

ELTHAM DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Incorporated

No. A0016285F

728 MAIN ROAD (PO BOX 137) ELTHAM 3095

NEWSLETTER NO. 127 JULY 1999

**NEXT MEETING
8.00 PM WEDNESDAY 14TH JULY**

**ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE
MAIN ROAD ELTHAM
(ENTER FROM OLD SHIRE OFFICE DRIVEWAY)**

**SPEAKER: MICK WOIWOD
THE WURUNDJERI OF NILLUMBIK COUNTRY:
OUT OF THE SHADOWS TOWARDS CENTRE STAGE**



**ON THE HEIDELBERG ROAD.
IN AND AROUND ELTHAM.**

From The Australasian May 2 1908

JULY MEETING

Mick Woiwod is well known to members for his books on the history of Christmas Hills and Kangaroo Ground and for his work with the Andrew Ross Museum. In recent years he has taken a keen interest in the history and culture of indigenous Australians and particularly the local Wurundjeri people. Whether this interest caused him to write his historical novel "The Last Cry" or perhaps stemmed from his research for the book we will probably learn at this meeting.

The title of this talk "The Wurundjeri of Nillumbik Country: Out of the Shadows Towards Centre Stage" has been especially selected by Mick to reflect his theme. He says that this title is especially appropriate since it appears that many are having trouble incorporating indigenous themes into local history.

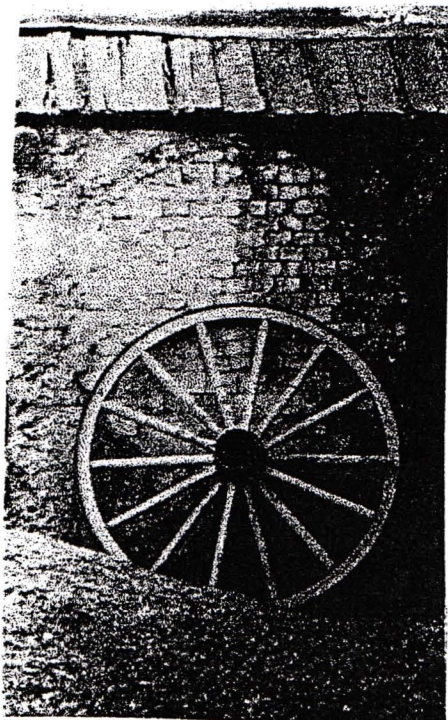
The timing of this talk is especially appropriate as it falls within the season of Nillumbik Reconciliation Forums about which Mick has written a separate article in this Newsletter.

GORDON FORD

The recent death of Gordon Ford after a long illness brings to a close an important chapter in the modern history of Eltham. Gordon was a pioneer and leading exponent in Australian bush landscape design and construction. He was also a leading figure in the Eltham earth building community along with his late friends Peter Glass and Alistair Knox. Gordon's own magnificent garden was generously opened on many occasions ranging from visits by our Society to public events like the Australian Open Garden Scheme. A funeral service for Gordon was held at Montsalvat and was attended by several hundred of his friends and admirers. A number of speakers eloquently told of his personal qualities and his achievements. His old friend, jazz musician Graham Bell, played in his honour on the grand piano.

Gordon had completed writing a book on his work and the Australian landscape movement. It is now in the hands of the publishers and should be released late this year. It is most unfortunate that he did not live to see it published.

Our sympathy is extended to Gordon's wife Gwen and the rest of his family.



Montsalvat 1970
From our collection of George Bell photographs

Montsalvat is listed in the Nillumbik Planning Scheme
and the Victorian Heritage Register

NILLUMBIK RECONCILIATION FORUMS

by Mick Woiwod

June 24 saw the second of the Shire's **Reconciliation Forums** open at Kangaroo Ground. A marvellous venue for what proved to be an entertaining night — as at Eltham on the 27 May, indigenous performance to the fore, and tables decked out in bush tucker. On this occasion *Wurundjeri* elder, Joy Murphy performed the role of M.C. First off, she introduced to a packed house, the renowned Aboriginal dancer and star of Storm Boy, David Gulpilli. David entertained his large audience with five separate dances and, towards the close of the evening, didgeridoo-playing and a talk about his world.

The principal indigenous speakers were chosen for the theme of the evening '**Appreciating Histories — Sharing Histories**'. They were *Gamilaroi* man, Colin Bourke, *Wergaia* woman, Elenour Bourke and *Yorta Yorta* man, Wayne Atkinson.

The next forum will be in the Eltham Community and Reception Centre on 29 July — 6.00 to 9.00 pm. The theme '**Addressing Disadvantage — Custody Rates & the Law**', the speakers: *Yorta Yorta* man, Charles Williams, *Birri Gubba* woman, Helen Curzons-Siggers and *Koori* doctor, Ian Anderson. A great opportunity for members of the Eltham Society to learn more of the emerging indigenous world around them.

Each of the four forums is being hosted by Nillumbik Shire with no charge to those attending.

NILLUMBIK HERITAGE CONTROLS

Over a number of years now we have been following the progress of local heritage studies, commenced by the Eltham Shire Council then continued and expanded by Nillumbik Shire Council. The ultimate aim of such studies is to provide protection for places of heritage significance. This can be through inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register for places of State significance through to protection in the Council's Planning Scheme for places of local significance. Although a few places and significant trees have been listed in the Planning Scheme for some years the bulk of the places listed in the heritage studies have not yet been given this protection.

Nillumbik planners are currently preparing an amendment to the Planning Scheme to provide protection for approximately 200 of the places listed in the heritage studies and also in the Significant Tree Register commenced by the Eltham Council. While this is not the complete list of places, it incorporates all of the recommended places not subject to major queries as to their significance.

It is proposed to submit the amendment to Council this month. It would then be placed on exhibition for public comment prior to further consideration. In accordance with usual practice for this type of planning control, it is hoped that the Minister for Planning will give approval for interim protection while the amendment goes through its statutory procedures.

SOCIETY NEWS ITEMS

As indicated in our last Newsletter the local chronology prepared by Harry Gilham has now been completed and distributed to local schools, libraries, historical societies, etc. Although it has been produced as a publication by our Society, most of the research and writing has been carried out by Harry. A number of other members has assisted with typing and assembly of the publication. Congratulations are due to Harry for his persistence over several years with this project. Copies are available for sale to members at \$5.00 each and to the public at \$10.00 each.

At our May meeting Andrew Mackenzie gave a detailed description of the Heidelberg School Artists' Trail illustrated by prints from his personal collection. The original trail at Heidelberg and Bulleen comprised twelve signboards featuring paintings in the Yarra Valley. The extended trail includes another thirty-nine sites in Eaglemont, Templestowe, Eltham, Research, Diamond Creek, Warrandyte and the Dandenong Ranges.

President Harry has included in his busy schedule the arrangement of a historical display at Research School on 19 June.

Don't forget that subscriptions for 1999/2000 are due as of 1 July. Details of subscription rates and membership forms were given in our last Newsletter. Many members have already paid but for those who haven't, subscriptions can be sent to our Post Office box or paid at the July meeting. Our Treasurer will be on holidays then, but Mary Regan will be happy to accept your money.

Our records workshops at the Eltham Local History Centre continue to draw small groups of members, mainly from the Committee. Other members who would like to help or would like to look at holdings are most welcome to attend. The next workshops are at 9.30 am on July 19 and August 16 and at 7.30 pm on August 3 and September 7. The Andrew Ross Museum is also holding cataloguing workshops each Tuesday morning between 9.00 am and midday. Society members are most welcome to attend. Phone Marg on 9712 0563 if you are interested.

Dennis Ward's project for an Eltham heritage trail now has a name — the Little Eltham Trail. Written articles on trail sites from members have been a little slow in being produced and we should finalize these over the next month. Anyone having difficulty with their allocated site should talk to Russell Yeoman.

OTHER NEWS ITEMS

The Committee of Eastern Historical Societies is holding a "Preventative Conservation" Workshop of Saturday July 31 at 10.00 am. The venue is Nunawading Historical Society Museum and the cost is \$15. Registration closes on July 24. Registration forms are available from Russell Yeoman or Harry Gilham.

Russell Yeoman is leading two walks later in the year for the Nillumbik Living and Learning Centres. The first on September 12 is "A Walk on the Kangaroo Grounds" covering newly opened horse trails and historic sites at Kangaroo Ground. The second on November 7 is the "Nillumbik Artists Walk" covering sites on the Heidelberg School Artists' Trail and other locations of artistic significance at Eltham, Research and Diamond Creek. Both are long day walks for experienced walkers. Enrolments must be made through the Living and Learning Centres. Phone 9719 7506 or 9439 3463 for details.

An invitation has been received from Box Hill Historical Society to attend the unveiling of a headstone to artist Joy Hester at the Box Hill Cemetery on Saturday 28 August. There is no charge for the unveiling at 2.00 pm but a Cemetery tour at 10.30 will cost \$5.00 and lunch is also available at \$5.00. R.S.V.P. is required on 9897 4167, Tuesdays 11.00 am-4.00 pm or answering machine at other times.

Advice has been received from the National Trust that it has classified Shaws Cool Store in Hildebrand Road, Cottles Bridge. This is understood to be the result of research on cool stores carried out by local historian Lesley Alves.

Harry Gilham
President

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Secretary

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