

KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

P.O. BOX 175, KEW 3101

President:

Mrs. Sue Leong

Hon. Secretary:

Miss Lex Allen

Newsletter No.34

Jan./Feb. 1987

Dear Members,

Happy New Year to you all-I hope you are well rested and ready to approach 1987 with vigour.

Our monthly meetings during 1987 will no longer be held at the Manchester Unity Hall. We will now meet at the more comfortable venue of Hall number 3 of the Kew City Halls complex. There are ample parking spaces in the Council Car Park and the hall has facilities for making supper. Entrance to the hall is by the Citizens' Advice Bureau door.

I am a little sad to be leaving the Manchester Unity Hall as I think it is a quaint building, conducive to camaraderie. Creature comforts and convenience have, however, prevailed, prompting our move. Grateful thanks to Dot Adams and the Manchester Unity Committee for allowing us to use their hall over the past years.

Our first meeting in the Kew City Hall no.3 will be at 8.00p.m. on Wednesday 11th. February. Our guest speaker will be Mr. Noel Goss from the National Trust Tours office who is going to speak about Mulberry Hill, the former home of Sir Daryl and Lady Lindsey.

Onto other news- our Christmas party at Chris and Jacci Simpson's home was a pleasant occasion. For once the weather was kind to us and we enjoyed a balmy evening where most of us could savour our spit roast dinner outside. Thank-you to Chris and Jacci for having us and to all members who were able to attend. A special thank-you to Alva Allen for once again donning the Santa outfit and providing pleasure for the young and young at heart.

I think 1987 will be another busy year for us and I hope as many members as possible can participate. The Port of Melbourne launch trip, which was cancelled by the Authority last October, will take place on Wednesday 18th. February when participants will meet outside the Kew City library at 12.30p.m.. Please remember that it is bring your own afternoon tea and the cost of the bus is \$3.00. Please confirm or make your booking with Lex Allen (phone) by the meeting on 11th. February.

The annual cake stall will be held on Friday 6th. March. I shall confirm arrangements at the February meeting.

On 22nd. November last year, it was my pleasure to represent the Historical Society at the Kew R.S.L.'s celebration of the 100th anniversary of their branch's property, formerly known as "Wilton", which was the home built for Dr. William Butler Walsh in 1886 on the corner of Cotham Rd. and Charles Street.

It was a happy occasion with speeches being made by the Kew R.S.L. President, Mr. J. Ryan; the mayor, Cr. Joe Orlando, and the member for Kooyong, Mr. Andrew Peacock. Afterwards, we were given a sumptuous afternoon tea and then taken for a tour of the building. For some reason, I had always thought that the tower contained a staircase, but of course it does not. There are delightful stained glass windows throughout the Cotham Road side of the house and a lovely carved blackwood staircase at the entrance.

The R.S.L. were kind to include us in their celebrations and members should be happy that nearly 30 years of our Society's existence has given us some standing in the Kew community.

Speaking of centenaries, it has been pointed out to me by Gwen McWilliam from the Hawthorn Historical Society, that our Queen Victoria Jubilee Fountain may not really have its centenary this year. Although the inscription on the fountain says it was erected on 21st. June 1887, in honour of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, extracts from the Hawthorn Historical Society's index to the 1888 Boroondara Standard have noted a continuing saga over its erection. (I have included the extracts in this newsletter.) It looks like we will need to find out when it actually was finished and working - all offers of help gratefully accepted.

Before I close my usual long letter, I would like to let you know that the Kew Council has given us a Community Assistance Grant of \$250.00 for purchasing acid free paper and materials to preserve our archives.

Regards,

Suzanne Leong
Sue Leong
(President)

HISTORICAL NOTES



A postcard of Kew made before 1920 from the archives. Note the Jubilee Fountain plus fig tree outside the Post Office. The buildings on the right were called The Block.

HISTORICAL NOTES

Extracts from the 1888 Boroondara Standard courtesy of Gwen McWilliam of the Hawthorn Historical Society.

"3 Feb. 1888 ...Cr. Martin wished to know if anything was being done in the erection of the Jubilee Fountain. The Mayor said some of the materials had been placed in the ground.

27 April 1888...architects had arranged for selection of lamp for top of Jubilee Fountain. Cr. Martin said...a lot of 'humbug' over the fountain and the architects should have arranged to have had the work completed long since. The mayor said that everything would be completed in a short time.

11 May 1888...Mayor reported...a set of four lamps ordered, to be used in connection with the Jubilee Fountain erected in front of new public buildings (post office, court etc.)

15 June 1888 Letter from Reid, Smart & Henderson...all instructions had been given regarding erection.

3 Aug. 1888 Letter from architects...had taken every step to compel the contractor to complete...now being gone on with.

17 Aug. 1888 ...disgrace...it seemed it never would be finished...the contract time was six weeks, but it was now eight months since the work had been commenced.

28 Sept. 1888...Mr. Fenton was now proceeding with the erection...Cr. Ellis said he did not believe Fenton would ever finish...should cancel contract... Council adjourned.

5 Oct. 1888...Cr. Gray stated Mr. Herbert Henty had promised to undertake the completion of the fountain...motion not seconded.

9 Nov. 1888 Letter from architects...tenders not yet received...Fresh tenders for the fountain would still be received.

7 Dec. 1888 Letter from Reid, Henderson & Smart...no fresh tenders had been sent in beyond those (already) received...tender of Wilson, Corben & Co. at £189 17s. 9d. be accepted for completion. Carried."

By way of contrast, F.G.A. Barnard records in his 1910 history of Kew (p.64)-
"The fine block of public buildings erected in 1888, at a cost of £10,000, comprises the post office, facing the junction of High Street and Cotham Road; the court house, opposite Walpole Street; with the police station adjoining. At the apex of the triangle is the Jubilee Memorial Fountain erected by the Borough Council in 1887, commemorating the jubilee of Queen Victoria. It may be interesting to note that the roadway here is just 190 feet above sea level."

So - memories are short! I guess it makes more sense that the fountain was erected after the post office complex was completed. It will be interesting to find out when the saga of the fountain ended. Its fate was to make way for the War Memorial and rest at the entrance to the Alexandra Gardens. Kew's history is not without ironies!

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome new members Mrs. Derryn Sayers and Mrs. Judy Mills. We hope they enjoy their association with us.

DIARY NOTES

+ Note : All meetings will now be held at the Kew City Hall number 3 (opposite the present library) and commence at 8.00p.m.

11th. Feb. Guest Speaker: Mr.Noel Goss from the National Trust Tours Office will speak about Mulberry Hill

18th. Feb. at 12.30p.m. Port of Melbourne Authority launch trip.Participants assemble outside the Kew City Library.B.Y.O. afternoon tea.Cost of bus \$3.00.Contact Lex Allen

6th. March (Friday) 9.00a.m. K.H.S. Cake Stall.

11th. March Guest Speaker: Mr.J.Pennington,Kew District Scouts Commissioner.

14th. March(Sat.) Kew Festival.The Society will participate in the Parade at 11.00a.m.

15th. March(Sun.) Kew Festival.A free walking tour of Kew (lasting approx. one hour) will be conducted from outside the library entrance at 2.00p.m. Guide books available at a cost of \$1.50.

22nd. March(Sun.) Kew Festival.The Society will run its free bus tour no.2 of central Kew and Studley Park, leaving from the library entrance at 2.00p.m. and lasting approximately 1½ hours.

+ Reminder : 4th.April marks the beginning of the National Trust's Heritage Week.The Friends of the Villa Alba are holding a Villa Alba Restoration Trade Fair on Saturday and Sunday 4-5 April.

18th. April Guest Speaker: Prue Sanderson from the Kew Heritage Committee.

13th. May Guest Speaker:A speaker from the Royal Guide Dogs'Association will speak and show a film about the Association's work,and bring along a friendly dog.

Later speakers are still to be confirmed,but the other meeting dates are 10th.June,8th.July,12th.August,9th.September,14th.October (A.G.M.) and 11th.November.

SPECIAL PLEA

If you can help at the K.H.S. information counter in the library on Mondays from 2.30 to 4.00p.m.,please contact Dorothy Benyei on

COMMITTEE FOR 1986-7

President:	Mrs. Sue Leong
Vice Presidents:	Cr. Phillip Barnes
	Mrs. Thea Sartori
Hon. Secretary:	Miss Lex Allen
Ass. Secretary:	Miss Irene Stones
Treasurer:	Dr. Laslo Benyei
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