



Eltham District  
Historical Society  
Incorporated  
PO Box 137, Eltham, Victoria 3095

**NEWSLETTER**  
**No. 114 MAY 1997**

**NEXT MEETING**

**8.00 PM WEDNESDAY 14TH MAY 1997**

**ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE**

**MAIN ROAD ELTHAM**  
**(ENTER FROM OLD SHIRE OFFICE DRIVEWAY)**

**GUEST SPEAKER - JILL BARNARD**

**"THE THEME OF THE PLACE"**



Famous early Eltham artist Walter Withers is featured in our "Culture of Eltham" display at the Eltham Library. Illustrations in this Newsletter are from Walter Withers' sketchbooks.



## MAY MEETING

Jill Barnard is a historian and was a member of the team headed by Graeme Butler who carried out Stage 1 of the Nillumbik Heritage Study. She was responsible for the environmental history which forms a major part of the study report.

Jill thinks that to talk on the study itself will be telling many people things they already know so she has chosen a more general subject. She will talk about her methods of historical research with particular reference to developing an understanding of the special themes or character of the place that she is researching. She will use her Nillumbik work to provide case study examples and will also draw on her current research which will lead to place entries in the proposed Encyclopedia of Melbourne.

Jill's talk will therefore be of importance in the general historical context but will have a distinctive local interest component. We all know something about the elusive special character of Eltham and it will be interesting to hear Jill's account of how she dealt with this issue and how she compares it with other areas.

## NOW HEAR THIS

After 74 years of operation (originally as the Lower Plenty Progress Association) the Lower Plenty Residents' Association has decided to wind up its affairs. As part of this process it invited local organizations, including our Society, to participate in the disbursement of its funds. For some time a number of our members have had difficulty in hearing speakers at our meetings. The Committee thought that an amplified public address system would solve this problem and so we made a submission to the L.P.R.A. for funds to purchase such a system.

The Association agreed with our submission and we now have purchased a small portable system suitable for use at meetings, excursions, etc. It will receive its first full scale trial at our May meeting.

The P.A. system can be made available for uses other than Society meetings. Members who wish to use it for meetings of other organizations etc are invited to discuss the matter with Harry Gilham.

We are grateful to Tom Cox, President and the L.P.R.A. for their generous donation. The Association has suggested that we may be appropriate custodians of their records. We expect that arrangements can be made for that to happen in the near future.





## OFFICE BEARERS FOR 1997

At the Annual General Meeting in March the following people were elected as office bearers and committee members for the next year.

President	Harry Gilham
Senior Vice President	Sue Law
Junior Vice President	Doug Orford
Secretary	Russell Yeoman
Treasurer/Membership Secretary	Gwen Orford
Committee Members	Opal Smith; Blanche Shallard; Jock Read Diana Bassett-Smith; Margaret Ball; Keith Banks

Keith is a new Committee member replacing Shane Stoneham who has difficulty attending Committee meetings because of work commitments.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are set at the Annual General Meeting and are payable on 1st July. They can be paid in advance of that date and there is no objection to payment at the May meeting.

Subscriptions remain unchanged and are as follows:

Adult	\$10.00
Student	\$ 2.00
Family	\$15.00

Subscriptions should be sent direct to Treasurer Gwen Orford at 125 Napoleon Street Eltham 3095 or to the Society's post office box by the due date.

## AUTUMN EXCURSION

Rain was forecast for 6th April but it held off until late in the day and so our small group of members and friends were able to enjoy a pleasant visit to three historic locations in the Doncaster-Templestowe area.

Irvine Green, a member of our Society is also Vice President of Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society. He proved an excellent guide on our visits to Petty's Antique Apple Orchard and the historic "Pontville" homestead of Major Charles Newman. Later we visited Schramms Cottage where members of the local society provided us with an excellent afternoon tea. Thanks to Irvine and the Doncaster-Templestowe Society for a most enjoyable day.

## SOME OTHER BRIEF ITEMS

The theme of this year's Victorian Heritage Festival was "Culture Down Under". We organized a small display in the Eltham Library titled "The Culture of Eltham". This features some of the people who helped create the special character of Eltham as a place of artists, writers, environmentalists, mud brick builders and the like. The display will remain for a few more weeks.

The saga of the planning appeal regarding the development of the former Eltham Shire Offices site continues to roll on. The appeal will determine the fate of the historic Shillinglaw trees amongst other things. A committee appointed by the Minister of Planning and Local Government has completed four days of hearings and will make recommendations to the Minister in about a month.

The Society's ambition of gaining use of 728 Main Road Eltham as its headquarters seems to be no further advanced following the optimistic report in our last Newsletter. We remain hopeful that we will get some good news from Nillumbik Council in the near future.

## ANDREW ROSS MUSEUM

The museum continues to open regularly on Sunday afternoons despite a severe shortage of volunteers to keep it running. The four regulars would appreciate any assistance from Society members. A good working arrangement would be for four additional people to volunteer for the regular roster. This would mean one day on every eight weeks. Contact Diana Bassett-Smith on 9712 0668 if you can help.

Museum volunteers Denise Dalton and Margaret Woiwod have attended an archival cataloguing field day at Launching Place organized by the Museum Accreditation Programme. Their acquired knowledge in this area will be of great benefit to the Museum.



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