



NEWSLETTER OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 1985

MEETINGS: Christ Church C. of E. Hall, Edward Street, Mitcham. 7.45p.m.

WED. 9th October. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Annual Report, Election of Office-bearers, etc. Various members
have agreed to stand for election. Everyone is specially requested
to attend, and a small plate of supper each, please.

WED. 13th November. Program not yet finalised.

PLEASE NOTE: Our society is the HOST for the HISTORICAL SOCIETIES'
EASTERN SUBURBS REGIONAL MEETING on Saturday, 19th APRIL, 1986 at the
NUNAWADING HORTICULTURAL CENTRE, JOLIMONT ROAD, NUNAWADING.

All members will be needed to assist in some way - more details later,
but in the meantime, please make a note of this date.

On 14th August, Mr. Howard of Northcote Historical Society,
provided a most interesting evening for us on 'The Rudder Grange Story' -
anecdotes, family history and above all, the canoeing and boating
activities on a stretch of the Yarra from Alphington St. to Studley Park.
All this was centred on a building which began as a boathouse, became
tea-rooms, and was rebuilt further back after Floods as a two-storey
house. The full account is in our minutes of the meeting.

On 11th September, Mrs. Norma Jamieson and our President
explained and demonstrated to us some of the work being carried out on
our Archives at the Council Offices. We all found this extremely interest-
ing and we realise how fortunate we are to have such a dedicated person to
help us. There is always scope for any members to give a few hours of
assistance in this work [office hours].

Extract from our Newsletter of October 1969.

READING - NOW AND THEN.

'Nunawading Gazette', August 1969.

'Blackburn Branch Library lends 340,000 books each year.
32,000 borrowers. Planned Central Library with 86,000 books...
and Reference Section with seating for 100!'

'Ringwood Borough News' 14/8/1931. 'A TRAVELLING LIBRARY'

'A novel venture has been undertaken by Mrs. Vernon Williams, widow of
the Australian author, who has commenced a travelling library in the
Croydon district, using as a nucleus the splendid collection of books
owned by her late husband. This will be kept up-to-date by continuously
adding the latest works of Fiction, etc. to the library.'

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Nomination for:
Proposer:
Secunder:
Nominee's Signature:

Mrs. Williams has commenced delivering to her subscribers on horseback, but later it is her intention to purchase a horse and jinker and go further afield.

AND NOW: For 1984, till the end of September - 732,175 books lent by Central and Blackburn Libraries.

We are indeed fortunate in the City of Nunawading.

PATCHWORK - an old, old craft that is achieving today a greater popularity than ever before. In the past, sometimes this was carried out because of necessity, but nowadays, people choose to spend much of their leisure time with color schemes and countless hours of satisfying stitchery.

Oddly, in the early years of the nineteenth century, there was a great demand for patchwork quilts in that [to English folk] extremely remote colony of New South Wales! Perhaps to the exiles, a patchwork quilt seemed more homelike and nostalgic than anything else likely to be encountered there.

Mrs. Elizabeth Fry [1780-1845], a Quaker, and a great-great-grandmother of the writer, Noel Steatfield, first visited Newgate Prison in 1813. Horrified at the conditions there for prisoners and their children, she began a long campaign of reform, despite much opposition from people in authority. One project was to teach the women sewing and knitting for their own clothes, then to arrange for the sale of other goods made by them. For patchwork sewing classes, Quaker merchants in the drapery trade donated thousands of scraps of material, then a London company agreed to purchase all quilts supplied. Mrs. Fry also began her practice of visiting the convict women about to embark for Australia. With the help of her committee of ladies, she could provide for each prisoner a bag of gifts, which included 2 lbs. of patchwork pieces, needles, thread, scissors, thimble and other articles. The women then could start work immediately. The more industrious convicts could sell their quilts at Rio De Janeiro for a guinea, while the others could do likewise on arrival in Sydney.

A far cry indeed from our leisured patchwork of today, but our spirits surely reach out across the years to those less fortunate women, stitching diligently as their frail ships crossed so many leagues of ocean to that strange new land awaiting them.

[Acknowledgments to 'Elizabeth Fry' by Janet Whitney]

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