

**HISTORICAL
SOCIETY INC.**

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students,
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other researchers*

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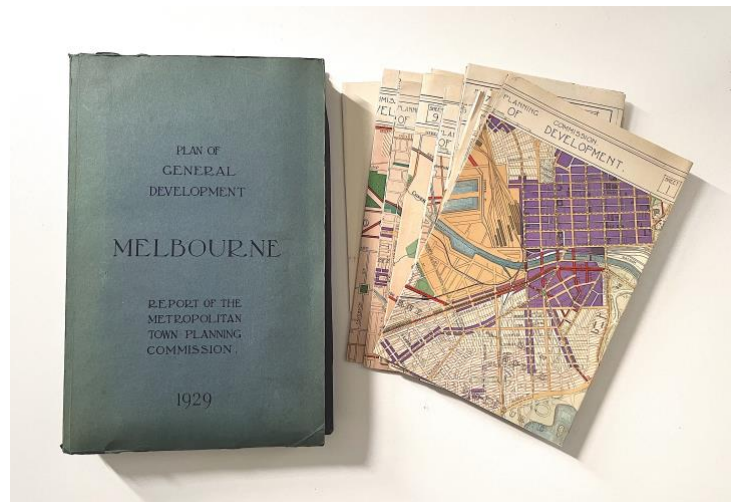
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NEWSLETTER

No. 140

SEPTEMBER 2022



RARE BOOKS

If we think of rare books, we probably imagine an extremely old library with shelves full of dusty, leather-bound volumes which we would not dare to touch. The library might be the British Library in London, the Bodleian in Oxford, the Library of Congress in Washington, or one of our own National or State libraries. Books contained in these institutions could be precious manuscripts dating from before the invention of printing, including religious texts such as scrolls, psalters, hymnals, and Books of Hours, which may have hand-drawn and hand-coloured illustrations. Or they may be from the earliest years of printing using moveable type, which was first developed by Johann Gutenberg in Mainz in about 1450. Subjects of printed texts from the 15th through to the 18th century could be botany (such as herbals with wonderful plant illustrations); stories of exploration and discovery, often illustrated with maps; scientific discoveries; ancient history; and literary works such as Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (1483), Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605 and 1615) and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726).

However, age alone does not make a book rare or valuable. It may have been printed in very small numbers, have specially produced illustrations, binding, or paper, or have special significance because of its provenance - the ownership of the book before it arrived at its current home, whether a library, archive, or a historical society such as ours. Most of the books in the Kew Historical Society's collection are not of exceptional rarity. However, the earliest we hold is Volume 1 of the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, dated 1778, which has an interesting provenance. It was once held at Kew Primary School, according to a stamp inside the back cover, and then by Mrs Grace Tabulo of *Fairyland* in Malmsbury Street. How did a primary school come to have such a valuable volume (the first volume of ten), and who gave it to Mrs Tabulo? This information is valuable background to the story of the book, but it has been written heavily in ink in the book, a detrimental practice which we would not now use.

Two early nineteenth century books we hold are: Thomas J Graham's *Modern Medicine: A Popular Treatise*, 7th ed. (London, 1837), which belonged to Edward Dumaesq, a Tasmanian landowner with connections to Kew, and Adam Smith's *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Edinburgh, 1839).

Front page

PLAN OF GENERAL DEVELOPMENT, MELBOURNE
Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, 1929
KHS Collection

RARE BOOKS (from page 1)

Books in non-text form include albums, mainly of photographs, postcards, or other cards. These have been written about quite extensively in earlier Newsletters, and one, Kellett and Farquhar's *Kew Where We Live* (1891) will feature in our forthcoming publication *The Stories They Tell*. An early map we hold is *Whitehead's New Map of Victoria with Alphabetical Index*, dated 1869.

An interesting example of a much more recent book and set of maps in the KHS collection is *Plan of General Development, Melbourne: report of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission* (Government Printer, Melbourne, 1929). It would probably have been produced in large numbers by the Government Printer, and distributed or sold to all metropolitan councils, who may or may not have kept their copies or passed them on to local libraries. Our copy is in very good condition, with all 15 large, folded maps intact in a pocket at the back of the 308-page volume, along with the text and the many other maps and illustrations throughout the volume.

So, what is the significance of this work? It was the culmination of a great deal of data collection on the part of the MTPC, and the first comprehensive zoning scheme for an Australian metropolis, using, as it does, coloured maps to indicate types of land use such as shopping and business areas, railways, port and harbour facilities, parks, housing, and land subdivision. Discussion is included on such topics as the permitted height of buildings, the roofing of the Jolimont railway yards, and the relationship of main roads to level crossings – subjects which continue to exercise the minds of government authorities today. The City of Kew appears on Map 3 of the 15, with a commendable number of green-coloured areas indicating parklands.

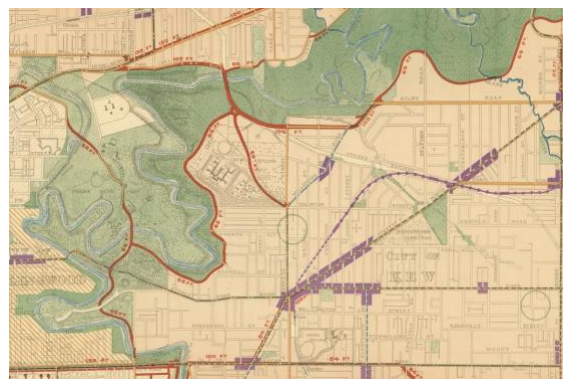
Because of the Depression and then World War II, most of the recommendations in the report were not put into effect, if at all, until after the establishment of the Town and Country Planning Commission in 1944, but they formed the basis for later planning schemes instigated by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works from 1954 to the 1980s. KHS holds one or two individual sheets from these later planning schemes.

JUDITH SCURFIELD

GRANTS & SPONSORS

KHS is supported by a Triennial Operational Grant from the City of Boroondara, and funding for specific projects by the City of Boroondara and Rotary Club of Balwyn. Kay & Burton (Hawthorn) is a corporate sponsor.

KAY&BURTON



Extract of Plan 3 showing Kew
[from] **PLAN OF GENERAL DEVELOPMENT, MELBOURNE**
Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, 1929
KHS Collection

KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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Curator: Judith Scurfield

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

Public meetings of the Kew Historical Society are held in the Phyllis Hore Room at the Kew Library on the second Wednesday of each month (excluding the months of January, March, October and December). There is usually a guest speaker. Visitors are welcome to attend.

KEW COURT HOUSE

Members of the Society played a key role in the preservation of the Kew Court House. General enquiries can be made, and viewing of our current exhibition, on Fridays (excluding public holidays) between 11am and 1pm. Our room is on the first floor of the former Kew Police Station at 188 High Street, Kew.

KEW HERITAGE CENTRE

The Kew Heritage Centre, at the rear of the ground floor of the Kew Library, is generally staffed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 10am and 4pm. Entry is by appointment.

NEWSLETTER

This is published quarterly and distributed to all members. Additional copies are made available to the community. Past newsletters can be downloaded from our website.

WEBSITES

www.kewhistoricalsociety.org.au

victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/kew-historical-society

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PO Box 175 Kew VIC 3101
KHS Newsletter, No.140/2022
ISSN 0155-1337

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed, and information provided, by the authors of articles in this newsletter do not necessarily mirror the views and values of the Kew Historical Society. We also rely on authors checking the accuracy of their data and apologise if errors of fact have been made.

HISTORY NEWS

PUBLICATIONS

Visitors to our regular exhibitions will appreciate the range and diversity of our collection. In 2022, significant items from the collection have been exhibited at the Town Hall Gallery, Villa Alba Museum, Kew Court House and Kew Library.

On 14 September 2022, the Mayor of Kew, Cr Jane Addis will launch our most recent publication – *Stories They Tell: A history of Kew through objects*. Funded by a Community Strengthening Grant, the book selects 31 objects from our nationally significant collection, each of which is described by a member of our research and or collections group. Every object is contextualised within the broader history of Kew and Kew East. [For additional information about the book and its availability, see page 11.]

A number of items described in the book are featured in our new exhibition at the Kew Court House. Many have not previously been displayed. The exhibition can be viewed before and after the launch of the book on 14 September and subsequently on Fridays between 11am and 1pm.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Kew Historical Society also publishes stories, photographs and events on Facebook. We are seeking to grow our audience and reach, so appreciate it when you 'like' an item or post, or subscribe to our page, so that you can find out about any new events we post or items we feature. Our Facebook page is linked from the front of our website.

MEMBERSHIPS

For new membership applications and renewals, please use the printed form on page 12 of this newsletter, or the online form on our website, making your subscription payment to our bank account 633 000 171300288. Please send any queries to secretary@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au

THE COLLECTION

The Society has received the following additions to the collection since June 2022:

- Silver plate and crystal trophy awarded to W Howieson in 1885-86 as the President's Prize of the Kew Bowling Club. Gift of Marina and Graeme Adam.
- Presentation folder in leather box given to Cr James 'Robbie' Mather in 1931 signed by Councillors, civic officers and community representatives, together with correspondence relating to his resignation. Purchased by the Society.
- Tramways destination roll including locations covered by the Kew, Camberwell and Hawthorn depots. Gift of Robert Baker and Margaret Robinson.
- *Snow Scene* by Donald Cameron. Gift of Virginia Kemp to commemorate the life of Prue McColl.
- Photographs of M&MTB Roster Clerks, and Kew Cricket Club tour to Sydney. Gift of Elizabeth Nolan.
- Photograph of a group of men from various organisations. Gift of Caroline Freemantle.
- *The Glory Days* by Desmond Foley. Gift of the author.
- Digital copies of photographs of members of the Coombs family of *Hope Mansell* in Studley Park. Gift of Margaret Cerabona.
- Photographs of Kew State School in 1872, and the Kew Float in the Centenary Parade of 1934. Gift of Christine Sargood.

MEMBERS

The Society has recently been advised that life member, Dr John Curtin, has been recognised with an Australia Day Honours Award. John was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) 'for significant service to oral and maxillofacial surgery, to dentistry, and to professional associations.' We sincerely congratulate John on this exceptional achievement.

The Society welcomes new members: Byron Smith (our new Treasurer), Lesley Walker & Graeme Smith, and Robert & Denise Sloane.

Membership renewals were due on 1 July 2022. For more information, see page 12 and the Kew Historical Society website.

ANNE FRASER BON

A SCOTTISH WIDOW IN KEW

Anne Fraser Bon, née Dougall (1838–1936) grazier and philanthropist, was a resident of Charles Street Kew between 1877 and 1887. Contemporary newspapers reported her attendance at sports days at Kew High School where her son David was a student, but it was her advocacy for the cause of the Coranderrk Aborigines which led to some extraordinary events in Charles Street which attracted the most attention from the press. This article sets out to explore the background to “Mrs Bon’s verandah full of aborigines.”

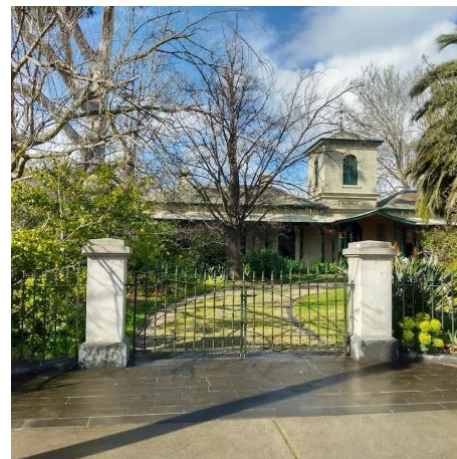
Anne Fraser Dougall, the second daughter of David Dougall, a physician and Jane Fraser, was born on 9 April 1838 in the village of Dunning in Perthshire, Scotland. After the death of her father in 1850 she lived with her mother, two sisters, a younger brother and her maternal grandmother until her marriage, aged 19, to John Bon (1805–1868) on 12 January 1858.

Thirty-three years her senior, John Bon left Scotland in 1840 bound for the Port Phillip District as a bounty immigrant shepherd. Initially working as an overseer for the Scottish pastoral company Watson and Hunter, by 1848 he had acquired the rights to the 30,000 acre Wappan pastoral lease on the Devil’s River (later renamed the Delatite River) near the present day location of Bonnie Doon.

Under his management, Wappan prospered. In 1857, he returned to Scotland to pay out the debts he had left behind in 1840 and buy pedigree breeding stock to improve the bloodlines on his run. The newly married Bons arrived back in Melbourne on 14 May 1858 accompanied by Anne’s younger sister Jane.

In July 1858, architects Balmain and Saunders called for tenders for the construction of a new homestead at Wappan. The Bon’s first child, a daughter Mary Jane was born in 1860, but died in infancy. She was followed by sons John in 1863, David James in 1864, another daughter Wilhelmina Mary Jane in 1866 and finally, in 1868, another son William Andrew. Sadly, on 12 November of the same year, the death of Anne Bon’s husband John from a heart attack left her a thirty-year-old widow with four young children.

Anne Bon was well provided for under her husband’s will, receiving a generous annuity and use of the homestead and surrounding one hundred acres for her lifetime, or until she remarried. In addition, after one of the three executors nominated in the will was declared bankrupt in 1867, she had replaced him as an executor. Rather than being a passive beneficiary of John Bon’s will, Anne Bonn was now able to take an active role in the management of the Wappan estate. Following the deaths of the other executors, John Bon’s brother James in 1872, and William Webster in 1884, Anne Bon was the sole executor and trustee of the estate and guardian of her children.



**ANNE BON'S FORMER TOWN RESIDENCE,
58 CHARLES STREET, KEW**

David White, photographer, 2022

The Wappan run was located on the traditional land of the *Taungarong* people, one of the five groups comprising the Kulin Nation. Otherwise known as the Goulburn tribe, their resistance to the arrival of pastoral settlers had gained them a reputation as “troublesome” Aborigines. However, John Bon is said to have maintained a friendly relationship with the *Taungarong* people, employing them and allowing them to camp on the Wappan run. Following his death, Anne Bon continued these arrangements.

In 1859, Acheron Aboriginal Station was established on traditional *Tuungarong* land on the Upper Goulburn River near the present location of Taggerty. Objections by neighbouring squatters led to the closure of the station. In 1863 the *Taungarong* people walked down the Black Spur and joined *Wurundjeri* and *Boonwurrung* people at a location near present day Healesville which was gazetted as the Coranderrk Aboriginal Station in 1863. John Green a Presbyterian lay preacher and Inspector of Aborigines, who had a previous association with *Wurundjeri* people camped at Yering, was appointed superintendent of Coranderrk. Under his management, the Aborigines participated in decision making at the Station and maintained a number of their cultural practices.

In 1875, growing pressure from the Board to relocate the people of Coranderrk to a more isolated location led to John Green’s resignation and his replacement as superintendent. A series of unsympathetic superintendents, and the continued prospect of closure of the station, led to discontent among the inhabitants and repeated deputations to Melbourne to protest at conditions and to request the reinstatement of John Green.

ANNE FRASER BON (from page 4)

Anne Bon's house in Charles Street Kew became a place of support and refuge for the Coranderrk Aborigines in Melbourne. The Board's officers saw acts such as paying for clothes for a poorly clad Aboriginal family at Charles Millist's drapery shop in Kew, and requesting the same shop supply a blanket to a dying Aborigine who had recently been discharged from the Melbourne Hospital at the Board's expense, as unnecessary interference by Anne Bon.

In March 1881, a deputation of twenty-two Aborigines including William Barak, walked from Coranderrk to Melbourne to present their grievances to the Chief Secretary, Mr Berry. They camped overnight on Anne Bon's verandah in Charles Street. The following day they met with Mr Berry before returning to Anne Bon's house where they were reported as performing a corroboree or native entertainment in the evening. The following day they returned to Coranderrk by coach, their fares paid by Mrs Bon.

On the night of 13 July 1881, after travelling by coach from Coranderrk to Melbourne, William Barak, the *Wurundjeri* head man, arrived at Anne Bon's house carrying his son David who was dying of tuberculosis. The following day she took them to the Melbourne Hospital, apparently calling in to the *Age* and *Argus* newspaper offices on the way to: "request that attention might be drawn to this, as one example out of many such, showing the necessity for reform in the present management of the Coranderrk establishment."

A nine member Board, which including Anne Bon, was appointed to enquire into the condition and management of the Coranderrk Aboriginal Station and commenced its hearings in September 1881. The appointment of a woman to such a position was unusual for the time. The Report of the Board including the Minutes of Evidence, provides fascinating reading. It includes an account by the Reverend Ashe, a retired Anglican minister and occasional inmate of the Kew Asylum, of finding Mrs Bon's verandah full of Aborigines who were unable to say grace. The Report was presented to both Houses of Parliament in 1882.

The Board was divided as to the recommendations of the Report and five members including Anne Bon felt impelled to attach an addendum of additional remarks and recommendations to the Report which included removal of Coranderrk from the control of the Central Board. The remaining four members also attached an addendum recommending the appointment of a local committee of three gentlemen to monitor the inhabitants and the management of the Station and report to the central board. This recommendation was subject to the proviso that if discontent continued, they advised: "...the breaking up of Coranderrk and the removal of the Blacks to an isolated part of the Colony, under missionary management."

Coranderrk was to remain an Aboriginal Station until its official closure in 1924. With the exception of six individuals who were allowed to remain in their cottages at Coranderrk, the remaining inhabitants were transferred to Lake Tyers in Gippsland.



WILLIAM BARAK MEMORIAL, CORANDERRK CEMETERY
David White, photographer, 2022

William Barak died at Coranderrk in 1903 and is buried in the Aboriginal cemetery on the site. His grave is marked by a monument which originally marked the graves of John Bon and infant Mary Jane Bon at Wappan. Removed when Wappan was flooded after the construction of the weir for Lake Eildon, it was donated by Anne Bon and reinscribed as a monument to William Barak.

Following the inundation of Wappan, Anne Bon lived at the Windsor Hotel in Spring Street, Melbourne until her death in 1936. Her grave is in the Presbyterian section of Boroondara General Cemetery. (PRES B 0209).



BON FAMILY MEMORIAL, BOROONDARA CEMETERY
David White, photographer, 2022

THE MUNICIPALITY OF KEW

Every now and then I delve into the Society's 'Chairmen and Mayors of Kew' publication. What an amazing wealth of information it contains! But I've always worried about the title: 'From Municipality to City'. Haven't we always been a municipality and isn't a 'City' a municipality anyway? Well, I've done a bit of research, and this is what I discovered.

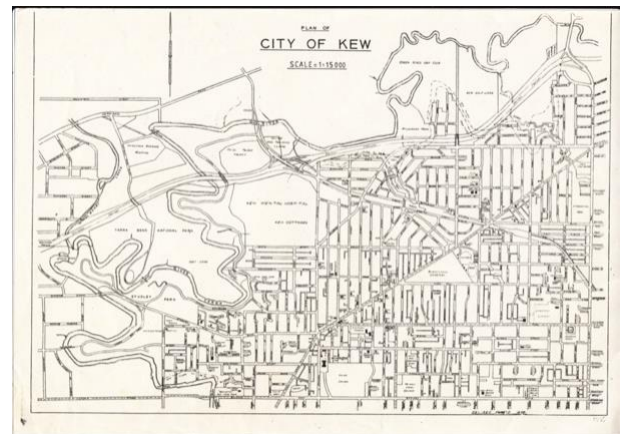
Some definitions. In general, a municipality is a defined area with legal status and subject to some level of self-government, with 'local government' and 'municipal government' being synonyms, and a 'district board' or 'municipal council' being the governing body.

While the Town of Melbourne had been established in 1842, Kew was never part of it. The first form of local government in Kew came in 1856 with the formation of the Boroondara Road District Board (following the proclamation of a Boroondara Road District in 1854). 'Road districts' had first been provided for under 1853 Victorian legislation, with further legislation in 1854 providing for the creation of 'municipal districts'. Kew was proclaimed a municipal district in 1860, with the first Council elected in 1861. All pretty impressive, given that the last Crown lands in Kew had been sold only ten years earlier.

Subsequent local government legislation provided for the creation of shires, boroughs, towns and cities – mostly on the basis of area, population and rateable property. [The current *Act* provides for cities, rural cities and shires]. As Kew grew in population size and wealth, it was progressively proclaimed as a borough (1863), a town (1910), then as a city (in 1921). All of these designations being types of municipality.

So, the area we now know as Kew has actually been part of a municipality continuously since 1854. Ironically, since 1994, once again part of a larger municipal entity called Boroondara.

Period	Official Municipal Status
1835 – 1851	(Undifferentiated part of the Port Phillip District of the Colony of New South Wales)
1851 – 1854	(Undifferentiated part of the Colony of Victoria)
1854 – 1860	Part of the Boroondara Road District
1860 – 1863	Municipal District of Kew
1863 – 1910	Borough of Kew (and, from 1901, part of the State of Victoria)
1910 – 1921	Town of Kew
1921 – 1994	City of Kew
1994 –	Part of the City of Boroondara



PLAN OF CITY OF KEW. SCALE = 1 TO 15 000
Revised June 1979
KHS Collection

© BRAD MILES 2022

AS IT HAPPENED ...

75 Years Ago

- 82,000 people stood motionless as the East Kew Citizens' Band played the National Anthem before the first semi-final of the VFL at the MCG. (*Herald*, 6 Sep 1947, p.8).
- Kew Council passed a by-law prohibiting parking of vehicles outside cinemas to prevent obstruction of cinema exits in the event of fires or other causes of pandemonium. (*Age*, 17 Sep 1947, p.4.)

100 Years Ago

- The Housewives Supply Scheme began home deliveries of milk to members of the Housewives Association in Kew. (*Age*, 1 Sep 1922, p.8).
- A meeting of members of the Kew Golf Club approved the purchase of land for new links on the corner of Kilby and Belford Roads (*Age*, 9 Sep 1922, p.18).

LETTERS TO FAMILIES OF AUSTRALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR

In April 2022, the Kew Historical Society received a request from Jan Coyle to identify the writer of a letter informing her great grandmother that her son was a prisoner of war (POW) in Java. The letter dated 8 February 1943 was signed by LE Thomson on the letterhead of The CAPITOL ladies hair dressing salon in Collins Street, Melbourne. Some background is necessary to understanding the events that caused Australians, in particular, to become prisoners of war of the Japanese in the South West Pacific Area (SWPA). It will help explain the activities of people like Leonard Thomson, who took the effort to notify the next of kin (NOK) that their relative was a POW.

Before 1941, Australia had only the 8th Division Australian Infantry Force (AIF) and militia units, some Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) units and some Royal Australian Navy (RAN) ships to defend its shores. The other AIF Divisions were engaged in overseas operations. In response to the Pearl Harbour attack and Japan's entry into World War II, the 6th and 7th Divisions were recalled from the Middle East by the Curtin Labor Government in 1941. The 9th Division returned in early 1943 and later that year was posted to New Guinea. The 8th Division was sent to Singapore and other parts of South East Asia in anticipation of the Japanese invasion. Singapore was thought to be impregnable – alas not so. The 6th and 7th Divisions were also engaged in the islands and New Guinea. Of a population at the time of about 7 million, 1 million were in the armed forces. If one assumes that half the population were women involved in domestic duties, children and men too old to enlist, the ratio becomes 1 in 3.5 enlisted.

Japan entered World War II in the South West Pacific Area on 8 December 1941, when it destroyed most of the US Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbour, Hawaii. It moved swiftly to capture the chain of islands to Australia's north to isolate Australia from the rest of the world and to prevent America from using Australia as a base from which to attack Japanese occupation in the SWPA. Malaya was captured by the Japanese in June 1942; Singapore surrendered on 15 February; Darwin was bombed 19 February; Java was invaded on 6 March; the Americans retreated from the Philippines in March 1942 and General McArthur and 25,000 troops arrived in Australia to regroup. McArthur was appointed Commander in Chief of the allied forces. In December, success in the battles of the Coral Sea, Milne Bay and Kokoda helped turn the war in the Allies favour. But it was not until the atomic bombing of Japan in August 1945 that the war in the SWPA ended. By that time, there had been 22,356 POWs of whom 8,031 died.

There were many POW camps in the SWPA, the most notorious were: Changi, Singapore; Thai-Burma Railway; and, in this case, Batavia, Java.

The alphabetical section of the 1942 Sands & McDougall directory has a Lrnd E Thomson at 165 Belford Road, Kew North.



165 BELFORD ROAD, KEW

John Torpey, Photographer, 2022

A search of *Ancestry* provided more detail. The 1943 Electoral Roll records Leonard Elliott Thomson, manager & Suzanne, hairdresser, residing at 165 Belford Road. The letterhead has three addresses: 2nd Floor Capitol House, Howey Court and 1st Floor 20 Collins Street. The Sands & McDougall directory of 1938 has the hair salon on the 1st floor, Albany Court, 230 Collins Street.

Leonard Thomson was born in Beeac in about 1893 to William H Thompson and Emily Curtis. He enlisted in August 1915 and served in France as a machine gunner before transferring to 1st Infantry Brigade HQ. He was wounded in action but remained on duty. He was promoted to sergeant in May 1918, and he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal by the King [& British War Medal, Victory Medal] He returned to Australia on the *City of Poona* and was discharged in May 1919. After the war, according to the Victorian Electoral Rolls, Leonard was residing in Northcote in 1926, Balaclava in 1928, and Malvern in 1931. After his marriage to Suzanne, they lived in South Yarra in 1936, St Kilda West in 1937, and Kooyong in 1943 and 1949. At the time of his death in 1954, they were living in Cheltenham.

Jan Coyle in her request said:

This person spent his evenings during the war listening to overseas radio stations on a short wave radio. He would hear names and messages from Australian POWs on a Japanese station. He has gone to a huge effort to track down my great grandmother in regional Victoria to pass on a message from her son who was a POW in Java. Until she received this letter my great grandmother had no news of her son and feared he was dead. I wonder if this person helped other families and what a great service this was.

> page 8

LETTERS TO FAMILIES OF POWs (from page 7)

For national security reasons, short wave radio transmission by professional and amateurs alike was prohibited by Australian Government decree in August 1939 at the outbreak of war in Europe. Short wave operator licences were also withdrawn. However, domestic radios of that era, along with the standard medium wave analogue service: 3AW, 3DB, etc. could also have short wave listening capability. One didn't need a radio operator's licence to listen to these broadcasts.

During the war, short messages from prisoners of war were often read by studio announcers at stations in Germany, Japan, and other Axis countries. Shortwave listeners copied the prisoner's name and address and notified families by mail or telephone. This service of identifying POWs by listening to broadcasts was important because mail was not being processed in accordance with the Geneva Convention. [Japan was not a signatory.] POWs were supposed to be able to write to their family through the International Red Cross several times a year. Some camps did not allow any outside communication; others allowed four or five letter cards to be sent over the period of captivity. Some were not posted but readout during a broadcast from Radio Tokyo.

The Japanese used allied POWs early in the Pacific War for propaganda purposes. The first POW letter read by the announcer to the mother of the prisoner was in December 1941. The number of such broadcasts increased in 1942, and later that year the Japanese station at Batavia [Jakarta] had a programme called *Australian Home News Hour*, during which POW letters were broadcast to Australia and New Zealand. Another station using allied POWs was Radio Tokyo whose show was called *Zero Hour*.

Jack Brown, serving with No. 1 Wireless Unit, Sigitel, RAAF in Leyte, Philippines attached to the Americans, recalls that while listening to Radio Tokyo he heard names and address being read out and he copied those with the suffix: SX (South Australian) intending to notify the NOK, but the camp censor said the broadcasts were propaganda, so the letters were not sent. There was no such restraint on the civilian short wave listeners.

Thomson's letter was sent to Mrs ME Pearce of Lower Bethanga informing her that her son LT Pearce was a Japanese prisoner of war. Jan Coyle further advised that Leslie's father was a carrier called George Pearce. [The Electoral Roll of 1919 lists a George William Pearce, carter, Bethanga.] Private Leslie Thomas Pearce, 2/2 Australian Pioneer Battalion, is the only POW in the National Australian Archives whose first name starts with L. That record shows Leslie's birth in Bethanga in 1908, and that his next of kin was his mother, Mary Pearce.

Leslie Pearce's Army Service record states that he was born in March 1908 to John F Pearce and Mary (Regan) of Bethanga. He enlisted on 21 May 1941 and was posted to 2/2 Pioneer Battalion. Pearce was serving with his battalion in Syria when the 6th and 7th Divisions were recalled to Australia.

The 2/3 Machine Gun Battalion, 2/2 Pioneer Battalion, 2/6 Field Company were on the *SS Orcades* which reached Batavia two days after the British forces surrendered in Singapore. The Japanese invaded Java on 28 February and the decision was made to fight the Japanese in support of the Dutch, who surrendered on 8 March. Pearce was captured along with 2,600 others and imprisoned in Bicycle Camp, Batavia, but later transferred in July to Malaya. The camp held 2,000 Australian POWs. Pearce returned to Australia on the *HMAS Manunda* and was discharged on 13 June 1946.

Ancestry reveals that Leslie Pearce died on 5 December 1969, aged 61, in Wodonga. On the probate application he is listed as a TPI pensioner. He is interred in the Wodonga Cemetery together with 'his dear wife Jean' who died in March 1996. The book *Australian Prisoners of War* has a picture of Australian and British POWs at 'Bicycle Camp' after liberation in September 1945. Leslie Pearce may be among them.

The POW Memorial at Ballarat contains the names of approximately 36,000 POWs from the Boer War to the Korean War. The 130-metre-long, black granite Memorial is located at Lake Wendouree. Leslie Pearce's name is listed on the monument.



PRISONERS OF WAR MEMORIAL. LAKE WENDOUREE. BALLARAT
John Torpey, photographer, 2022

While the Department of Defence informed next of kin of the wounding or demise of their serving personnel, it did not do so for those captured and interned by the Japanese in POW camps, unlike POWs in Europe whose whereabouts usually filtered through about 12 months after capture. Why not? The Australian War Memorial's POW lists were compiled after 1945. Unlike Europe, where POWs could communicate with home via the International Red Cross, the Japanese denied this privilege to their prisoners, although some letters were read out on the radio for propaganda purposes. The answer to Jan Coyle's question, therefore, will probably never be available because there is no official archive of the contacts made to next of kin by Thomson and his fellow short wave listeners, who provided such a valuable service.

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CLIFF JUDGE

AN ADVOCATE FOR PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY AND FOR THEIR FAMILIES

Cliff Judge was a Kew resident, psychiatrist, writer and painter who made an important contribution to the care of the intellectually disabled. His work at the Kew Children's Cottages is significant in the history of the Cottages.

Clifford George Judge was born in Geelong in 1928. The third of five children, he attended Geelong Grammar School as a day boy. There he was tutored by the art teacher Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack, a former Bauhaus painter and émigré who arrived in Australia on board the infamous *HMT Dunera* in 1940.

Although encouraged by his father to study dentistry, Cliff enrolled in the University of Melbourne's medical degree course. As an adjunct to his studies, he joined several on-campus drama companies, including the Tin Alley Players, The Melbourne University Dramatic Club and the Ormond Drama Group. His enjoyment of acting and success playing leading roles encouraged him to consider abandoning his course to concentrate on an acting career. Fortunately for Victoria's intellectually disabled he completed his medical degree, and went on to study psychiatry in London, earning a Diploma in Psychological Medicine.

Back in Melbourne in 1961, he married Selga Fridenberg whose emigration to Australia from Latvia was due to World War II. Cliff and Selga would go on to have three daughters.

The Kew Children's Cottages were opened in 1887, when they were established as a 'back ward' of the Kew Asylum. They provided separate accommodation and special educational facilities for children with intellectual disabilities. The Cottages were known as the Kew Idiot Asylum from 1887 until about 1929, when they were renamed the Kew Children's Cottages.

Cliff spent most of his career at Kew Cottages. Commencing in 1962, he was there for three separate periods amounting to a total of fourteen years, concluding in 1986. For many of those years, he and his family lived in one of the 1950s single-storey, brick veneer houses on the north side of Wills Street. These houses opened onto the Cottages' grounds through a gate in the rear fence. They accommodated the institution's senior medical, nursing and administrative staff.

Before moving to Kew, Cliff was Superintendent at the Janefield Training Centre in Bundoora. There, the family again lived on site. He was also a visiting consultant psychiatrist at Aradale Mental Hospital in Ararat and Travancore in Flemington; a mental health facility overseen by the Royal Children's Hospital.



CLIFF JUDGE

Judge family collection

During the 1960s and 1970s, Cliff investigated the types of intellectual disabilities in Victorian institutions, and their pedigrees, as part of his genetic research. He became President of The Australian Group for the Scientific Study of Mental Deficiency, which was established in Victoria in 1968. This was a professional association of people, mainly doctors, working in the field of mental retardation as it was then called. This organisation became the Australian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability in 1986. The name change was due to a change in society's attitude to disability.

There have been many definitions of intellectual disability and many terms to describe it. Definitions and terms are influenced by how intellectual disability is viewed by society. In 1962, legislation decreed that the intellectually disabled should no longer be referred to as 'lunatic'. Subsequently, infants admitted to the Kew Cottages with apparent intellectual disabilities were no longer pronounced 'insane' or the gentler, 'apparently insane'.

Cliff edited the *Australian Journal of Mental Retardation*, a quarterly publication first produced in 1970. He had many scholarly articles published and his book *Retarded Australians*, published in 1975 was used for teaching those working in the field.

His genetic research in the laboratory at St Nicholas Hospital in Carlton, led to an important paper which showed that the Fragile X chromosomal abnormality was not rare amongst the intellectually disabled population. Fragile X is now known to be the leading cause of intellectual disabilities like autism.

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Cliff's interests were broad. In 1965 he was a foundation member of the Australian Medical Association Arts Group, which exhibited at the Victorian Artists Society in East Melbourne. He showed his paintings in solo and joint exhibitions and was the recipient of several awards, including the Rotary Club of Kew's best oil painting award, which he won three times. His painting, *Autumn*, was entered into the Annual Brighton Art Exhibition in 1980 and won the Brighton City Council Acquisitive Art Prize. It is currently part of the Bayside Council's Art and Heritage collection. The subjects for Cliff's oil paintings were often taken from the landscape near his beach house at Anglesea. They included flowers and foliage, cliffs and bush landscapes. His style was influenced by Fred Williams, who had abandoned the traditional European method of depicting landscape. Cliff often dispensed with the horizon by eliminating the foreground, middle ground, and background. His influence on daughter Linda is evident as she is a contemporary artist whose work has been exhibited at the Town Hall Gallery in Hawthorn and is in the National Gallery of Victoria's collection.

In 1974, Cliff was a foundation member of the Arts Project Australia. The Project aims to present the work of artists with an intellectual disability in a professional manner and to accord them the same dignity and respect as their non-disabled peers.

Another great interest of Cliff's was music. When Frank Pam founded the Melbourne Musicians chamber orchestra in 1975, Cliff became the first concert manager. His appreciation of music covered both instrumental works and opera. His home was always filled with the sounds of music, and Livia, his youngest daughter, became an accomplished flautist, composer and teacher. Her music is diverse and reflects her interest in classical, folk and contemporary styles.



CLIFF, SELGA & THEIR THREE DAUGHTERS
Judge family Collection

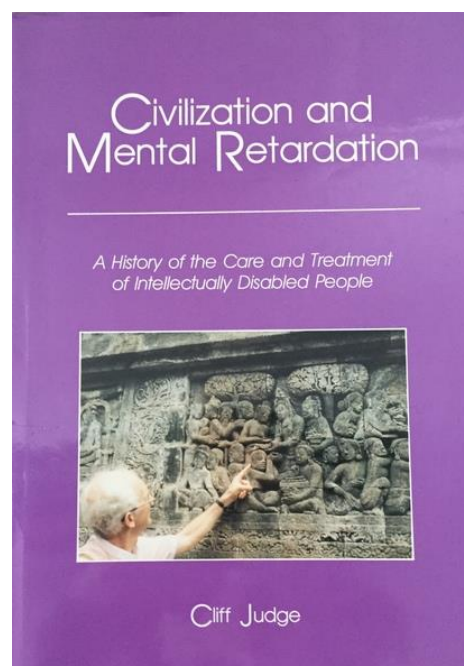
The history of assimilation into Australian society also interested Cliff. The experiences of his wife prompted him to investigate the problems of assimilation of her fellow Latvian immigrants and to compare these with the experiences of Indigenous Australians. Cliff wrote a play which explored assimilation in an Australian context, however it was never published or performed.

Following his retirement, and fascinated by Latvian culture, Cliff mastered the challenging Latvian language, gaining a pass at VCE level.

Many residents were involved in the running of the Kew Children's Cottages. They worked in the laundry, kitchen, nursery, gardens and wards. Most derived satisfaction from having a valued role in the Cottages' community. It was a diverse community, made up of residents and their families and staff. Sadly, many residents had no families of their own to take an interest in their welfare. While they were called Children's Cottages, many residents who entered as infants spent their entire lives in the institution.

In 1973, *The Age* initiated a campaign to raise funds for the care of the intellectually disabled at Kew Cottages. Donations were received from the general public, Kew Lions Club, the Kew Cottages Parent's Association and the Hamer government (which matched public donations). In 1977, newly constructed facilities were opened by Rupert Hamer. These included a hydrotherapy pool, medical and dental centre, recreation and art centres. By the late 1970s, special education, sports programs and nursing care at the Cottages were excellent, although there was much overcrowding. Nurses were often holders of the Mental Health Deficiency Nursing Certificate.

Following his retirement from Kew Cottages, Cliff continued his interest in the causes of intellectual disability and investigated these and the history of treatment in his 1987 book, *Civilization and Mental Retardation*. He also completed a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in philosophy.



FRONT COVER - CIVILISATION AND MENTAL RETARDATION
Published 1987
KHS Collection

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CLIFF JUDGE *(from page 10)*

In 1987, the Kew Cottages Historical Society was formed. Even in its centenary year, it was clear that the future of the Cottages was uncertain. The first activity of the Society was an Oral History project with interviews of residents and staff. Out of these interviews came another book, *Kew Cottages: The World of Dolly Stainer*, co-authored by Cliff and Fran. Cliff's daughter Astrid, a writer and editor, prepared the book for publication in 2002. It was subsequently commended for a Victorian Community History Award, and turned into a play by Janet Brown, performed in 2006 at the Carlton Courthouse.

In 2008, despite community opposition, the State Government sold the 27-hectare Cottages site to a developer and moved the 460 residents into community housing. Most of the residents, aged between 35 and 45 years, needed high levels of care.

Cliff saw the positives in large institutions when they were well run and properly funded. He questioned the drive to deinstitutionalise, which marked the 1970s and 1980s. His views sometimes differed from those of senior managers in the Mental Health Department.

In many ways, Cliff saw his role as an advocate for people with an intellectual disability and for their families. He promoted the rights of the intellectually disabled, fostered high standards of medical and nursing practice and delivered caring services to the people in his care. Through his example, he stimulated research in the field of intellectual disability.

Suffering incurable motor neurone disease, Cliff died in 2002. His ashes are interred in the Boroondara General Cemetery.

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(With the assistance of Astrid Judge, Cliff's daughter)

STORIES THEY TELL

A HISTORY OF KEW THROUGH OBJECTS

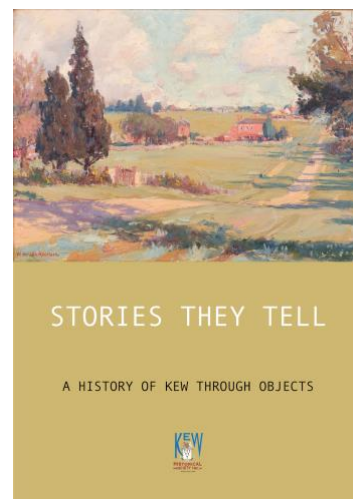
The last major history of Kew was published in 1973. Since then, members of the Kew Historical Society have identified a number of gaps in our recorded history, as told by previous historians, and attempted to fill and update these with publications covering newly explored aspects of our history.

The Society's previous collaboratively written history explored the history of Kew through the lives of former Chairmen and Mayors of Kew. Like our new history, that publication was funded by a Community Strengthening Grant awarded by the City of Boroondara.

It has taken 18 months to research, photograph, write about, edit and layout the book, which selects 31 objects from our collection, and explores the diverse stories that each item represents in Kew's history.

The earliest item described is a 'Cartwheel Penny' from 1797, which when unscrewed reveals a lock of hair of Thomas Henty, father of the Henty children and grandchildren who were active colonisers in Western Australia, Tasmania and Victoria. The final object described jumps forward 150 years to the Town Crier's outfit worn by Philip Slobom during the Save the Kew Court House campaign. In between are stories generated by individual artworks, photographs, maps, certificates, books, signs, textiles and clothing.

Each object, photographed by Christian Capurro, is presented in full colour. Each story about an object was written by a member of our research and or



collections group. They include Robert Baker, Julie King, Suzanne McWha, Desley Reid, Felicity Renowden, Margaret Robinson, Judith Scurfield, and David White.

Copies of the book are available for purchase from the Society at monthly meetings, at our Heritage Centre in the Kew Library, and from the Kew Court House.

The Society wishes to acknowledge the enormous effort that has gone into making this magnificent new publication such a success.

Kew Historical Society Inc.
PO Box 175
Kew VIC 3101

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Printing: Courtesy of Tim Smith MP, State Member for Kew.
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