

KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

P.O. BOX 175, KEW, VIC., 3101

President:
Mrs. Gwen Steele

Hon. Secretary:
Miss Lex Allen

February, 1990.

Newsletter No. 44

Dear Members,

Once again, may I say a very happy New Year to everyone. We can look back at a very pleasant end to 1989.

The interesting visit of Dr. Judge gave us an insight to the Kew Cottages, the street stall was successful and the Annual Meeting was well attended, with only slight changes to the Committee. I thank you all for the honour of being re-elected as President and regret that Alison Goding was unable to accept nomination. Marian Blatchly was elected to the Committee and I am sure will be a splendid help.

Councillor Michael Montalto, our newly elected Mayor, was a welcome guest and gave an excellent account of the present work being undertaken by Kew Council. The November meeting followed the very pleasant visit to Werribee Park on Cup Day, and our thanks to Mr. Pollard for a very pleasant coach trip.

I am sure everyone enjoyed the Xmas Party held at the home of Jacci and Chris Simpson and you join me in expressing our appreciation for their hospitality, and a very special thanks to our "Father Xmas", who braved the hot evening cheerfully - complete with beard. All in all, a very pleasant end to 1989 for the Kew Historical Society.

There are changes to be made early this year as we are unable to use No. 3 Hall for all our meetings, so I draw your attention to details of the venues for the meetings in February and May.

We sadly miss Irene Stones and hope that she will soon be able to re-join us.

Kindest regards to all.

GWEN STEELE

President.

P.S. Annual subscriptions (\$5 individual, \$8 family) were due on 1 July 1989. A few are still outstanding.

DIARY NOTES:

- Wed. 14th February Meeting to be held at the Sacred Heart Hall at 8 p.m., to be followed by a conducted tour of the Church.
- Wed. 14th March Miss Janet Dawe, Kew Town Planner, will be guest speaker. Venue: No. 3 Hall.
- Wed. 11th April "Things I Remember."
Venue: No. 3 Hall.
- Wed. 9th May Local School speaker. Venue to be advised at future meeting and in Kewriosity.
- Wed. 13th June Mrs. Gwen Ripper will talk about her life in Kew. Venue: No. 3 Hall.

Please note: The Lions Club van has been booked for our annual street stall on Friday, 7th September.

Speakers for July to November to be advised in next Newsletter.

Mr. Rick Fairhall has very kindly donated to the Society a pocket-sized "History of Kew", which is extremely interesting, so we decided to include extracts in this and forthcoming Newsletters:

After listing train and tram time tables, a short History of Kew states:

"Nothing is more interesting than to look back through the vista of years gone by and see the various progressive changes of decay and growth which have succeeded each other in an old familiar place. And it is with the object of giving the reader a glimpse of Kew in its earliest days that the following brief sketch is compiled from original sources.

If we cast a retrospective eye say, 45 to 50 years back, we behold a very different Kew from the aspect of busy life which it now presents - from the stately avenues of mansions, cosy villa residences, and handsome lines of shops in the busy thoroughfare of High-street of today. In the very early days - in the days of the 'Shepherd Kings' of Victoria - this whole district was a sheep run, in the hands of Major Hodgson (whence the name Hodgson-street). This gentleman used to have his station near the now Johnston-street bridge. Thus a dense scrub covered the hills and vales, and only from the top of the rise at the head of what is now High-street, but which was then known only as the main road, could be obtained stray glimpses of the site of what was destined to be Melbourne -

A might city, like the ocean,
Rolling, restless at our feet.

By and by there were made two estates - one the Clifton, embracing Studley Park (from which the Clifton Hotel takes its name) and the other the Cotham Estate, the latter extending towards the now Boroondara Cemetery. Cutting through this bush country, then, from the back blocks towards town, were the two roads now known as High-street and Cotham-road, both converging towards the Yarra about where the Johnston-street Bridge stands. At that spot about 50 years ago, was established a punt, where woodcarters and others could get across the river, drays, cattle and all for a small sum. The first bridge which spanned the river in that locality was the Penny Bridge (the now disused bridge, through the holes in which it has been said a horse and lorry might easily fall). Along the river flats in those days the settlers grew potatoes largely and large."

(To be continued)