

ELTHAM DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Incorporated

No. A0016285F

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NEWSLETTER

NO. 198 MAY 2011

NEXT MEETING

8-00 PM WEDNESDAY 11th MAY

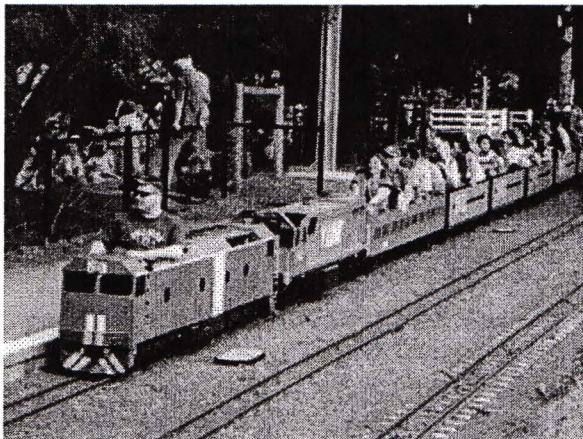
SPEAKERS ROSS MCDONALD & BRUCE DRAPER

**"THE MCDONALDS AND THE DRAPERS
TWO SIGNIFICANT NILLUMBIK FAMILIES"**

ELTHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE

LIBRARY PLACE ELTHAM

(FORMERLY OLD SHIRE OFFICE DRIVEWAY)



HERITAGE WALKS & EXCURSIONS PROGRAM

**2PM SATURDAY 7th MAY
ELTHAM LOWER PARK WALK**

**2PM SATURDAY 2nd JULY.
HERITAGE WALK**

SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS

Diamond Valley Railway
Eltham Lower Park

MAY MEETING

Among the early settlers of the present day Shire of Nillumbik, the McDonald and Draper families were influential and respected members of the local community, particularly in the northern part of the shire around Arthurs Creek. Ross McDonald and Bruce Draper are present day members of these families and are both members of our Society.

The talk by Ross and Bruce is inspired by a family history written by Ross and titled "From Laggan to Arthur's Creek". This book also explores connections between the McDonald and Draper families. The talk also draws on garden history research by Bruce about "Charnwood", the property established by Charles Draper at Arthurs Creek.



Reunion of the descendants of the 2 settlers' families: the McDonalds and Drapers
at Arthurs Creek Mechanics Institute, 2010

This talk promises to be more than just the story of two families. It is expected that it will contribute significantly to our knowledge of local history. It will be illustrated by digital slides from the collections of both speakers.

ELTHAM LOWER PARK WALK

Eltham Lower Park has played an important part in the history of our area since the early days of European settlement when it was used by local residents as an informal racecourse. Prior to that its location at the junction of the Diamond Creek and the Yarra River made it an important meeting place for the Wurundjeri people.

The park combines formal parkland and sporting elements with remnant bushland that is of environmental significance.

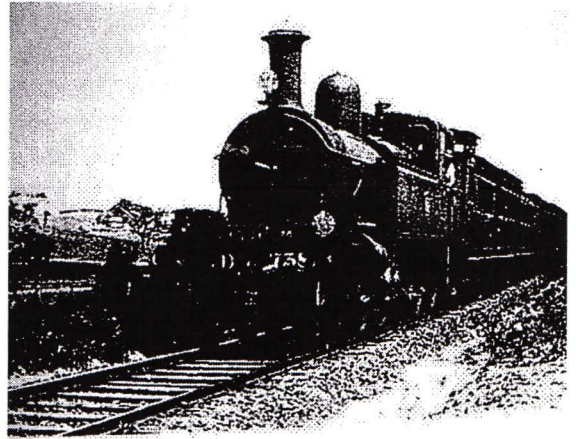
The park will be the venue for our May excursion which will comprise a walk of about 3.5km. around the park and nearby areas. Along the way we will discuss the history and natural history of the park. The path along the creek and the river provides a pleasant and scenic walk.

This free walk is open to the public as well as Society members. It starts at 2pm on Saturday 7th May at the Main Road car park at the front of the park (Melway ref. 21 H10). It is expected to take about two hours. The phone number for contact on the day is 0409 021 063.

ELTHAM RAILWAY LINE

Article from 'The Argus' 12 December 1911

According to a correspondent in 'The Argus' on Saturday residents of the Eltham district are desirous that the morning trains from Eltham should arrive at Melbourne an hour earlier. It is also contended that the time occupied on the journey on weekdays should be reduced to about the same as that taken on Sundays. It is stated by railway officials that some time ago a number of residents requested that the train which was due to leave Eltham at 7.33 a.m. should be started an hour earlier. Regular travellers who had made their business arrangements in connection with this train were consulted by the department, but as the majority of them were strongly opposed to any alteration of the time-table no further action was taken. On Sundays trains ran through to Eltham, and, as there was no transference of passengers at Heidelberg, the journey was naturally covered in a quicker time than on week days. When the new station at Heidelberg was built however, there would be very little detention.



ELTHAM NORTH BRIDGE

From time to time records, memorabilia and the like, no longer required by Nillumbik Shire Council are passed on to local Historical Societies including our own. We are grateful that the Council takes the opportunity of preserving items of possible historical interest rather than simply destroying them. We have developed a good working relationship with Council staff in this regard.

A recent donation from the Council comprises two large high quality colour photos of the Wattletree Road Bridge over the Diamond Creek at Eltham North. While the bridge is not of great historical significance, the photos are an interesting record of this picturesque structure. The history of bridges at this location is quite interesting.



The original crossing on the road forming the link between Eltham and the Diamond Creek township was upstream of the present bridge location. Because of a bend in the creek, the bridge was on an east-west alignment rather than the more northerly alignment of the present bridge. The older bridge lined up with Progress Road to the west and Coleman Crescent east of the railway. In fact, Main Road originally followed Coleman Crescent and then turned along the railway to the current intersection of Main Road and Wattletree Road. The road to Diamond Creek headed westerly from there and after the railway was built crossed the line before coming to the bridge. The power lines across the creek still follow the line of this old road. To the west of the creek the embankment of the road still exists hidden in grassland just north of the bridge. Captions on Council photos of the 1950s indicate that the old bridge was called the Glen Park bridge.

By the mid 1950s the old bridge had reached the end of its useful life. A new timber bridge was constructed but it was soon destroyed by a flood and so the present bridge was constructed on a new alignment. It consisted of timber piers, steel beams and timber deck. In recent years it has been extensively renovated, including provision of a steel deck, but it still retains some of the character of an old timber bridge.

This bridge has now been deemed to have come to the end of its useful life and it is to be replaced by VicRoads. Action by local groups and individuals with support from the Council has resulted in modification to the standard VicRoads design, including a reduction in the width of the bridge. While this will help to blend the new bridge with its environment, it will certainly be a significant change to the character of the area.

ROOM NAMES AT OUR LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE

As mentioned in the last newsletter we have named the rooms at our Local History Centre after historical figures from the area. The following is a draft caption for the Wingrove Room.

This room is named after the Wingrove family, who were early pioneers in the local area. Charles Symons Wingrove J.P. (1819-1905) was a significant local identity. He was actively involved in civic matters for many years and was appointed Secretary for the Eltham District Road Board in 1857 and then later was also the Engineer.

On creation of the Shire of Eltham in 1871 he was then appointed as Secretary and Engineer to the Council, a position that he held until 1904. For many years Wingrove conducted the business of the Roads Board and Council from his residence, which still exists in Main Road. His wife Katherine and daughters were active in the Eltham community for many years.

In naming the Wingrove Room we also acknowledge the significant contributions made to our municipality by many community minded people including councillors over many years.



NILLUMBIK HERITAGE STRATEGY

Cultural heritage is made up of many components including the way communities live, their history, traditions and values. The cultural heritage of the Shire of Nillumbik defines its character and identity, helping to tell the story of the area, its landscape and people through evidence left by generations of people, both Aboriginal and European.

Nillumbik Shire Council has an important role to play in the identification and protection of its communities' heritage places. It is important to protect heritage places because: they help to strengthen personal and community identity; we want to pass them on to future generations; there are social, spiritual, ethical and legal obligations to do so.

Council's role in ensuring the protection of heritage places in the Shire of Nillumbik is to identify and fulfill its legislative responsibilities; identify, assess and document important heritage places and to consider and act on, best practice in their conservation.

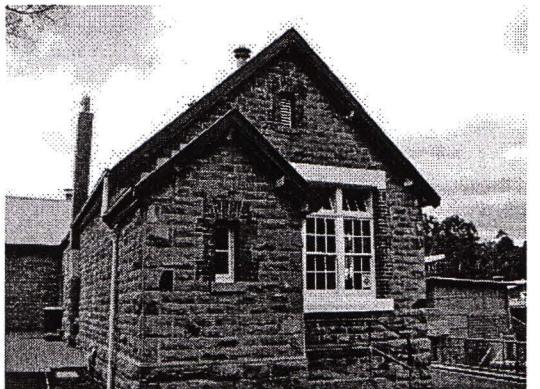
Accordingly, a draft Nillumbik Heritage Strategy has been prepared by Council in accordance with guidelines issued by Heritage Victoria, which has also peer reviewed the document to provide support for the draft directions. This strategy will build upon the positive heritage actions that Council has undertaken over the past two years, and help guide its actions over the next four years.

The purpose of the Nillumbik Heritage Strategy is to identify the positive measures Council employs in protecting and looking after heritage; identify and prioritise work that needs to be done in the future; appropriately manage and monitor the heritage assets of the community; and to report on and celebrate achievements.

There is increasing emphasis at the State Government level for Councils to prepare heritage strategies, to ensure that planning authorities meet their statutory obligations and demonstrate strategic thinking in applying for funding. A heritage strategy is also an opportunity for Council to ensure that it has adequately identified and protected its community's heritage places.

The Draft Nillumbik Heritage Strategy is currently on public exhibition and any person or group can make a submission, which Council will consider following conclusion of the public consultation period. Eltham District Historical Society along with other historical groups within the municipality will review and comment on this strategy.

For those wishing to read the full strategy or the executive summary it can be downloaded from Council's website www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au. If you have any comments that you think might be included in the Society's submission please contact Jim Connor or Russell Yeoman.



SUBSCRIPTIONS

At the Annual General Meeting subscriptions for 2011-2012 were fixed at the same levels as last year and are as follows:

Single member	\$25.00
Newsletter	\$15.00
Family	\$30.00
Business organization	\$30.00

Subscriptions are due on 1 July but earlier payment is welcomed.

Our treasurer David Johns would be happy to receive your money, either at the May meeting or by mail. As our Society strives to provide the best range of services, (including producing and distributing our newsletter, presenting general meetings, arranging excursions) on limited financial contributions it is very important that we receive your subscription, as early as possible.

OFFICE BEARERS 2011 - 2012

At the Annual General Meeting in March office bearers and committee members were elected for the coming year.

The full list of office bearers and committee members is as follows:

President	Jim Connor
Senior Vice President	Sue Law
Junior Vice President	Doug Orford
Treasurer/Membership Secretary	David Johns
Secretary	Russell Yeoman
Committee Members	Diana Bassett-Smith, Alison Delaney Harry Gilham, Gwen Orford, Mary Regan, Gabrielle Turner

The last Newsletter contained a request for assistance with secretarial duties and we appreciate that several members have made offers of help. Further consideration is being given to determine the most appropriate way of utilising these offers.

AND ALSO

The Society has recently been contacted by the Eltham Police seeking material for a small history display at Eltham Police Station. We were able to provide a limited amount of relevant material. If anyone has photographs or other items relating to police activities at Eltham they are invited to contact Jim Connor.

Some newer members have been assisting at recent records workshops. We try to tailor tasks to members' individual interests as much as possible. All help at these workshops is appreciated.

Coming dates for records workshops at the Local History Centre are:

Mondays 9:30am	-	16 th May, 20 th June
Tuesdays 7:30pm	-	7 th June, 5 th July

Jim Connor
President

Russell Yeoman
Secretary

David Johns
Treasurer /
Membership Secretary
Phone - 9434 3357

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