

Kew Historical Society Inc.

P.O. BOX 175, Kew VIC 3101

President:
Mrs. Dione McIntyre

Hon. Secretary:
Miss Lex Allen

January 1996

NEWSLETTER NO. 57.

Dear Members,

It is with pleasure that I write to you as your new President in 1996. I wish you all a healthful and rewarding New Year.

Ours is a common interest in preserving what remains of the old Kew and recording its history. At the same time, we understand that some changes are inevitable and can improve our way of life.

During the past 100 years the whole world has undergone remarkable transformations. Some changes have been beneficial, while some have been to the detriment and loss of irreplaceable local heritage.

For several years one of our principal landmarks, the old Kew Post Office building, was allowed to fall into disrepair but now, as restoration work nears completion, there is cause for optimism as it is prepared for a new life.

The fate of the Civic Centre will be the subject of great community interest and concern during the coming year. Even though its sale seems inevitable, there is at least some hope that community use of the Ivan Wade Room and car park will be allowed to continue.

The Kew Historical Society holds a unique place in our community. Its role in recording and preserving our local history provides a valuable resource for the growing population, many of whom are showing a greater interest in our past, particularly in relation to the history of families.

Dorothy Benyei, our Archivist, spends many hours attending to requests for information, from residents, schools and from the community at large. We thank her for representing the Society so capably and in so many different ways. The depth of her knowledge and the cheerful way she goes about sharing this information with others is a very special gift which we all value. We thank her for all her effort on our behalf.

We also thank our Secretary, our Treasurer and members of the Committee for their time and dedication. Their work does not pass unnoticed.

This year we hope to enlist some younger members. This is essential if the Society is to survive. Perhaps the answer lies in the formation of a student group similar to the Junior National Trust. Please give this matter some thought. Your suggestions will be most welcome.

With very best wishes
Dione McIntyre, President, K.H.S.

THE COMMITTEE:

The following were elected to the Committee for 1995-96::

President	Mrs. Dione McIntyre	Archivist	Mrs. Dorothy Benyei
Vice-Presidents	Rev. Morris Watson and Mr. Raymond Vaughan-Smith.	Assistant Secretary	Dr. Ken Sillcock
Secretary and Public Officer	Miss Lex Allen	Committee	Miss Marian Blatchly and Miss Joan Simms
Treasurer	Dr. Laszlo Benyei	Members	

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO 1995 AGM

It is with pleasure that I present my report to the Kew Historical Society for the year 1994-95. This year we have been part of history as we witness the amalgamation of the City of Kew with Camberwell and Hawthorn to form part of the new City of Boroondara. We have seen the formation of the Combined Historical Societies and greater communication between the five historical societies within the new boundaries. We have seen considerable change in staff at the Library and the Municipal Offices. It is hoped that the good working relationship built up over many years can continue into the future.

As in past years we have had a wide variety of speakers at our monthly meetings. These included speakers from the Vietnamese Baptist Church and the Arthritis Self-help Association, and a number of very talented members of the local community in Di Baker of the Real Estate Institute, Mrs. Elizabeth Minehan, a local artist, and an insight into the changes in the Yarra River from both sides. The Members' Nights are always interesting to all with memories of early days in Kew. This year's recollections were of the end of World war 2 in the Pacific and elsewhere as well.

The Exhibition in Heritage Week was very well produced and those who visited found lots of interest.. The display window into the Library

always causes comment, and I would like to thank Dorothy Benyei and Lex Allen for the time spent in organising these displays.

The Cup day bus trip has become an annual tradition and was enjoyed by all who participated, and the Christmas break-up with Santa Claus and the Christmas carols certainly puts us in a festive mood for the holidays.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee and all those members who attended the working bees over the last few months. Your help has been invaluable. To our treasurer, Laszlo Benyei, thank you for keeping our finances in order, and to all the members who bring along our supper, thank you also. To Ken Sillcock, thank you for editing our Newsletters and including such amusing anecdotes.

It would be very remiss of me not to ask you to show your appreciation to our Archivist, Mrs. Dorothy Benyei, and to our Secretary, Miss Lex Allen, for all they have done for the Society not only this year but in all the past years.

I wish the incoming Committee well for the year 1995-96, and I am sure the Kew Historical Society will grow from strength to strength.

Thea Sartori.

"MUSINGS ARISING" FROM MEMBERS' NIGHT

Last year's Members' Night revealed that our members had ages spread over almost 40 years. Some remembered much about 1945, when others were mere toddlers. The range stretched to about 70 years when a large group from Kew State School came for a discussion with us. It is good that history is an interest which can be shared by people of all ages. Should we have an "Australia Reviews". (rather than "remembers") year every decade, going right back each time to Magna Carta, so that young and old will know what our forebears did to free us from tyranny and then to defend that freedom. We cannot afford to ignore the lessons of our history and fail to guard our hard won rights. We must not allow our nation to drift

into the intolerance and bitterness, into the unchecked irresponsibility of government, even into the anarchy, which plague some parts of our world.

Those of us who are older can help the young to understand what has gone before and why things developed in the way they did. So many of them are interested in our history. We must sustain and foster their interest by presenting it as an ongoing stream of human thinking and activity, not just as static relics of the past.

History compressed!

When war service was mentioned, young people asked our member, "Was it the first or second world war?" "I was rejected for the first", he replied. "as my age was under five years."

OUR HERITAGE WEEK DISPLAY

As we did last year, we will again set up a display in the Phyllis Hore Room illustrating the history of Kew and showing items of historic interest, many of which have been donated to our Archive collection by local citizens. The pieces of equipment we have tell much about the way of life in Kew in earlier times. Enlarged photographs show what Kew looked like, and what services were available, to former generations of residents.

The display will be open to people from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday 20th. and Sunday 21st. April. A coin donation by those who attend, to help defray costs such as hall hire and lighting, would be appreciated.

VALUERS FROM NOON TO 4 P.M.

From noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, 20th. and Sunday, 21st. April, valuers will be present to give assessments of value of possessions

brought by the people. Items assessed include silver, jewellery, porcelain, paintings and also post cards and cigarette cards.

An additional donation of \$2 an item for assessment is asked, and a limit is set of three items to be assessed per person.

BEFORE YOU COME, LOOK IN YOUR GARDEN SHED!!

Last year a Kew resident, who came to our Heritage Week display and found that paintings were being assessed for value, went back home to dust off, clean and fetch a painting which had spent years in several of the family's garden sheds.

The picture proved to be worth a very tidy sum indeed, so bring for assessment any half forgotten treasures you may have. And tip off your friends to do likewise.

KEW FESTIVAL IS ON AGAIN

This year Kew Festival will be held from Saturday, 23rd. March to Sunday, 31st. March. This is later than usual to be clear of the municipal elections, Easter and Senior Citizens' Week. Our part in the Festival is the

HISTORIC TOUR OF KEW

on Sunday, March 24th, on a bus leaving the Library at 2 p.m. and returning at 4.30 p.m..

These tours are a great way for newcomers to Kew to learn about their new surroundings. But there is still much for those who have been on earlier tours, as the route and the commentary are varied from year to year. Those intending to take part should let our Secretary know of their intention.

VERY INTERESTING READING IN OUR ARCHIVES

The histories of Kew by W.Vaughan, Dorothy Rogers, and especially Chapter 3 of F.G.A. Barnard's book, are specially interesting in this

time of change. Also are the 1988 City of Kew Conservation Study and, of the same year, the introduction to "Kew Living".— Ed.

THINGS WE DO

We are much more than just a group which meets monthly to hear guest speakers. We work at preserving and adding to Kew history and in making it available to those who seek it. One major effort of our Working Bees, for instance, is to keep up to date on the ever changing ownership of properties, recording them in a separate file for each Kew street. We also need to record the drastic changes in street numbering e.g. so we can still identify the place where Billy Hughes lived. We are often asked such questions, and our help is sought by those working on histories of families, of

buildings, of localities and of local industries. We set up, and we change, historical displays, including those in the window opening into the Library which are so much appreciated. We talk to many school groups and provide guest speakers for other bodies. We give our considered opinion on new developments in Kew. And a task now to be done is to revise and republish our "tour guides" for those exploring Kew by car or on foot. To quote a notice in a RAAF Senior Chaplain's office, "We *do the impossible immediately. Miracles take a little longer.*"

1996 CALENDAR

MEETINGS

Wed Feb 14 Visit to home of Mrs. Ruth Funder, 7 Mary St. Kew to see her remarkable garden. 7.00 p.m. Supper afterwards at 49 Mary St.

All other meetings to be held in the Phyllis Hore Room, commencing at 8.00 p.m. unless otherwise notified.

Wed Mar 13 Rev. Greg Davies, Chaplain, Kew High School

Wed Apr 10 Speaker from Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

Wed May 8 Mrs. Jill Plowright: "Birds".

Wed June 12 Members' Night

Wed July 10 Carolyn Frank: "Working in Kew".

Wed Aug 14 Robert Green, Heritage Victoria: "Memorial Fountains and Troughs".

Wed Sept 11 Mrs. Joan Smith, Publicity Officer, Guide Dog Association of Victoria, with Quilton, her Guide Dog.

Wed Oct 9 Annual General Meeting, Guest Speaker to be announced in next Newsletter.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

MONDAY FOLLOWING EACH MEETING: 10 a.m. to 12 noon; Working Bee on Archives, to maintain them and keep them up to date. All helpers welcome - and we break for a "cuppa".

Sun Mar 24 Historic tour of Kew. Bus leaves from the Library at 2 p.m. Returns 4.30

Sat & Sun, Apr.20 & 21. Heritage Week display of Kew history in the Phyllis Hore Room, and Assessment of silver, jewellery, porcelain, paintings, cards etc. Details on page 3.

Tue Nov 5 Melbourne Cup Day bus trip. Details to be announced later.

Wed Dec 11 Christmas party. Details in next Newsletter.

FERDINAND, OUR MYTHICAL MEMBER making it Working Bee day. Will Ferdinand get things wrong again? He will EASY TO CHALLENGE if, once more, he has written "Working Bee" in Visitor: We're all one City now, so why can't his diary for the third Monday of each month. people living in Hawthorn or Camberwell be He will front up a week late in May, which starts buried in the Boroondara Cemetery? on a Wednesday, and in October, which starts Local: Well, you could easily challenge that. on a Tuesday. In those months the second Just ask approval to be buried alive there, if Monday will follow the second Wednesday, that's what you really want.