

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, 10th April, 1968.

In pursuance of the policy followed by our society last year of our own members contributing to the programs, an address will be given by Mrs. D. Mattingley on the subject of:

"A CENTURY OF WOMEN'S MIGRATION"

Place: Auditorium, OLD ORCHARD SHOPPING CENTRE, Cr. Williams & Springfield Roads, BLACKBURN. Time: 8.00 P.M.

OFFICE-BEARERS: Owing to illness, our Secretary, Mrs. Calwell, has resigned from office, and Mrs. Mattingley has been appointed to this position. We hope to see Mrs. Calwell at meetings again soon, and we thank her for her efforts on our behalf.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: If your membership subscription is due, would you hand it to the Treasurer at the meeting, or else forward it to him at:

Mr. I. Barker,	Sub.	\$2.00
14 Tortice Avenue,	Junior	50 c.
MITCHAM. 3131		

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS AND OTHERS INTERESTED:

Due to the high cost of advertising, the Committee at present does not intend to insert notices of meetings in the local newspaper. You will remember that last year, an anonymous donation by a generous member enabled us to advertise in the "Nunawading Gazette".

There will be a number of visiting speakers later in the year. They are all busy people who will sometimes travel a long distance, and it is hoped that as many members as possible will attend meetings and bring their friends. When you receive notice of a meeting, WILL YOU PLEASE PASS ON THIS INFORMATION TO ANYONE YOU KNOW WHO IS INTERESTED? AND - ask your friends to join our society.

NEW MEMBERS: We welcome Mrs. Coutts, Miss Rosanne Coutts (Junior) and Mr. Farr.

S.T. GILL IN VICTORIA EXHIBITION at the Latrobe Library; a visit here is essential for anyone with an interest in the history of our own state. This display is open until 10th May.

Hours: Mondays: 2 p.m. to 10 p.m.  
Tuesdays to Fridays: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SWAN HILL DISPLAY at the State Savings Bank, Cr. Bourke & Elizabeth Streets, City. Some 'pieces' of the famous Folk Museum have been brought down to the City specially for this event. Don't miss this display, you will long to see the original.

WHAT MEMBERS HAVE BEEN DOING, WHAT THEY ARE DOING, AND WHAT THEY HOPE TO DO.

1. A duplicator has been purchased and this will be a great help to the Society in printing future Newsletters and other local history.
2. The Committee has decided to hold the annual meeting each year in October, instead of November. This will enable the new Committee to begin planning the program for the next year before the Christmas holidays.
3. A conducted tour of the Latrobe Library is planned for later this year. This would take place on a Monday night. Perhaps members will indicate at the next meeting how many would wish to participate in this.

4. SPEAKERS FOR THIS YEAR, etc.

May: Mr. R. Jackson: "Historical Research".  
June: Mr. K. Paterson: "Archives and Archival Materials".  
July: Mr. A. Massola: "Victorian Aborigines".  
August: Mrs. Hoban: "Caroline Chisholm".  
September: Mr. Blake: "Gold Escort Route to S.A."  
October: Annual, Photographs, Film, Treasures.  
November: To be arranged.

5. MARCH MEETING:

At the invitation of Mrs. D. Goble, M.L.A., 30 members and friends of the Society visited Parliament House on Wednesday, 13th March. It was reported that Parliament House had never been finished, as its dome should have matched the one on Exhibition Buildings. The tiles for the floor in the entrance were made in England and laid by Italian workmen. A recent measurement check showed that they had not moved in 100 years.

Immediately behind the entrance hall is Queen's Hall, used for State Receptions by the Governor and the Premier, and for meetings with and among members who do not have their own offices. The statue of a youthful Queen Victoria dominates the hall, and behind is a musicians' gallery on the back wall of which are portraits of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, copies of originals in Canberra. The impressive chandeliers were once lit by gas.

The Society was then led upstairs into Strangers' Gallery and looked down on the Legislative Assembly in session, in the green furnished lower house - a green to match the British House of Commons. Second Readings of three bills were introduced during this 30 minutes; one about the enquiry into the M.M.B.W. and its working, another about the acquisition of land to increase the size of a cemetery, and a third about the finances of the V.R.C. Debates were adjourned. It was interesting to note the use of wigs, and the formalities connected with the mace.

A visit to the Legislative Council followed, where the comfort of the upper house's red furnishing (to match the House of Lords) was appreciated. Members admired the beauty of the chamber, where pillars and cornices ornate with plaster and gold leaf are softly illuminated by concealed lighting. Some of the traditions were explained: those connected with the Usher of the Black Rod, the opening of Parliament, and the Bar of the House; and the leafy design of the carpet copied from the earliest Parliamentary assemblies in Britain. The care in checking the Hansard reports of proceedings was described, and the circumstances under which Strangers' Gallery may be cleared, by the words "I see a stranger in the Gallery".

The last part of the tour was to the library of 140,000 volumes. Here members browsed at will, but most were impressed by the contents of a glass case displaying the property of one member of the house. These included a first Melbourne newspaper, handwritten by Fawcner, and relics connected with Peter Lalor.

Mrs. Goble joined the Society at the supper she had arranged and other guests were Mr. G. Hayes, M.L.A., and Hon. Wm. Vasey Horton, M.L.C., with whom informal discussions were enjoyed by members. Our sincere thanks go to Mrs. Goble for a very rewarding evening.

J.R.

6. "DISCOVERY" SUMMER SCHOOL at Mornington, 9th-11th March, 1968.

Students gathered at the old Mornington Post-Office (built 1863-4 and in use until 1964) which the local Historical Society now leases and where a museum is planned. Dr. Stephen Murray-Smith delivered a short address and then everyone set off by bus to view the many historical features of the Mornington Peninsula: Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday were spent in this way.

The tour ranged from the impressive and well-guarded Quarantine Station, with its old cemetery, to places less well-known, such as the site of a duel in 1843; the participants were Meyricks and Barker (no relation to our present Treasurer, we are quite certain!), their dispute being over ownership of land.

At the site of the graves in Sorrento, Mrs. Marjorie Tipping, Vice-President of the R.H.S.V., traced again the story of the Collins Settlement of 1803, with its much-discussed transfer to Van Diemen's Land. While the object of the establishment at Port Phillip was to forestall the French, Mrs. Tipping conjectures that the obvious reluctance of Collins to remain may have been due to sheer apprehension, a small, completely isolated settlement would have been very vulnerable to French attack. There was also the ever-present dread that the convicts might one day mutiny. Collins mentioned only lack of water, the unsuitability of the spot and the natives, but these reasons (or excuses) could have masked his real fears.

In Sorrento, the nearby players at the Bowling Green doubtless wondered why a huge crowd of people were just gazing at a piece of wood, while a man talked about it! This wood, 67 feet long and more than 40 inches in circumference in one part, was a cross-yard (not a mast, as many guessed) from a sailing ship. It was washed up on the back beach at Sorrento, and, with the combined efforts of much man-power, a crane and a low-loader, it reached its present resting place. Enquiries indicate that this must be from a sailing ship known to have run aground on a Bass Strait island early this century. Whilst the crew escaped, no other ship has since been able to approach this dangerous shore. Because there was no marine growth at all on the cross-yard, obviously it had not been in the water long; apparently it must have broken away and reached the beach in a very short time. The local society hopes to display this when a suitable plan is evolved whereby the approach of initial-carving humans may be blocked.

A Civic Reception by the Shire President, a talk and slides by Dr. Keith Bowden, who wrote that fine biography "George Bass", and films and prepared tapes of local historic interest were the events of the two evenings.

Monday saw everyone cruising happily on the Bay "In the Wake of Flinders" and other early maritime explorers. Finally, a visit to the historic Ballam Park at Frankston concluded a weekend which was a lively proof that Augustine Birrell erred greatly in using the words: "That great dust-heap called HISTORY".

#### PRESERVING A HERITAGE AT SWAN HILL. Part 1.

Seven acres of a picturesque site at Swan Hill is slowly being transformed into an authentic 19th century Australian town.

An easy three hours can be spent taking in the numerous collection of items from trains to tractors, timber jinkers to gigs, homestead and log cabin, blacksmith's shop to the first prefabricated dwelling.

Sharing your walk will be a few young emus and kangaroos. Beware of the buck kangaroo - he boxes - but the does are most affectionate. When the planned flora and fauna sanctuary is established, there no doubt will be many more of our natives to enjoy.

The establishment of this Folk Museum was made possible by the Government of Victoria, the Council of Swan Hill and the residents of the district. It began with the arrival of P.S. "Gem" on July 25th 1963, and was officially opened by the Premier of Victoria, the Hon. Sir Henry Bolte, on September 29th, 1966.

One enters this area by passing through the "Gem" and she is, as her name implies. The two display cabins give one a mental picture of travel in those earlier days - rather cramped but with the main amenities of bed, wash facilities and storage space, though none of these certainly as we know them today. The wheel house on the top deck is a must to see. The huge ship's wheel is of brilliantly shining brass. On the wall behind it is a River Murray chart. This is a strip map, wound up as the steamer progressed along the river, which shows all the hazards of reefs, snags and sandbars.

Needless to say, there is much more to be seen aboard this fascinating example both of preservation and of recapturing the times in which she moved busily on her highway before railway transport reduced her popularity.

L.K. Calwell.