

**ELTHAM DISTRICT  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**  
Incorporated

**PO BOX 137 ELTHAM 3095**

**NEWSLETTER  
NO. 121 JULY 1998**

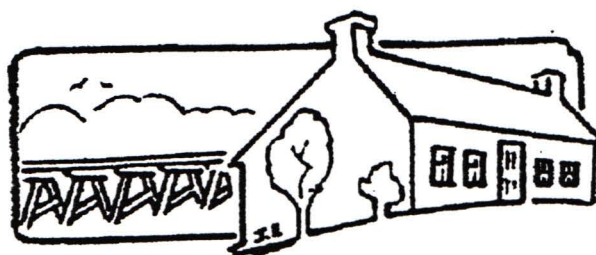
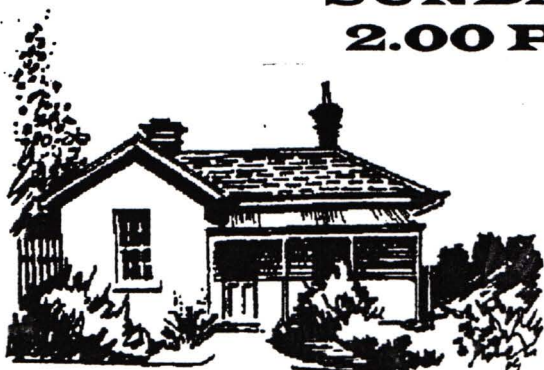
**NEXT MEETING  
8.00 PM WEDNESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> JULY  
ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS'  
CENTRE  
MAIN ROAD ELTHAM  
(ENTER FROM OLD SHIRE OFFICE  
DRIVEWAY)**

**6.30 PM BUFFET DINNER**

**8.00 PM GUEST SPEAKER  
PETER WILLIAMS  
"THE ROMANCE OF ST GILL-  
COLONIAL ARTIST"**

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**OFFICIAL OPENING  
ELTHAM LOCAL HISTORY  
CENTRE  
728 MAIN ROAD ELTHAM  
SUNDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JULY  
2.00 PM - 5.00 PM**



## JULY MEETING

This meeting will be combined with our mid-year buffet dinner.

Guest speaker, Peter Williams, is President of Heidelberg Historical Society but has a number of other historical interests outside the local sphere. He has a strong involvement with the museum ship "Castlemaine" at Williamstown and has also researched the work of the famous colonial artist S. T. Gill. It is this latter subject which forms the basis of his talk to our Society.

Gill was a popular artist of the Victorian goldfields but also worked in other Australian colonies including South Australia and New South Wales. His works have been widely reproduced in modern times and remain a popular representation of the colonial era.

Peter's talk will be illustrated with slides of Gill's paintings and sketches. This is a high quality presentation which has received wide acclaim from a number of other organizations and should be of great interest to our members and friends.

Our buffet dinner prior to the meeting will commence at 6.30pm. The dinner will be catered and the cost will be \$12.50 per person. Wines and other drinks will be provided by Harry Gilham and we are told there are some new varieties amongst his selection. Payment will be required on the night but we need to know beforehand how many people are coming. Please advise Gwen Orford (9439 8642) by Friday 3rd July if you are coming to the dinner.

If you can't make it to the dinner, come at 8.00pm for the meeting. No RSVP or payment is required for this option.

## PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL REPORT

I am pleased to inform members and the public in general who know Russell Yeoman that his dedication to the general history of the Shire of Eltham and, particularly, the growth of the Eltham township from the 1840's, is to be recognized at our July meeting. A period has been set aside for Dr Richard Morton, a Council member of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, to present the R.H.S.V. Award of Merit to Russell.

This award, one of only ten given annually, is based on the criteria of "meritorious service which should be exceptional and go beyond the routine holding of office".

Our nomination of Russell included his 29 years of active Secretary tasks, his organising secretary role in the Eltham Shire's 1971 publication "Pioneers and Painters", his annual Living and Learning Centre 'walk around' tours, his part in the movement of Shillinglaw Cottage in the 1960's and his defence of the Shillinglaw trees in 1997 to remain where they are. In recent years he negotiated the use of the Kangaroo Ground teachers residence which is now the home of the Andrew Ross Museum.

Come and share the night of July 8, either from the dinner at 6.30pm or the general meeting at 8.00pm, and witness this special occasion in recognition of Russell Yeoman Esq.

Harry Gilham

## ELTHAM LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE - OFFICIAL OPENING

Our new headquarters at 728 Main Road Eltham is to be officially opened on Sunday 12 July. It will be open from 2pm to 5pm with the opening ceremony at 2.30pm. We have sent out invitations to a number of people. Members and their friends should consider this as their formal invitation to attend. There will be a representative display of items from the Society's collection of documents and photographs.

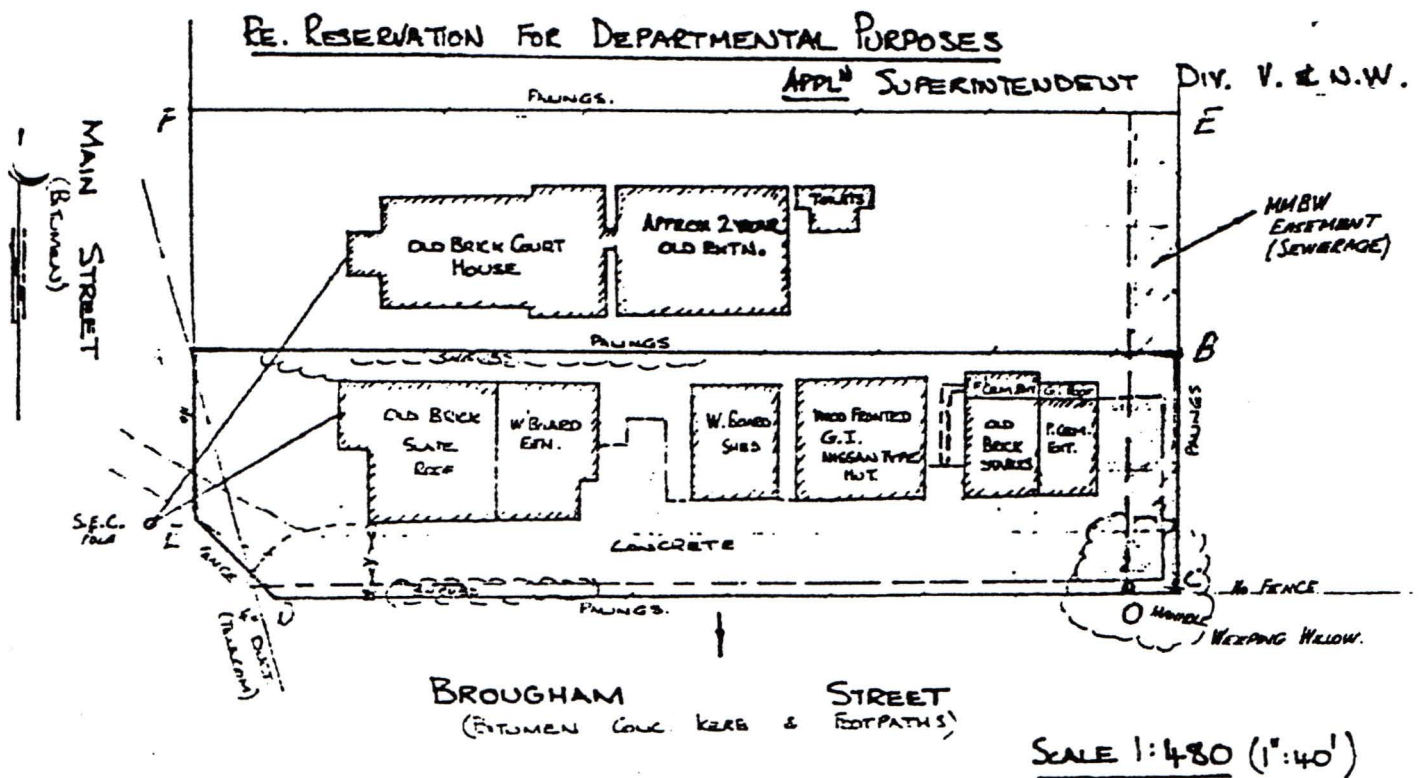
After consideration of a number of options we have settled on the Eltham Local History Centre as the name for our premises. The times that it will be open have not been finalized but it will be available for research at least by appointment. Displays of Society material will be arranged for special occasions and hopefully the centre will be open on a limited but regular basis.

A brief history of the building was included in Newsletter No. 117. Originally it was the Eltham Police Residence and dates from 1860. The police office alongside the residence was demolished but has now been replaced by a replica building. The lock-up at the rear has also been demolished but the stables in the back yard remain.

Since closure as a police station in the 1950's the house has been used by the State Lands Department, Community Youth Support Scheme and Eltham Council's Parks and Environment Section. It is included in the Victorian Heritage Register.

Storage facilities external to the house are now used by the Eltham Concert Band (replica office), Nillumbik Garden Club and Society for Growing Australian Plants (both in the stables).

This is an important event for our Society and an excellent social occasion for members. We hope that most of our members will be able to attend. Ring Russell Yeoman or Harry Gilham for more information.



The following item by Clifford Crate is re-printed from the Newsletter of the Eltham Society, England.

FROM ELTHAM TO ELTHAM WITH MARGARET

Malaysia Airlines looked after me very well and landed me safely at Melbourne Airport at 7.55 am local time on Tuesday 30 December 1997, although being cooped up with over 400 other people in a 747 for 13½ hours got tedious.

Margaret, as promised, awaited me with a hired car. After nine months on the edge of the jungle in the tropics, she looked very fit. I phoned my family to let them know that I had arrived safely. Wonderful to be with Margaret again.

An hours drive took us to our first abode - Sheringa Farm, in Kangaroo Ground. It proved a very comfortable holiday home. After settling in and resting we went to Healesville Australian Wildlife Sanctuary. After wintery London it was very warm in the Australian summer.

The following day Margaret drove into Eltham, about 20 minutes drive away and we went direct to 7 Peter Street, the home of Russell and Marion Yeoman. These two wonderful people were to give us much of their time and drive us many miles through the State of Victoria. Their garden which was well wooded proved to be an aviary. They put out water and food for the birds, and many varied and beautifully coloured birds take advantage. Rainbow Lorikeets, Wattlebirds, Pied Currawongs, Flame Robins, Bell Miners, etc., etc. They are great bird lovers.

They then drove us around Eltham, a very nice township, with most shops, residences and buildings built on a single storey bungalow type plan. It nestles in wooded hill country and the River Yarra flows close by. There are many beautiful trees to be seen. We were shown into their library, built about 5 years ago, a quiet peaceful, beautifully planned building. The Eltham District Historical Society has a row of glass fronted shelves looked after by Russell.

We were taken to Eltham's art centre called Montsalvat, built in the 1930's - the creation of an architect named Justus Jorgensen. It is the venue for a variety of visual and performing arts and exhibitions. The Great Hall may also be hired for receptions and seminars. We spent some time in the grounds and enjoyed a snack. We strolled along the banks of the Yarra river. Later, when staying at 41 Margaret Street, South Yarra in Melbourne we went on a river cruise and saw the busy commercial part of the Yarra.

The following evening we went to see a street lit up with Christmas lights and on the way a kangaroo leapt in front of the car, much to our surprise. We were to see more of them later together with lots of rabbits. On the way back the police stopped us and Margaret was breathalised which she passed without trouble.

On Sunday 4 January the Eltham District Historical Society had arranged for us to attend a barbecue evening and here we met Harry Gilham, their President. I also met Sue Law who had been my contact during my chairmanship of The Eltham Society some years ago.

We chatted to these good people. Surprisingly a number still had relatives in the UK and were keen to have recent news. We were made most welcome and enjoyed a very happy evening.

Later in the evening we were taken for a short walk to the Society's new headquarters. Here Harry presented to our Eltham Society two books written by an Eltham District Historical Society member Mick Woiwod by name. One is the history of Kangaroo Ground called "Kangaroo Ground - The Highland Taken". The other an historical novel called "The Last Cry".

It seeks to explore precisely how Aboriginal people viewed the come of the Europeans. Margaret started to read it and couldn't put it down! Margaret and I were to be invited to Mick's home later. We in turn presented to them a painting by Lionel Backhurst and a booklet on the buildings and places depicted on our Eltham Town Sign.

Outside their new headquarters is a triangular piece of ground which they intend to make into a flower garden. Margaret and I were honoured to be asked to plant the first bush, which we did. The bush is named GREVILLEA DIMORPHA which has a stalky red flower. It looked very healthy as I watered it prior to flying back.

Whilst at Sheringa Farm we visited Sugarloaf Reservoir, a scenic delight, and spent a day motoring to the city of Ballarat, the 1830 goldrush centre. We spent a very enjoyable day at the tourist centre of Sovereign Hill which has the look of a wild west township. Here you can pan for gold, ride a stage coach, and walk through a gold mine.

Out next home was suitably at 41 Margaret Street in the South Yarra district of Melbourne. We had to give up the car and travelled about on Melbourne's trams, which I enjoyed. Thereafter Russell and Marion took us many miles (kilometres) through the pleasant state of Victoria in their Mitsubishi Pajero (Shogun). Most notably we saw magnificent scenic coastal views along The Great Ocean Road and enjoyed a day at the Lavandula Lavender Festival at Daylesford about 70kms out of Melbourne.

Margaret and I will look back on a memorable few weeks in and around Eltham in the Australian state of Victoria, and we shall never be able to thank Russell and Marion enough for their wonderful hospitality.

Clifford Crate

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Just a reminder that subscriptions for 1998-99 are now due. Details of subs and a membership form were included with the last Newsletter. Payments should be made to Gwen Orford or sent to Society's Post Office box.



## VARIOUS MATERS OF INTEREST

The Committee of Eastern Historical Societies is holding a workshop on preventative conservation of historical material on Saturday 25 July. Contact Russell Yeoman for information if you are interested.

Following an enquiry by Sue Law, the stockbroking firm of J B Were & Son has donated a copy of the book "A Voyage from Plymouth to Melbourne in 1839" by Jonathan Binns Were. The Were family had early associations with Montmorency resulting in the names of Were Street and Binns Street.

One Sunday 18 October Russell Yeoman is organizing a Hurstbridge Heritage walk for the Nillumbik Living and Learning Centres. It will include a walk from Hurstbridge to Dunmoochin' and return. Bookings may be made at the Panton Hill Centre.

At the May meeting a panel of Society members spoke on the personal or business interests in the historical family research areas. A number of members voted this as one of our best panel presentations.

Sue Law led a small group of members in the "Walking Together" at the Nillumbik Gayip Aboriginal Reconciliation Festival. The whole of the festival was considered a great success. As a result of this and other associated events there seems to be a rising interest in Wurundjeri history and culture and this is a matter we propose to pursue further in our future activities.

Harry Gilham  
President

Russell Yeoman  
Secretary

Gwen Orford  
Treasurer /  
Membership Secretary  
Phone 9439 8642

Phone - 9439 1175

Phone - 9439 9717



**DRAPERY STORE, ELTHAM.**