

**ELTHAM DISTRICT
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
Incorporated**

PO BOX 137 ELTHAM 3095

**NEWSLETTER
NO. 124 JANUARY 1999
NEXT MEETING
8.00 PM WEDNESDAY 10TH FEB.
ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS'
CENTRE
MAIN ROAD ELTHAM
(ENTER FROM OLD SHIRE OFFICE
DRIVEWAY)
THE NILLUMBIK ARTS AND
HERITAGE TRAIL
A WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY
DENNIS WARD**

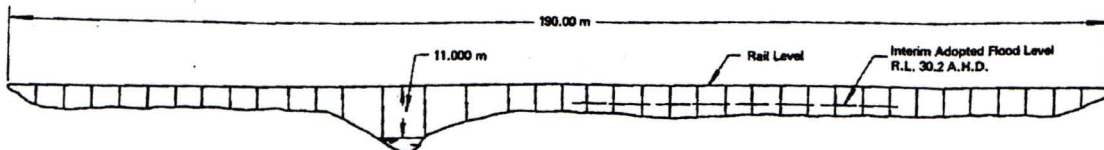


Diagram of the Eltham Railway Bridge
See page 4
Diagram from MMBW report
Diamond Creek Basin Study 1980

FEBRUARY MEETING

Dennis Ward is an architect and landscape architect who has had business interests in Eltham and Heidelberg for many years. He also wears a number of other hats in the local arts, cultural heritage and tourism fields. He is an executive member of the Plenty Yarra Cultural Tourism Association and is the heritage representative on Nillumbik Shire Council's Arts and Heritage Committee. He collaborated with our old friend Andrew Mackenzie in establishing the Heidelberg School Artists' Trail in the Yarra parklands of Heidelberg and Bulleen.

As we reported in the Newsletter last September the artists trail is to be extended covering extra sites in Banyule and Manningham and sites in the Shire of Nillumbik including a number in Eltham. Signboards depicting paintings from these localities are currently being erected.

Dennis has termed his talk a workshop because he expects input from our members based on the ideas he intends to put forward. He will talk about the artists' trail and potential extension as a heritage trail as an exercise in heritage promotion and also as a means of promotion of local tourism.

Dennis is very enthusiastic about the project and it will be interesting to see how he thinks that the Society can best help with it.

SOCIETY PROGRAMME 1999

As usual at this time of the year the Committee is finalizing our programme of activities for the year ahead. We have a number of speakers and other events in mind but we can try to accommodate any suggestions from members. We have had little feedback so far on excursions which have proved to be the most difficult aspect of our programme over recent years. Please talk to a Committee member about your ideas or preferences - local excursions, coach trips to distant or nearer venues or any other suggestions.

The programme will be distributed with the next Newsletter.

THE OTHER ELTHAMS

It is now a year ago since we entertained two special visitors from Eltham, England - Margaret Taylor who travelled from her teaching job in Papua/New Guinea and Clifford Crate who came direct from London.

We regularly receive correspondence from Clifford with news of the Eltham Society, most recently in November when he sent Sue Law a copy of their newsletter and good wishes to our members. The mail service in the highlands of P.N.G. is less reliable but we do receive occasional letters from Margaret.

This Christmas the two of them are touring New Zealand including a visit to another Eltham, a rural town on the west side of the north island. We have had a card from Clifford shortly after his arrival but we hope to hear more of their Eltham "pilgrimage".

Watch for the next instalment.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To satisfy the requirements of the Society's rules, notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Eltham District Historical Society Incorporated will be held at 8.00pm on Wednesday 10 March 1999.

The Agenda of the Annual General Meeting is set out below in accordance with the rules. Further detail will be given in the March Newsletter.

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of 1998 Annual General Meeting
3. Reports:
 - a. President's Report
 - b. Treasurer's Report
 - c. Any other Reports.
4. Statement by the Society in accordance with Section (3) of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981
5. Election of office bearers and ordinary members of committee positions to be filled as follows:
 - President
 - Senior Vice President
 - Junior Vice President
 - Treasurer/Membership Secretary
 - Ordinary Committee Members (not less than three and not more than six)
6. Fixing of entrance fee (if any) and annual subscription
7. Any other business of which at least two weeks notice has been given to members

It should be noted that under the Society's rules nominations of office bearers should be made in writing to the Secretary not less than seven days before the meeting.

Nominations should be signed by two members of the Society and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate. If insufficient nominations are received further nominations shall be received at the meeting. However, it should be noted that where a valid prior nomination is received it will have priority and no nomination for that position can be accepted at the meeting.



COUNTRY ROAD
By Walter Withers
From the National Gallery of Victoria collection
One of the paintings featured in the extended
Heidelberg School Artists' Trail

ANDREW ROSS MUSEUM

The museum has been closed over the summer holidays but will re-open on Sundays from February 14th. Meanwhile, work has been going on behind the scenes and two new publications have been produced. One is a book of poems from the museum's Joseph Furphy poetry competition and the other is a diary from Kangaroo Ground's pioneering Bell family. Each sells for \$12 and Diana Bassett-Smith will have copies available at our February meeting.

The museum continues to need new members and volunteers. A registration form is enclosed with this Newsletter.

THE ELTHAM RAILWAY BRIDGE

Advice has been received from the National Trust that it has classified the timber trestle railway bridge over the Diamond Creek at Panther Place Eltham.

Some years ago the Trust conducted a survey of timber bridges throughout Victoria and following on from that there was an article in the Trust's magazine last year which identified many of the interesting and significant timber bridges throughout the state. It contained diagrams of a number of notable bridges including the Eltham bridge which it stated was the longest bridge with timber piers still used by trains today. It contains 34 timber spans of 15 feet and 4 steel spans of 30 feet. It was built as part of the railway in 1901/2 but all of the original timber would by now have been replaced as part of the continuous maintenance programme.

The bridge is a well known feature of the Eltham valley landscape and is included in our Society logo. In the 1970's there was a proposal to demolish the bridge and replace it with an embankment and large culverts. Following a significant community protest the proposal was abandoned. There is only a single track across the bridge and there remains a threat to its future if the line is duplicated.

The classification should assist in any case that needs to be made for its preservation.

SOME OTHER SNIPPETS

We have been advised by Banyule Council of archaeological excavation being undertaken by Heritage Victoria at the site of the former Viewbank homestead in Banyule Road. The work is being done by volunteers but unfortunately the invitation to volunteer did not coincide with our Newsletter distribution.

The homestead was built about 1840 and was demolished in the 1920's

* * * * *

We have received an enquiry from Christine Fairhall of Western Australia regarding an 1873 painting "Scene at Eltham" by colonial artist Henricus Leonardus van den Houten. It is accompanied by a photocopy of a typical local bushland scene. The ownership of this painting is not stated in the enquiry.

* * * * *

The first item in this Newsletter mentions the Heidelberg School Artists' Trail and its extension to Eltham. There is another trail associated with the Heidelberg School but well removed from our local area. The Coastal Art Trail features art works by Roberts, Streeton, Withers and others in locations where they often painted along the bay between Sandringham and Mentone. A brochure is available from Banyule City Council, phone 9599 4444.

We often receive advertising material for various publications, mainly new books and it is not possible to publicize all of them. We have recently received information on two new magazines which may be of interest to members. Australian Pathways is a quarterly magazine of Australian Heritage and History which is published in Melbourne. It is available from newsagents or by subscription.

We have also received a publicity copy of R. M. Williams Outback which is available by subscription. Russell Yeoman has details of both magazines.

Many years ago the bulk of the historic "Garden Hill" property at Kangaroo Ground was sold to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. The houses on the land were retained by the Gepp family. Within more recent years the land has become surplus to water supply requirements and it has recently been subdivided into lots of about 8 hectares (20 acres). The subdivisional works included widening of Eltham-Yarra Glen road to facilitate access to the new road. This work threatened one of Kangaroo Ground's "trade mark" hawthorn hedges on the opposite road boundary. Following negotiations with property owners Don and Carolyn Johnston, Nillumbik Council has agreed to modifications to the works, resulting in the hedge being saved.

Harry Gilham
President

Phone - 9439 1175

Russell Yeoman
Secretary

Phone - 9439 9717

Gwen Orford
Treasurer /
Membership Secretary
Phone 9439 8642



ELTHAM RAILWAY BRIDGE
From the Society's collection of George Bell
photographs from the 1960s

Save the Trestle Bridge



Eltham's trestle railway bridge, one of the longest such bridges in Victoria, is being destroyed by Victorian Railways — they want to make it into a huge embankment, with Diamond Creek led through four huge pipes.

If this happens, not only will we lose a valuable part of Eltham history, but our Central Park will be seriously affected. The bridge crosses a flood plain, and if Diamond Creek floods again, sports grounds and the park itself will be inundated.

The embankment will block both views and access in the park; the enormous pipes will protrude several feet from it, and if only one becomes blocked there will be serious flooding.

The Victorian Railways have not consulted either the Eltham Council or the Board of Works about the piece of vandalism. If we want to keep this beautiful example of early Australian craftsmanship, we must act now.

Public Meeting

Thursday 14th October
Council Chambers
7 pm

RALLY

In the Central Park
1 pm Sunday 17th October
Barbeque, Diamond Creek Walk,
Other events.

Drawing from "The Diamond Valley Sketch Book"
by Graham Hawley & Brian McKinlay
Published by Rigby

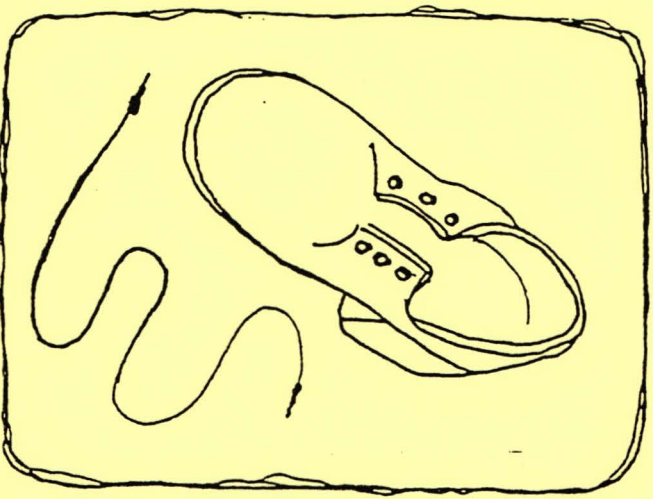
Printed by RMIT Union Press
Authorised by F. Baker, 1004 Main Road, Eltham

1976 SAVE THE TRESTLE BRIDGE POSTER

Diana Bassett-Smith,
c/- The Andrew Ross Museum
Main Road, KANGAROO GROUND 3097

NAME
ADDRESS.....

- ✓ Please sign me up as a Regular Member @ \$10 per year
- ✓ Please sign me up as a Life Member for \$100
- ✓ Please sign me up as a DONOR enclosing \$ for the Museum
- ✓ I would be happy to assist in the operation of the Museum



*its hard to
live on a
shoestring!*

THE ANDREW ROSS MUSEUM KANGAROO GROUND
IS A VICTORIAN AND LOCAL TREASURE. . .

We need lots more community help
and involvement to keep going &
present it proudly to our many
visitors.

Become a MEMBER for \$10 per year
or a LIFE MEMBER for \$100
or a DONOR - to keep us in shape

What a GREAT COMMUNITY SERVICE.

Visitors are most welcome at
General Meetings

Unless otherwise advised,
General Meetings are held at
the Senior Citizens'
Clubrooms, Eltham

Any additions or alterations to this
programme will be advised in the
Newsletter.

Records Workshops are held at the
Eltham Local History Centre, 728 Main
Road Eltham. The centre is open for
research at these times or by
appointment.

Enquiries-Workshops, membership,
research, etc:

Russell Yeoman
Phone- 9439 9717

Harry Gilham
Phone - 9439 1175

Gwen Orford
Phone - 9439 8642



**Eltham District
Historical Society
Incorporated
P O Box 137 Eltham, Victoria
3095**



Montsalvat

**Programme
1999**

1999

FEBRUARY

Wednesday 10th

8:00 pm General Meeting
Dennis Ward

Nillumbik Arts and Heritage Trail

MARCH

Tuesday 2nd

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Wednesday 10th

8:00 pm Annual General Meeting
Election of Office Bearers

Speaker: Harry Gilham

The War Memorial Tower

Kangaroo Ground

Monday 15th

9.30 am Records Workshop

APRIL

Tuesday 6th

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Sunday 11th

Excursion

Brighton and Bayside Artists' Trail

Wednesday 14th

8.00 pm Committee Meeting

14th - 25th

Victorian Heritage Festival

Monday 19th

9.30 am Records Workshop

MAY

Sunday 2nd

Book Launch

Andrew Ross Museum

Tuesday 4th

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Wednesday 12th

8:00 pm General Meeting

Guest Speaker: Andrew Mackenzie

The Heidelberg School Artists' Trail

Monday 17th

9.30 am Records Workshop

JUNE

Tuesday 1st

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Wednesday 9th

8:00 pm Committee Meeting

Monday 21st

9.30 am Records Workshop

JULY

Tuesday 6th

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Wednesday 14th

8.00 pm General Meeting

Guest Speaker: Mick Woiwod

Monday 19th

9.30 am Records Workshop

AUGUST

Tuesday 3rd

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Wednesday 11th

8:00 pm Committee Meeting

Monday 16th

9.30 am Records Workshop

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 7th

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Wednesday 8th

6.30 pm Buffet Dinner

8.00 pm General Meeting

Speaker Panel

Conservation and Environment Groups

Monday 20th

9.30 am Records Workshop

OCTOBER

Tuesday 5th

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Wednesday 13th

8:00 pm Committee Meeting

Monday 18th

9.30 am Records Workshop

Sunday 24th

Excursion

Heidelberg School Artists' Trail

NOVEMBER

Tuesday 2nd

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Wednesday 10th

8:00 pm General Meeting

Speaker: Russell Yeoman

Society Map Collection

Monday 15th

9.30 am Records Workshop

DECEMBER

Tuesday 7th

7.30 pm Records Workshop

Wednesday 8th

6:30 pm Christmas Barbecue

Records Display

Eltham Local History Centre