCURSION

SUNDAY 22 OCTOBER 1995

BOOKING FORM

Please make a booking for the Spring Excursion on Sunday 22 October 1995 as follows:

()

at \$16 each

Total \$

Name: _____ Phone No.: _____

Enclosed is payment for \$

WE ARE INTERESTED IN THE PUB LUNCH Yes No

Booking Form and payment may be returned to Gwen Orford at the September Meeting on 13 September or forwarded to P O Box 137 ELTHAM 3095