

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

**NEWSLETTER  
No. 117 NOVEMBER 1997**

**NEXT MEETING**

**8.00 PM WEDNESDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 1997**

**ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE**

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

**SPEAKER - KEITH BANKS**

**"LIGHTHOUSES OF EASTERN VICTORIA"**

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**CHRISTMAS FUNCTION**

**6:30 PM WEDNESDAY 10TH DECEMBER  
ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE  
BUFFET DINNER**

**HISTORICAL AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE  
TRIVIA QUIZ**

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**SOCIETY B.Y.O. BARBECUE  
6:30 PM SUNDAY 4TH JANUARY 1998  
ELTHAM LIVING AND LEARNING CENTRE**

**MEET OUR VISITORS FROM ELTHAM, ENGLAND**

### **NOVEMBER MEETING:**

From time to time we coax one of our members into sharing with us their area of expertise or pet subject. For this meeting we have prevailed upon Committee member Keith Banks to talk to us about his experiences with and research into lighthouses. Keith's parents were lighthouse keepers and as a child Keith lived at Gabo Island, Cape Everard (now Point Hicks) and Wilson's Promontory. Keith's talk will concentrate on these three eastern Victorian lighthouses but will also cover general background history of lighthouses.

We have heard good reports of a similar talk Keith gave to Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society and this meeting should prove quite entertaining for our members.

### **CHRISTMAS FUNCTION:**

The main purpose of this annual event is to get together in a social atmosphere for an informal dinner and after dinner entertainment rather than any formal sort of meeting. The dinner part follows the usual buffet format provided by the same caterer as for our July meeting. Wines will be selected by Harry Gilham including his own exotic range, together with some commercial brands to keep the less adventurous happy. Cost of the dinner is \$12 per person payable on the night. However, we do need to know how many are coming so please tell Gwen Orford at the November meeting or ring her on 9439-8642. If you can't come for dinner by all means come along later for the quiz.

Which brings us to the trivia quiz. This will be a team event with teams being selected in a completely informal manner - probably those sitting together for dinner will comprise a team but any other selection method is equally appropriate. Questions are being devised by Russell Yeoman to test your knowledge of our history, our local area, maybe some general history like what was Hovell's middle name and anything else appropriate to the occasion. Any team considered to be approaching the matter too seriously will be subject to a points handicap to be determined by the Committee.

The idea is to have fun but of course to win at any cost. Subject to protests, cheating will be dealt with leniently.

### **VISITORS FROM ELTHAM:**

As reported in our last Newsletter, Margaret Taylor and Clifford Crate from Eltham, England will be visiting Melbourne in December and January. Margaret will be arriving from Papua/New Guinea on 18th December and Clifford from England on 30th December. They will be here until 18th January. This will be during a time when we normally do not have any Society activities so we have arranged a get-together where members can meet the visitors. This will be a barbecue at the Eltham Living and Learning Centre, 739 Main Road, Eltham on Sunday 4th January, commencing at 6:30 pm. If the weather is fine it will be in the garden, otherwise it will be in the new Pavilion. Bring along your own eats and drinks and perhaps nibbles or sweets which can be shared. This will be an awkward time but we hope for a good attendance. It is still some time off so please mark it in your diary now.

Margaret will be staying with the Yeomans until Clifford arrives then they will be staying at Kangaroo Ground until 5th January and at South Yarra for the rest of the time. The Orfords have answered the request in the last Newsletter regarding Margaret's wish to have Christmas dinner at Christmas Hills. If any other members would like to entertain these visitors, either at home or sightseeing, please contact Russell Yeoman.

## COUNCIL MATTERS:

The date has been changed for the Council memorabilia working bee. It is now on Thursday 20th November from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Nillumbik Shire Offices. We still need a couple of volunteers to assist with this work of sorting and filing photos, negatives, documents, etc. Lunch will be provided. Please ring Harry Gilham if you can help.

We have received a grant of \$500 from the Nillumbik Community Fund. The application was to cover society operating expenses, including production of the local chronology currently being assembled by Harry Gilham and for furniture for our new headquarters. We are grateful to Nillumbik Shire Council for this assistance.

### 728 MAIN ROAD

### President's Report

Some background of our proposed centre.

The former Police residence, office, lock-up and stables served the Eltham area from 1860 to the 1950's when the office was moved to its present site in Pryor Street Eltham.

The lock-up and office have been demolished but a new replica office has been built.

During the 1960's the buildings were put to use by the Department of Crown Lands and Survey for a Vermin and Noxious Weeds office. For a short time they were used by the Community Youth Support Scheme. In the early 1980's the buildings again became vacant so the Shire of Eltham made use of them for its Parks and Environment section. These people were moved out during the amalgamation period that saw the formation of the Shire of Nillumbik.

The building lay dormant for some months. Then in October of 1996 three of our Committee members met with two Commissioners and the Community Services Manager on a memorable wet day at the site to put into action the seeking of funds to repair the roof, secure the storage areas and paint out the house. The need to replace the paling fence was negotiated with an adjoining property by the Council.

During the past month all the necessary work has been completed. The Society has yet to sign a contract lease as such. However, we have become responsible for the reconnection of electricity and a special water rate has been established with Yarra Valley Water.

As the Society would only require the house, the timber painted office on the corner of the site has become the music library for the Eltham Concert Band. One of the storage areas is to be used by the Nillumbik Garden Club and a second storage area could have as tenants the Society for Growing Australian Plants. Both groups have a need to store their trestle tables, boxes and other materials for displays. Both groups have their general meetings in Metzner Hall, Judge Book Village.

Our Society's future actions involve furniture needs and the transfer of stored materials, especially from Secretary Russell's (and Marion's) house.

The front garden area has already become a challenge to one of our members and the heavily concreted back yard is being looked over by the Garden group.

An opening of the site has been proposed and could be early next year.

Harry Gilham

## MONUMENT HUNTING THE HUME AND HOVELL WAY

Sunday October 28 1997 dawned bright and very warm. Some twenty-five members, complete with picnic baskets, met outside the Eltham Library awaiting the Cobb and Co. large coach which would be taking us on the second leg of our travels along the route of the early explorers Hume and Hovell.

Stephen West was our very good driver for the day. He would be guided around the circuitous route by Russell Yeoman who had made a detailed study, not only of the intended route, but of the story of these two explorers. During the trip Russell regaled us with poetry, quotations from the Journals and the History of the Shire of Seymour, "The New Crossing Place: by Martindale, 1982, (now Mitchell Shire due to the recent amalgamations).

We headed towards the Hume Highway via Greensborough and Cooper Street and proceeded north to our first stop, noting on the way Monument Hill in the distance which is near Kilmore and, according to Russell, well worth the effort to visit as the view across the valley is magnificent. Past Sunday Creek Valley, Mt Piper and Mt Disappointment, all traversed and noted and named by them. We passed through Tallarook, then onto Seymour where we took photos of the monument telling us that Hume and Hovell had passed through on the 28th of October 1824. We also deviated down Hume and Hovell Road viewing deer and emu farming and the Bellbourie property now a sanctuary. Leaving Seymour behind we travelled up the Avenel Road to the Avenel monument, pyramidal in design of four reducing square blocks with a sharply pointed peak, erected in 1924 in memory of the 1824 exploration.

The day was warming up and the countryside showing the dryness of the current drought. A parallel note had been made in their journal too of 1824 of the drought appearance of the country they were traversing.

At Seven Creeks, Euroa we stopped for some minutes to check the monument placed 20th November 1924 to commemorate their passage on the 29th December 1824. More photos.

Russell had pointed out the abrupt termination of the distant ranges which is noted in their journal.

The next monument is beside the road at the entrance to Honey Suckle Creek Caravan Park, Violet Town. The squarish shaped monument some eight feet high is topped with a simple steel cross, and was to mark the date of 28th December 1824 and built for the 20th November 1924.

By now it was 12.20 and nearly lunchtime as we drove along the Warranbayne Road to Roach's Road, monument hunting without success. Though there is a large, what appears to be an old timber sign which was hard to read, maybe this was the lost monument. In many of the paddocks hay had been cut and baled or was being cut, what a contrast to the rugged country they had passed through which was smoky from the fires of the natives burning off.

By 1.00 pm we were at Benalla and pulled up beside the park where abundant beds of roses filled the air with their scent and the smell of barbecued food twitched the nostrils whilst the cheerful sounds of other picnickers could be heard throughout the park.

We left the bus and collected up our picnics, dispersed to the various tables and enjoyed the shade from the various European trees.

2.00 pm and we were on the road again driving along the Benalla, Mansfield, Yea road. The Swanpool monument states that they passed four miles south and returned three miles north. Then we stopped at the Barjarg monument which notes that they camped near this spot. It is again a pyramidal monument and this time topped with a steel arrow indicating their route of the 29th November 1824. Half an hour later we came to another monument, again with a steel arrow marker on top and the plaque dated the 2nd of 12th 1824. Erected on the 12th of 12th 1924.

“They blazed the way that we might inherit the land.”

Another square based and needle topped monument appeared at Yarck near Yea and this plaque records the date of 3 December 1824.

Near McGuigans Road Russell related that the expedition had lost a dog but it had found them next day, the dog was apparently torn by a kangaroo.

A short while later Russell reminded us here of the problems they encountered in crossing the Goulburn River near Molesworth where banks were high, water deep and wide. “Good coat of grass but quite dry due to drought”.

At Yea we stopped for afternoon tea and raided the last of our picnics and looked at the monument to their journey of 1824, situated at a corner of the gardens near the bowling green. No photo - we were out of film.

We returned home via Kinglake West and Whittlesea past the Yan Yean Reservoir, not full.

5.00 pm back at Eltham we emptied out of the bus and everyone, including Joan Cole, collected their things, Joan also had the major souvenir of the day, a large carp she had picked up from the river bank, her cat was in for a great feast.

The day was made so interesting by the informed commentary which Russell provided. His background knowledge of the route and nature of the journey could only have come from many hours of reading and driving the area. Thank you to Russell and to everyone who made the day so informative and pleasurable.

Diana Bassett-Smith.

### **IRVINE GREEN OAM 1913-1997:**

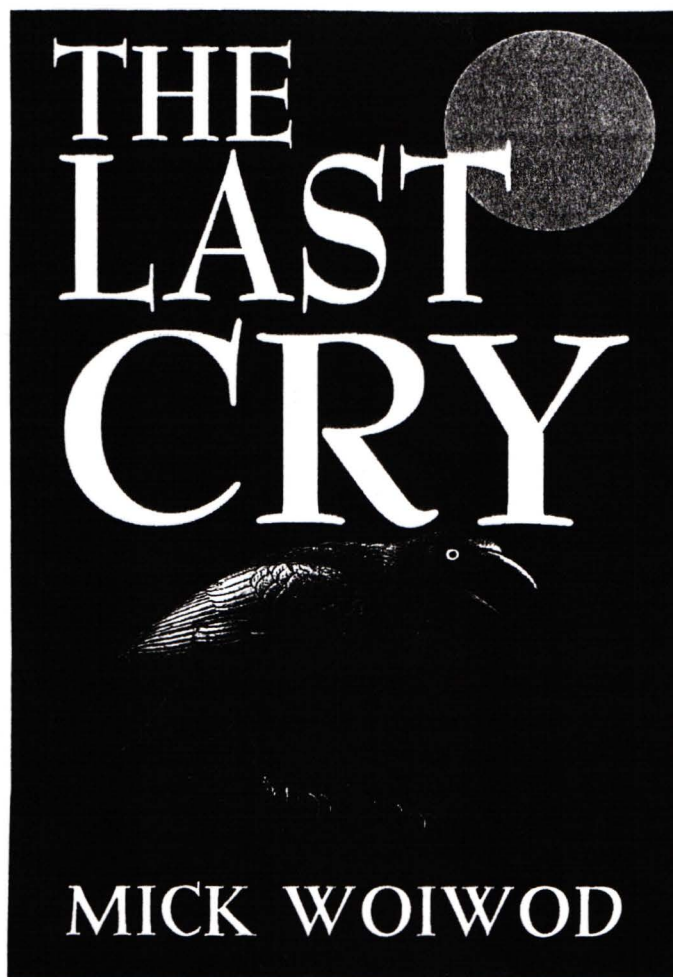
Irvine Green passed away on 4th August after a short illness. Irvine had been a member of our Society for the last few years after he and his wife Paddy came to live in Eltham. However, for the last thirty years he had been a member and one of the driving forces behind the Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society. He remained as very active Vice-President of that Society until the time of his death.

Before the death of his first wife, Muriel, both she and Irvine were major players in the relocation of Schramm's Cottage. They were both councillors of the City of Doncaster and Templestowe. Irvine's profession was a photographer and his many other interests included the Rotary Club of Doncaster and writing of a number of historical publications.

Recently Irvine took our Society on a tour of Petty's Orchard, Pontville and Schramm's Cottage.

Our sympathies are extended to Paddy and other members of Irvine's family.

There was a large attendance at a service for Irvine at Schramm's Cottage. Our Society was represented by Harry Gilham, Russell Yeoman and the Orfords.



#### THE LAST CRY:

*The Last Cry* is the title of Mick Woiwod's latest book - this time an historical novel rather than the local histories which he has produced so far. This book is published by Tarcoola Press and was launched at a function at the Eltham Wiregrass Gallery on 5th October. It is now readily available in bookshops.

The theme of the book is the conflict between the early settlers of Melbourne and the Yarra Valley and the Wurundjeri people whom they displaced. It is a fictional story which takes the Aboriginal viewpoint but includes many actual historical events and early white settlers such as Thomas Sweeney to give authenticity to the narrative.

This book is an important addition to the slowly growing collection on the history of our local area. Mick is to be congratulated on achieving another important milestone in his writing career.

#### SOME OTHER MATTERS:

At the September meeting Jock Ryan from Nillumbik Historical Society passed on a wealth of information and myths resulting from his years of research into gold mining in the Diamond Valley. A series of maps of gold mining areas added interest to Jock's talk.

The local history cabinet in the Eltham Library currently contains a display based on the Eltham Heritage Trail. The research and documentation of this trail was carried out in 1996 as part of a LEAP programme funded by the Federal Government and sponsored by Nillumbik Shire Council and the Montsalvat Trust. Trail brochures are available at the Library.

The Eltham Fire Brigade is currently researching its history and is having trouble locating information between the years 1940 to 1970. If you have any information, paper clippings, photos, etc. on this period or earlier please ring Paul Hoyle at the fire station on 9439 7917 or at home on 9439 9198.

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