

**ELTHAM DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Incorporated

No. A0016285F

728 MAIN ROAD (PO BOX 137) ELTHAM 3095

**NEWSLETTER
NO. 129 NOVEMBER 1999**

**NEXT MEETING
8-00 PM WEDNESDAY 10TH NOVEMBER**

**SUBJECT: THE SOCIETY'S MAP COLLECTION
INTRODUCED BY RUSSELL YEOMAN**

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

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**CHRISTMAS FUNCTION
6-30 PM WEDNESDAY 8TH DECEMBER
BYO BARBECUE
ELTHAM LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE
728 MAIN ROAD**

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OTHER COMING EVENTS

**ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE WORKSHOP
WEDNESDAY 17TH NOVEMBER**

**ANDREW ROSS MUSEUM OPEN DAY
SUNDAY 21ST NOVEMBER**

NOVEMBER MEETING

During the past 32 years of our Society's existence we have accumulated a significant collection of documents relating to our local area. A large proportion of these are maps and related documents of varying ages. They have been obtained from a variety of sources but most have originated from the former Eltham Shire Council. These are maps that were surplus to Council requirements or have been donated to the Society for safekeeping. Within the collection are map based documents such as land sale brochures, aerial photos and artistic representations of maps.

From time to time various maps from the collection have been used in displays of historical material but many of them have not been publicly displayed. This meeting presents an opportunity to view a representative sample from the collection.

Russell Yeoman has been responsible for the acquisition of many of the maps and is familiar with their content and how they relate to the local area. This role ties in well with his hobby of map collecting which predates the beginning of the Society's collection. Russell will introduce the maps and discuss various points of interest for each item. This will be an informal group discussion type of presentation involving passing around of some maps and perhaps grouping around a table or display board to look at larger or fragile maps.

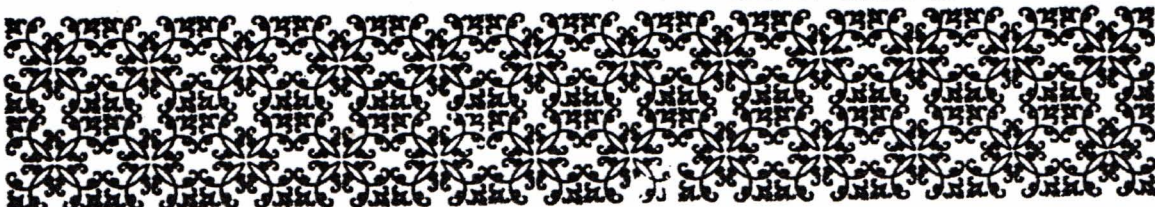
Illustrations in this Newsletter show detail from some of the maps.

CHRISTMAS FUNCTION

As foreshadowed in our programme for the year we have planned a different event for our Christmas breakup from those of recent years. We plan to utilize our Local History Centre as both a venue for a barbecue dinner and also to present an opportunity for members to examine items from our collection of local history material. Some material will be arranged as a display but it is open to members to delve into filing cabinets, plan drawers and photo albums to check out any items of particular interest. Albums of photos of Society activities will be on display and we ask members to provide comments on any without captions. We now have large collection of books and various reports of local or general historical interest. Those who would like to sit in a corner for a quiet read are well catered for.

The barbecue catering will be BYO. Bring your own meat for cooking and drinks plus a salad or sweets to share. If you can bring a chair that would be handy but not compulsory.

There is no need to book for this event but enquiries can be directed to any of the phone numbers listed at the end of this Newsletter.



SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

At the September meeting we had a very successful panel of speakers from local environmental groups. All were dedicated to a particular area of the local environment but the co-operative nature of these groups was emphasized in that all of the speakers knew each other through group contacts.

As well as talking about his group, Friends of Wattle Ward, Eric Johnson gave an overview of "Friends of" groups throughout the area. Alan Bonny provided a detailed description of the Bend of Islands area and the environmental controls which apply there. In an unassuming way Margaret Burke told of her efforts in attracting Federal funding for conservation works in Warrandyte and the bushland link to the Kinglake National Park. Elaine Braby stepped in at the last minute instead of Anna as representative of Friends of the Eltham Copper Butterfly. She showed an interesting collection of slides of the butterfly and its habitat.

A small group of members made a start on the Heidelberg School Artists' Trail on 24 October. The idea of covering the complete trail in one day was an impossible dream and less than half has been covered. We may organize another excursion for the balance. For those wishing to follow the trail themselves, maps showing all of the 52 sign locations are available from Nillumbik Council.

The records workshops are continuing on a rather low key basis. It is important to keep working away at bringing our records into a presentable and accessible form and members are encouraged to attend. Dates and times over coming months are as follows:

7.30 p.m. Tuesdays 7 December, 1 February.
9.30 a.m. Monday 15 November.

The venue is of course at the Eltham Local History Centre, 728 Main Road.

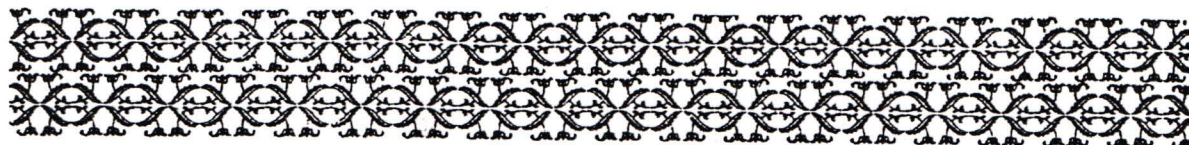
TARCOOLA PRESS

Bruce Nixon of Yarra Glen is Chairman of the Andrew Ross Museum and has been a generous benefactor to the museum. He is a member of our Society and provides assistance to us in various forms from time to time. Bruce has established a small publishing company called Tarcoola Press with the objective of producing at least one historical publication each year. Publications so far have included two small books related to Joseph Furphy and James Donaldson's diary. In 1997 Tarcoola published Mick Woiwod's "The Last Cry".

There are several manuscripts in preparation for publication including the diary of Andrew Ross and a biography of Aborigines who accompanied the European explorers of Australia.

Tarcoola's current publication is by far its most ambitious. "Charles Joseph Latrobe Landscapes and Sketches" is a limited edition of 500 copies which will sell for \$350. It includes all the 437 known artistic works of Latrobe who was the first Lieutenant Governor of Victoria.

The book will be launched on 18 November by Sir James Gobbo at Government House. Orders may be placed with the State Library of Victoria.



MUSEUM OPEN DAY

In the last Newsletter we mentioned a proposed open day at the Andrew Ross Museum on 7 November. That has now been re-arranged for Sunday 21 November starting at 3 pm. A flyer giving further information is enclosed with this Newsletter. Please note that an RSVP is required and members are requested to make their own arrangements for this.

ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE WORKSHOP

Nillumbik Council has organized a workshop for historical societies and museums as part of its 1999 Reconciliation Program. It is to be held at Wellers Restaurant, Kangaroo Ground from 10-30 am to 2 pm on Wednesday 17 November.

The morning session will be an opportunity to hear from Jim Berg and Gary Presland who are leaders in researching and including Aboriginal cultural heritage information and historical artefacts and documents in traditional collections. Jim will provide an overview of the Koorie Heritage Trust approach to developing, protecting and promoting an Aboriginal collection. Gary will provide an overview of pre-European Aboriginal Culture in Victoria from his extensive research.

The afternoon session will be an open forum led by Jim and Gary to explore the roles local groups can play in assisting to uncover, document and promote historical and continuing examples of local (Wurundjeri) Aboriginal cultural heritage and highlight opportunities for support from and collaboration with peak bodies such as the Koorie Heritage Trust, the State Museum and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria on local and statewide projects.

The Council will cover the cost of the workshop including morning and afternoon tea but participants will have to pay for their own lunch. If you plan to attend please ring Daryl Taylor at the Council on 9433 3136 by Friday 12 November.

Members are encouraged to attend, and to co-ordinate our approach to this there will be a brief discussion at the November meeting.



THE SHIRE OF ELTHAM WAR MEMORIAL, KANGAROO GROUND.

Harry Gilham's role on the advisory committee for the Memorial Tower continues to produce items of interest to the Society. Most recently he has reported on the project to floodlight the tower. This is now operational with the lights being switched on for three hours nightly. This project has been carried out as a community donation by Telstra and Eastern Energy who between them have provided the installation and operation expenses.

Earlier in the year, Harry spoke to the Society on the history of the memorial site. Further research has been done on the site's history. Harry has produced the report below which mainly details events leading up to the construction of the tower.

The earliest public reference to this WW1, community supported, cultural heritage project, is to be found in the local Advertiser newspaper edition of August 9th, 1918.

A report of the August Council meeting records the Eltham Shire President, Cr. White, saying "it was proposed earlier that the Council obtain and place on an Honour Board in the Council Chambers (at Kangaroo Ground) the names of the lads who had enlisted.

Just recently however, it had been suggested that a more fitting memorial would be the obtaining of a piece of land on the summit of Garden Hill, Kangaroo Ground, and the formation of a memorial park in which a monument could be erected to represent the whole Shire.

If a couple of acres could be obtained a gentleman had promised to donate 50 pounds, and another would fence it, and other contributions, he was sure, could be obtained."

The access to the land came in January 1919 when several Councillors and the Shire Engineer surveyed the actual two acres of '5 chains along the road and 4 chains deep'.

The Engineer volunteered his services free to do this task.

Entry from the Kangaroo Ground-Yarra Glen road was seen to be a problem and Mrs. White, who owned the land beside the park, donated a triangle of her property to allow this access.

Volunteers were called to clear the hill top by ploughing up the rocks and clearing the area, the fencing was put into place and in May 1921 the Council erected three gates, within an archway, at the entrance to the drive and pathway to the summit.

Public subscriptions were sought through the Advertiser newspaper to beautify the site. The views of the Curator of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens were sought as to the 'class of ornamental trees most suitable for planting in the Park area'.

There is a photograph of the entrance showing the gates and 'knee-high' trees with rabbit proof mesh, held by our Society.

In 1922 plans were made to place a Memorial in the Park. Funds were donated by the Council of 250 pounds and a challenge to the community, to match this money with contributions was met.

The Tower was built in 1926 at a cost of 1,023 pounds 5 shillings. The Caretakers cottage was built in 1927 and the toilet block in 1965.

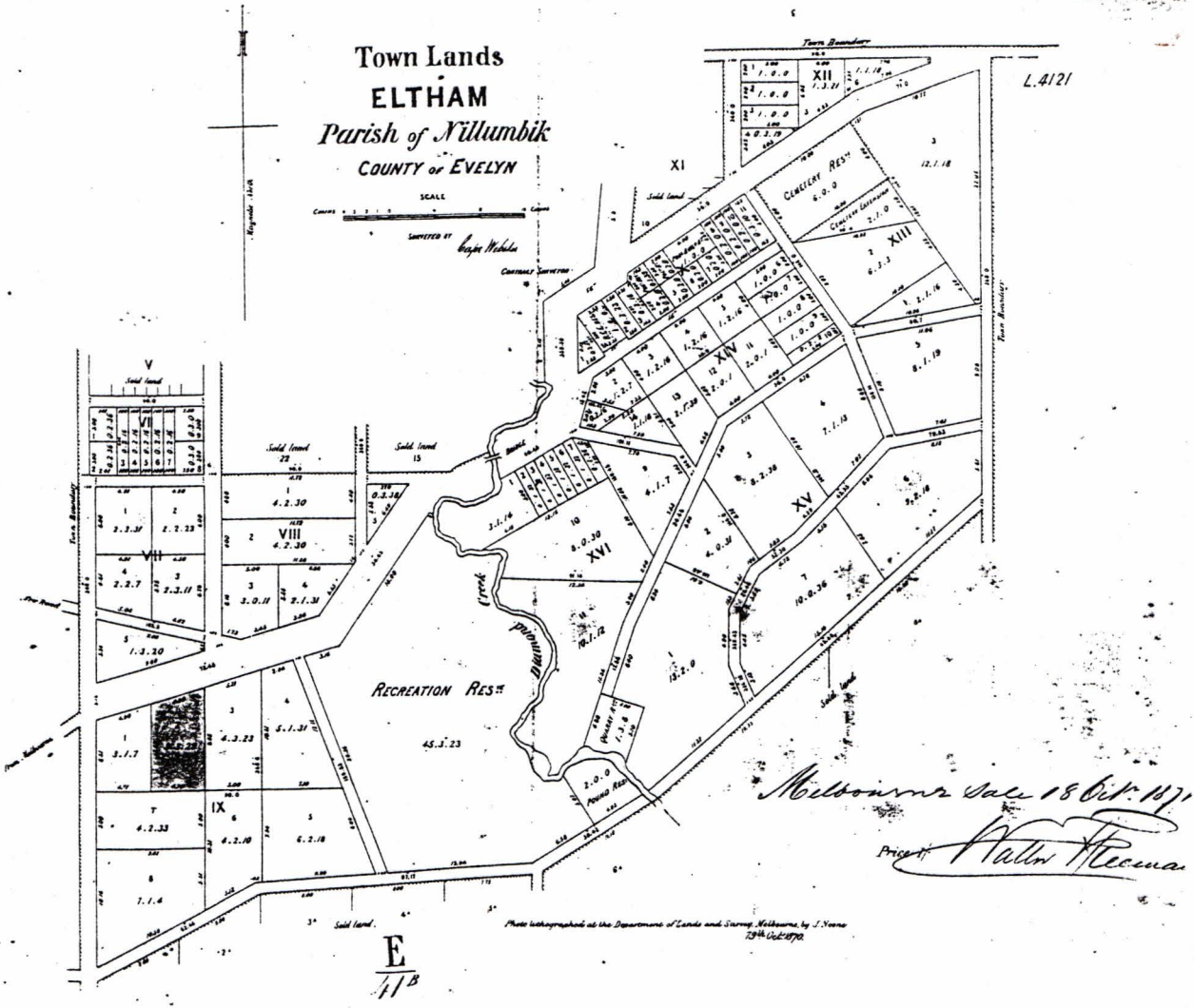
Four land titles are involved:

The purchase of the two acres from owners Ruth Gosling, Alexander Mess, James Johnson Mess and Joseph Mess is recorded in two actions, the first being the payment of 100 pounds for the two acres, the second showing that the Shire of Eltham did not get a transfer of title until 14th January, 1952.

The access land donated by Mrs. White is dated 26th February, 1924. The need to widen the entry came after the deepening of the road cutting and another land donation was given by Sir Herbert Gepp, title dated 14th May 1952.

The land reserve to increase the area and possibly allow a circuit road to be put in place on the western side of the Park was purchased by the Shire of Eltham, title dated 16th February, 1973.





OTHER NEWS ITEMS

Through the office of local Federal MP Jenny Macklin the Society was made aware of the Commonwealth Recognition Awards for Senior Australians. These are on electorate basis and so we decided to nominate President Harry Gilham for an award for our electorate of Jagajaga. We are pleased to announce that Harry was one of those selected for an award and has now received it at a presentation ceremony. Congratulations Harry.

Parks Victoria is in the process of acquiring a property in Laughing Waters Road east of Eltham which was owned by the late Gordon Ford. The property contains three mud brick dwellings which are of at least local historical significance. In response to community concerns that the buildings would be demolished or be vandalized, Parks Victoria organized a meeting to which our Society was invited. We were represented by Russell Yeoman and Harry Gilham. Following on from that meeting we have been advised of a proposal for use for artists' studios pending further assessment of options for future use.

In the last Newsletter Harry launched an appeal for funds to enable the erection of a sign to identify our Local History Centre. Some funds have been received and promised but we still have some way to go. Please contact Harry if you can help.

Harry Gilham
President

Russell Yeoman
Secretary

Gwen Orford
Treasurer/
Membership Secretary
Phone 9439 8642

Phone 9439 1175

Phone 9439 9717