

Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.

Formerly Nunawading & District Historical Society Inc.

1965 - 2005



NEWSLETTER



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Series 13, No. 3 May/June 2005

All mail to be addressed to P.O. Box 272 Mitcham 3132 - Museum Telephone 9873 4946

From the President

It never ceases to amaze me that in this the 40th year of the Whitehorse Historical Society, there is a continued interest in history, with people more than ever anxious to trace their family roots and or the history of their house.

The 40 years have not always been easy for the Society with the ebb and flow of membership. A common interest however has always been the aim to document and to preserve the fascinating history of the Whitehorse area.

David Gawler recalled several aspects of this history at his talk in April. He spoke on the remarkable and determined career path of his father, John Stevens Gawler, a highly respected architect, Local Councillor, Urban planning adviser and University of Melbourne academic.

One of Gawler's most innovative designs, a 1915 house in Camberwell, prompted a whole new style of building in Victoria, the brick veneer, a means of making the most of scarce and expensive resources. We also heard that Holy Trinity, Surrey Hills, is one of several churches designed by John Gawler, and while serving on the Box Hill Council, he advised on the design of the City seal and the proposed design of the Municipal Hall.

Co-incidentally, the Association of Eastern Historical Societies Conference, held on 30th April was hosted by the Box Hill Historical Society to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the opening of the Box Hill Town Hall.

This meeting was very well attended and David Gawler again was keynote speaker. After the meeting a tour of the building gave us the opportunity to admire the beautiful marble foyer and staircase, the wood panelling and ornate cornices and an interesting display on the building's history by the Box Hill HS.

Since I last reported to you a display was installed by volunteers at the Vermont Library, this was very well received so a big thank you to all who assisted with this project. We are also busy planning displays for two additional pre-loved National Gallery of Victoria display cases due to arrive very soon. Jay Miller, Bob and Barb Gardiner have followed through on selecting and organising the logistics of acquiring the cases. Our sincere thanks and acknowledgement are due also to the NGV.

After the appeal for volunteers in our last newsletter we have welcomed two new ladies to our working group. I also need to remind you to note in your diary that our next Saturday morning working bee will be held on the 9th of July at 9.30 am onwards.

Please note because of the public holiday our new date for the June meeting moved from the 11th to the 4th of June - I hope to see you there!

Judith Fry

**Next Meeting Sat. June 4th
at the Local History Room
Schwerkolt Cottage
Meeting at 1.30**

Guest Speaker

Sharron Dickman on the
Melbourne Athenaeum Library.

Sharron is a lively speaker with a wealth of experience marketing museums and as a lecturer in the subject. She is author of the Marketing Mix published by Museums Australia and she and her husband are also great Steam engine enthusiasts.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Society is to foster historical interest and knowledge. To collect, document, research, preserve and exhibit items that show how people have lived and worked in the development of the Whitehorse area from human settlement to the present day.

Early Days at the Society: some recollections *A letter from Joan Rocznio*

Dear Judy & editor

Just to let you know that the Rocznio's arrived in Mitcham in late 1964, and mindful of the history we left behind in England, Helen Smith, in 1965 took me to a meeting in a church hall on the Whitehorse Road, Keith Patterson was addressing the new Nunawading Historical Society.

Keith had copied a lot of maps and documents in the State Library and was working on them in the cold area next to the old Schwerkolt Museum. When he gave up I took over and I remember planning an arrangement for the documents, keeping Keith's original grouping.

I remember a meeting in the Muckleston's House where I explained the arrangement and the need for workers to collect material and get it into safety protective envelopes. I remember Bill and Beryl Gray. Beryl later took over from me but sadly died of cancer. We worked in all kinds of places including the basement of the Town Hall.

I eventually suggested the dimensions of the first local history room attached to the old museum. Unfortunately I was overseas when it was opened. I remember so many hard workers friendly people – Shirley and Ian Baker, Andrew Hillier, Shirley Jones, Phyl Johnson, Teddy Poole, Betty Muckleston, Judith (Fry?) Doris Mattingley, Maureen Mason, Barbara Rogalski, Noni Spooner, Jess Barnes, Evelyn Crean, Nina Holgate, Bette Jones and others that I can still visualise but not name.

Councillor Valda Arrowsmith must have special mention – she worked not only in the Society but for the Society in Council and is responsible for much help and for the many concessions that we received.

I remember the search for a photocopier, and for second hand shelves for our growing collection of books, and also purchase of *a filing cabinet* for the collection of leaflets and ephemera of all kinds. And the council staff passed on an old map cabinet over to us. There is so much more to remember. I eventually was made a life member and although unable to get to meetings I am still keenly interested in all that happens. With all my good wishes. JR

*Ed's note: Thanks for your recollections Joan!
The filing cabinets have multiplied since those early days!*

Museum & Heritage news: For the costume aficionados amongst us...

On Friday 13th April, the Belgrave library was host location for a fascinating talk by Anne Dixon on some of the rituals, traditions and costumes associated with death and mourning. The costumes on display were shown in chronological order from 1860 - 1940. Ann also featured a number of accessories including beautiful jet and wood, and hair jewellery.

The audience for the talk also contributed some interesting snippets such as explaining the saying, "The stinking rich". This apparently originated where instead of being safely buried in the Churchyard, it was not unusual for rich church benefactors, interred under the paving stones of the aisles to, as it were, still make their presence felt! Not a nice prospect for the summer months even in England!

Anne also referred to a book that provides very useful information on the cleaning of old costumes. It can be accessed at the State Library and is titled: "*Crinolines and Crimping irons*" by Christina Walkley and Vanda Foster, published by Owen in 1978 it is only available at the Redmond Barry Reading Room in the City.

On Friday May 27th for those able to get to it the Ferntree Gully Library (1010 Burwood Highway at FTG.) Anne will be tackling another interesting aspect of costume, that of dressing for dinner and the etiquette of fine dining. "*Fashion Food & Customs*" Bookings are essential though call 9294 8140 and do make sure you get good directions for parking it is off the Highway and easy to miss if you don't know the area. Advertised cost is \$3

WHS Dates for your Diary

Speakers for meetings in 2005

13th August – AGM

Joseph Borg on the Maltese Historical Society

8th October

John McKernan on the history of Point Nepean

Working Bees 2005

Normally 9.30 am – 12.30 pm

- Saturday 9th of July
- Saturday 10th September
- Saturday 12th November

Deadline for notices relating to heritage or any historical activities for inclusion in the newsletter need to be supplied by the 12th of the month preceding a general meeting

Cataloguing the Collection - Current Status

Artifacts	3954	Items catalogued
Documents	5229	Items catalogued
Photographs	3159	Items catalogued

Membership news

A warm welcome is extended to our new members:

Pat Richardson and
Joy Ogden

Both ladies are helping out with the WWC

City of Whitehorse Events for your Diary

Heritage week 2005 –

various events are planned for the week of:
Saturday 1 October – 8th October

THANKS!

Tremendous support has been given by

Penguin Dry Cleaners

Tunstall Square, 59 Tunstall Rd

Ph: 98426642

www.penguindrycleaners.com.au

RSL (Victoria) Honour Board Research & Preservation Project

Jay Miller has recently been researching an Honour Board at the old Melbourne Teacher's College, now known as the 1888 Building at University of Melbourne. Jay has been in contact with a very dedicated RSL member, Mr Ken Goudie who is the coordinator of a massive undertaking, collecting and receiving and organising texts, histories and some illustrations for access via the internet.

The listings include WWI and WWII Honour Boards in Victoria. To date there are almost 1300 listings from across the State and the project has also resulted in more attention being paid to such memorials. A new board is planned for installation at the Glen Waverley RSL.

Ken's interim internet site can be accessed by entering RSL Victoria on Google and then following the links to the honour board project.

There are a number of memorials listed and some honour boards where Ken has only been sent very minimal information, more is needed. Web sites such as Ken's and the 'War Memorials of Australia' site will be invaluable resources for future family researchers and local historians.

Can you help?

Jay noticed that Ken still needs some information and a photograph of the *complete Mitcham State School Honour List*? One photograph showing a roll book in an unusual frame circular frame is all that he has received to date – can anyone out there help Ken? There may also be other boards out there that need to be included. Ideally Ken needs as much information as possible to be forwarded for him to include on the web site and provides a good checklist for anyone who would like to help. Ken's email is on the project web site but first try the following web addresses to check on the project:

<http://www.rslvics.com.au> and follow link to "war memorials..." on left of web page or try

<http://members.optusnet.com.au/~goudie>

REMEMBER

**Whitehorse Historical Society
Local History Collection**

*open 10.30 am to 2.30 pm Wednesdays. Visitors welcome.
Ring 9873 4946 for an appointment at other times.*

**Box Hill Cemetery Records & Nunawading Gazette
for 1964-1974 available on microfiche for research**

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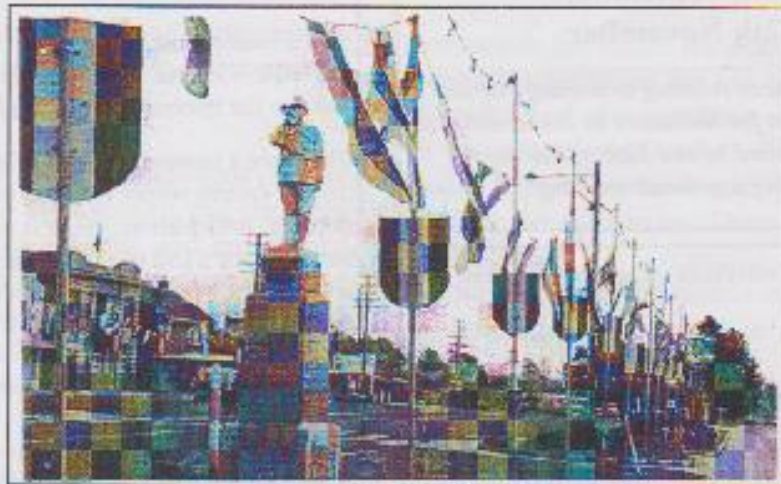


*Whitehorse Historical
Society, Inc.
acknowledge the support
from the
City of Whitehorse*



accredited
museum

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*With the 90th ANZAC day behind us here is a view of the
Mitcham war memorial in its old location on Whitehorse Rd. Taken in 1954 the street decorations
were intended to celebrate the Royal visit that year.*

Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.
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