

# **ELTHAM DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Incorporated**

No. A0016285F

**728 MAIN ROAD (PO BOX 137) ELTHAM 3095**

## **NEWSLETTER**

**NO. 133 JULY 2000**

**NEXT MEETING**

**8-00 PM WEDNESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JULY**

**ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE  
MAIN ROAD ELTHAM**

**(ENTER FROM OLD SHIRE OFFICE DRIVEWAY)**

**GUEST SPEAKER: KEN ECKERSALL  
"ELTHAM INHABITANTS"**

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Eltham Primary School No. 209. Head Teacher's house built in 1891. Shows Mrs J. Brown, one of her four daughters and her two sons who died in World War I.



## JULY MEETING

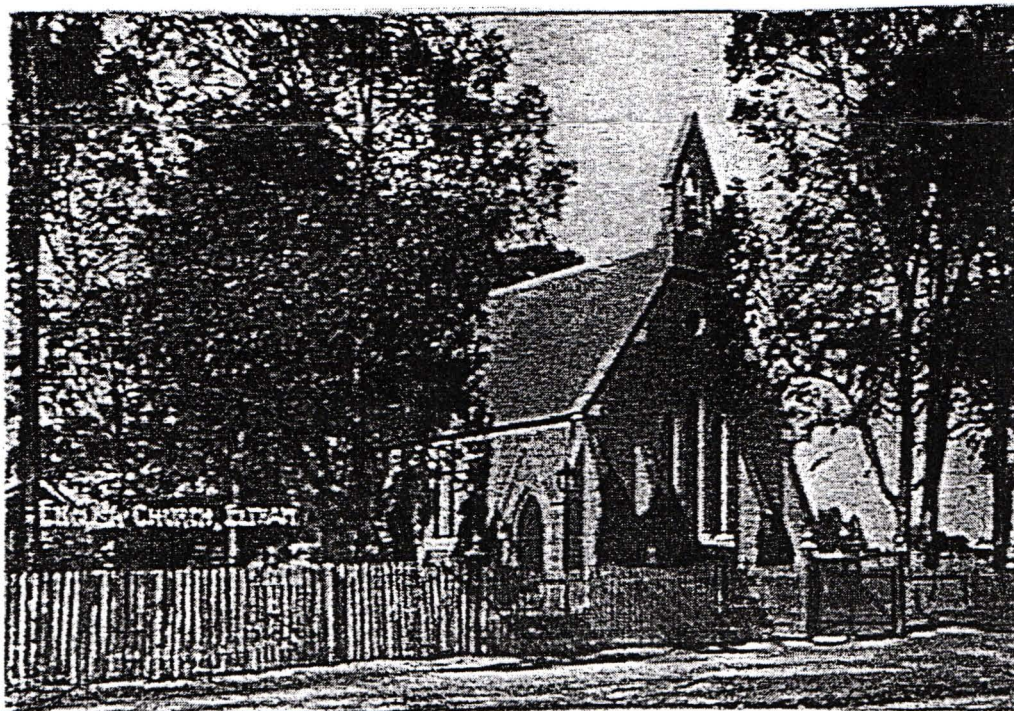
The Eltham Uniting Church and its predecessors, the Methodists and the Primitive Methodists, have been the catalyst for some years of historical research by Ken Eckersall. This work has resulted in a book to be launched in August under the title of "Eltham Inhabitants: For Most, the Serious Part". No doubt Ken will explain the meaning of this rather cryptic title in his talk at our July Meeting.

The sub-title of the book, "Church in Community 1850-2000" is somewhat more conventional and gives some idea of the wide scope of the work. Its basis is story telling about people who have been involved with the church and the Eltham community. For instance, there was W. Taylor who was Shire President and also Sunday School Superintendent. Other well known early Eltham names to feature include Crosier, Stebbing, Hunniford, Bird, Hill and Rodda. In later years the minister Brian Howe went on to become a minister on a national scale - Deputy Prime Minister of Australia. The story continues with reference to eighteen significant sites within the "Heritage Mile" along Main Road and recent local political situations, including the sacking of the Council and Aboriginal reconciliation. In talking to a historical society Ken will deal also with practical aspects of producing a history book of this nature.

Ken is very dedicated to his subject and has assembled a large amount of information, some of which will be familiar but much of it will be new material. We recommend that you come to this meeting to whet your appetite for the book which will follow.

## ARTHUR HEWITT

Arthur Charles Thomas (A.C.T.) Hewitt who died on 30 May at the age of 94 had been a member of our Society for many years but is known to few present day members. He lived at Ivanhoe for 53 years but had family connections and land holdings at Arthurs Creek and Strathewen where Hewitts Road is named after the family. He was a member of the advisory committee of the Kinglake National Park and wrote a history of the park. Arthur's qualifications were in the field of agricultural science and many years of his life were spent in increasing farm production. Arthur and his wife, Gwen, moved to Tasmania for health reasons seven years ago but he maintained his membership of our Society. Our sympathies are extended to Gwen and other members of Arthur's family.



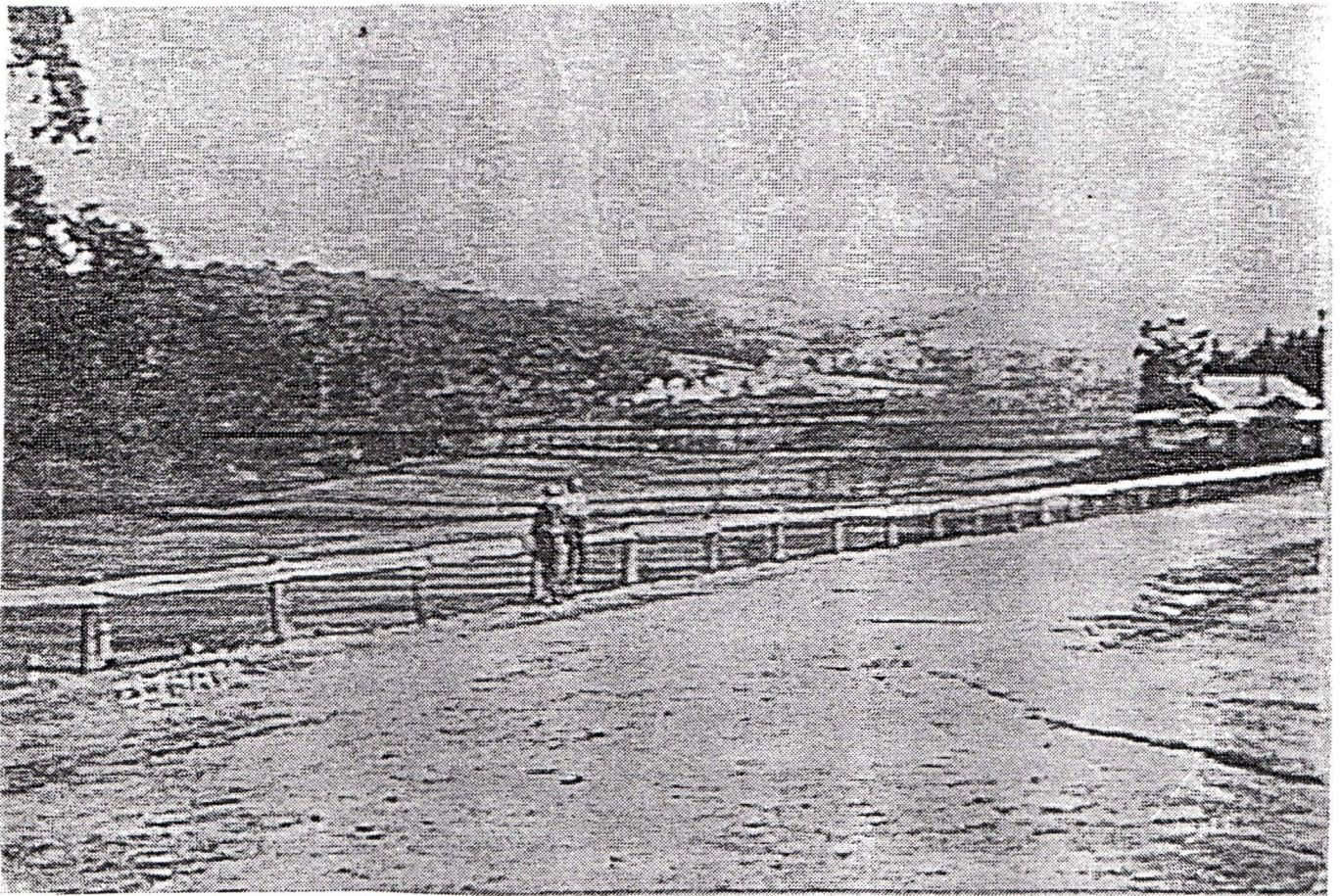
A picket fenced view of St Margaret's Church of England, in Pitt Street taken 1910.

(A State Library of Victoria photograph)





Main Road Burgoynes shop early 1900's.  
(Shire of Nillumbik photograph)



A mixed goods and passenger train being hauled by a steam engine towards Greensborough Station across Eltham's timber and steel trestle bridge some five years after its building in 1901-2.

Photograph from Main Road across what is now Alistair Knox Park.

(A State Library of Victoria photograph)

1907



SOCIETY NEWS:

Each year Russell Yeoman organizes a series of local walks for the Nillumbik Living and Learning Centres, sometimes with historical themes, sometimes just a pleasant but rather long walk in the bush. This year there will be two walks, the Yarra Valley Walk - South Side on 22 October and the Backblocks of Panton Hill Walk on 19 November .

The first walk includes several historic locations in the area between Warrandyte and Templestowe. Both are day walks for experienced walkers. For details and booking arrangements contact the Eltham or Panton Hill Living and Learning Centres.

In the meantime Russell will be visiting Britain and hopes to complete the Green Chain Walk between the London suburbs of Greenwich and Eltham.

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The panel talk at the May meeting produced a wide variety of experiences of the 20th century. Russell Yeoman gave a brief overview of local history during this period. Diana Bassett-Smith provided a humorous account of a young family establishing themselves in 1950's Eltham. A highlight of this meeting was Doug and Jock reminiscing about local characters that they had known. To finish off the evening Harry talked about the "preferred" future of the area in the form of his own appraisal of the Council's 2020 document.

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The Kangaroo Ground excursion on 21 May was most successful in terms of its attendance and content. Harry Gilham outlined new site works for the War Memorial Park and Tower of Remembrance. The Andrew Ross Museum board then hosted our visit to the Presbyterian Church and the Museum. Members were impressed by the new displays at the Museum.

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Don't forget that subscriptions for 2000/2001 are now due. Details of subscriptions and a renewal form were included with the May Newsletter.

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"Knox in Nillumbik" is the title of a proposed research and publication project intended to highlight the work of environmental builder and former Councillor Alistair Knox. Application has been made for funding under the Commonwealth Scheme to commemorate the centenary of federation. Community Heritage activist, Gayle Blackwood, is co-ordinating the project. The Committee endorsed this proposal for funding to add to the general knowledge of Alistair Knox which is evident in his books.

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