



History News

ISSUE 371 | APRIL 2024



PIANO EXHIBITED BY MESSRS WILKIE, KILNER AND CO.

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What's on at RHSV

Where possible we offer all our events as hybrid: both in our premises at 239 A'Beckett St, Melbourne and via Zoom. Information on booking tickets to all our events can be found on our website.

WELCOME HOME TO OUR TERLECKI CARVED KILNER TIMBER PIANO



Date: Thursday 4 April
Time: 10:30am – 12noon
Cost: FREE

Event type: in person only

Join us at a sparkling morning tea to celebrate the restoration and reframing of our glorious carved Terlecki timber piano front.

This piano front was donated to us by Keith Kilner representing his wider family and the recent restoration was paid for with a donation from the Boak family. We are enormously grateful to both families for their generosity. At the morning tea, we'll be hosting members of both the Kilner and Boak families.

A tiny bit of background ...

In 1862 piano maker Joseph Kilner and piano tuner Joseph Wilkie opened a music and piano saloon at 15 Collins Street. Driven by Kilner, the firm began experimenting with Australian Blackwood and red gum but also managed to incorporate other local timbers including kauri, myrtle, sassafras and various pine woods in their instruments.

Wilkie, Kilner and Company pianos won major prizes at home and abroad including a silver medal for best entry in its class at

the Centennial International Exhibition held in Philadelphia in 1876 for an upright instrument with a front panel intricately carved with Australian plants and animals, plus the words 'Advance Australia' beneath a rising sun: reminiscent of the Rising Sun badge proudly worn by soldiers of the 1st and 2nd Australian Imperial Force in both World Wars. This is 'our' piano front. The elaborate front was carved by Polish immigrant, Felix Terlecki, who also produced some of the finest ornamental wood-carvings found in Melbourne's colonial churches and banks.

EXHIBITION LAUNCH: MELBOURNE'S STORIED LANEWAYS

Date: Thursday 11 April
Time: 5:30pm for 6pm speeches
Cost: FREE

Event type: in person only
Speaker: Julian O'Shea

We all have our favourite Melbourne laneway and curator David Thompson has chosen his favourites which reveal some intriguing Melbourne stories. When we think of today's gussied-up tourist-friendly laneways like Guilford Lane and Hosier Lane, it is hard to imagine that a mere 50 years ago the laneways were places still full of small factories and light industry. And earlier still there was the desperation of "Little Lon". Today we get only glimpses of those rough and ready laneways which serviced the city and a tremble as the mouths of some still grimy and squalid laneways beckon us deeper in.

The exhibition will be launched by Julian O'Shea who is a popular online creator with millions of views across YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. Julian recently won the 2023 Victorian Community History

Award for best Digital Storytelling Award. Julian has performed at Melbourne Fringe and various comedy storytelling events and has been a comedy writer for Mad Magazine. He is a regular guest on ABC Radio Melbourne with Charlie Pickering and recently shared stories of the city with Julia Zemiro on Great Australian Walks. His work has been featured in *The Age*, *Herald Sun*, 3AW and the ABC. Julian has an upcoming show, 'M is for Melbourne', in the Melbourne Comedy Festival.

AGL SHAW LECTURE

Date: Tuesday 16 April
Time: 5:30pm for a 6pm lecture,
ending at 7pm
Cost: \$35

Event type: in person only
Speaker: Professor Penny Edmonds

The annual AGL Shaw lecture, one of our Distinguished Lecture series, is presented by the CJ La Trobe Society in partnership with the RHSV.

Professor Penelope Edmonds is Flinders University Professor of History. Penny's research is distinguished by over two decades of creative and interdisciplinary work in the areas of Australian history, 19th century British empire and settler colonialism in the Australian and Pacific region, postcolonial histories, heritage and museums. She seeks to bring a critical theory perspective to questions of colonialism, race, gender, reconciliation and redress, humanitarianism, slavery and unfreedom in the Australian and Western Pacific region.

What's on is continued
on page 9



History News

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COVER IMAGE: Wilkie, Kilner, and Co piano. See pages 2 'What's on' and 17 for more information
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President's report

The Fantastic power of catalogues

In the February edition I reminded my fellow members and friends that the RHSV will be, in May this year, 115-year-old. I also outlined that the Society, then the Historical Society of Victoria, had a progressive start supported by a small 'l' liberal Prime Minister about to enter office for the third time, a soon to be Victorian Premier, the speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and some educators. All believed it was a national and small 'l' liberal purpose to collect, protect and disseminate Victoria's history.

A Treasure without a key

Their vision for a collection is still relevant today. Our Vision 115, which will inform our end of financial year giving, is again to affirm the importance of our collection. However, a collection is only as good as its catalogue. Without one, and one relevant to interests of the modern day, the collection is a treasure without a key. This truth was seen by Aldus Manutius, a Venetian publisher who created a catalogue in 1498 of the books he produced.

While many RHSV records are catalogued, often these entries do not pay sufficient attention to the needs of today. Cataloguers are inevitably products of their time and so we must continually revisit our catalogue to ensure it is as rich as possible and fit for our own times. For instance, we need to recognise where women or cultural diversity might be found within our collection.

Other records in our collection are not catalogued at all, as we are continually accepting small sets of valuable records into our collection. This is particularly the case with images. Our recent Melbourne Lanes project has brought over 5,000

images into our collection, but they remain uncatalogued. In this way the potential of many items lay hidden.

Our current staff are highly skilled, but they are part-time appointments, so there are limits to what they can do. Our volunteer cataloguers are more accomplished than ever, due to the induction and constant direction they receive from our staff, but still the gap remains between what is, and is not catalogued.

We also find through better cataloguing, images that are more appropriate to be elsewhere, and therefore repatriate them. Recently, these included Tasmanian hydro images and images of a Northern Territory cattle station. And we share images with other appropriate parties, including First Nations groups.

Catalogues Create Living History

The theme for our Vision 115 May-June 2024 EOFY giving is: 'Catalogues Create Living History'. This recognises that without the painstaking work of cataloguing, writing history and sharing stories is extremely difficult. This became evident during COVID lockdowns when cataloguing continued. Gus Berger had an idea for a film, which became 'Lost Melbourne', a winner in the 2023 Victorian Community History Awards. Gus approached our staff and found ready access to valuable images of Melbourne through the power of cataloguing. Subsequently we were all able to enjoy these images when viewing his film.

Cataloguing has the power to create history! Please give generously to this cause.

Richard Broome AM

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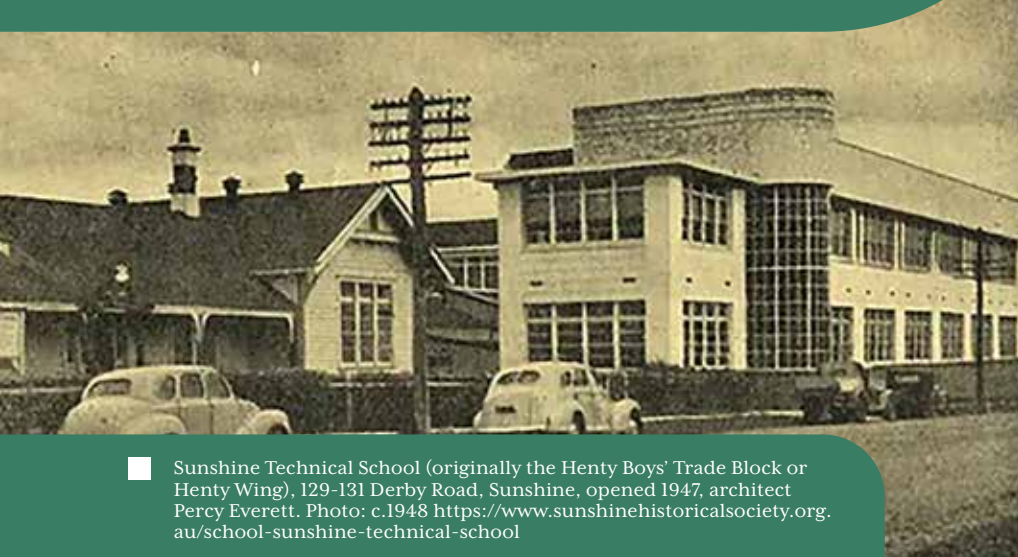
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Heritage report: moderne style Sunshine Technical School



■ Sunshine Technical School (originally the Henty Boys' Trade Block or Henty Wing), 129-131 Derby Road, Sunshine, opened 1947, architect Percy Everett. Photo: c.1948 <https://www.sunshinehistoricalsociety.org.au/school-sunshine-technical-school>

■ **Top:** Sunshine Technical School (Girls' Section, now known as the Nash Block, HO57, 111 Derby Rd, 1939, architect Percy Everett; photo courtesy Sunshine & District Historical Society). The distinctive curved window was to provide light for the dress-making room.

Bottom: Sunshine Technical School (originally the Henty Boys' Trade Block or Henty Wing). Photo: March 2020 <https://www.sunshinehistoricalsociety.org.au/school-sunshine-technical-school>

In the December 2021 issue of *History News*, I praised the action of the Sunshine & District Historical Society. They prevented the Victorian Education Department from demolishing two important heritage buildings comprising the former Sunshine Technical School. It's time for an update.

These lovely Moderne, or Streamline Moderne, buildings are fine examples of the work of Percy Everett (1888-1967), legendary chief architect of the Victorian Public Works Department from 1934 to 1953. Everett played a major role in introducing Moderne style to Victoria, with many important public buildings, including the Russell Street Police Headquarters (1940-43).

The buildings were and still are covered by a local Heritage Overlay, but the Education Department paid no attention and put up a notice of their intent to demolish the buildings. Fortunately, an alert passer-by saw the notice and brought it to the attention of Dr John Parry, President of Sunshine HS. In ten days, he produced a study of the school's history to support a nomination to the Victorian Heritage Register, prepared by Brimbank Heritage Advisor Natica Schmeder.

As a result, the RHSV and other parties wrote to the Hon. James Merlino, MP, then Minister of Education. On 30 September 2021, *The Age* ran a story with photos of the Sunshine HS officers and me. Three weeks later, the Minister replied that the Department would await the decision of Heritage Victoria.

We were optimistic about our chances of obtaining registration for these buildings,

but we were wrong. After an exhaustive assessment, the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria recommended against listing these buildings on the Victorian Heritage Register. To their credit, Brimbank Council will appeal to the Heritage Council against this recommendation. The Sunshine and District Historical Society and the RHSV will be making submissions to the Heritage Council.

The determination is based on the argument that the buildings are not of state significance and, or, don't adequately reflect the values we argued merited recognition; the buildings were significant historically, as representing the significant trend of technical education in Victoria, particularly girls' education. Heritage Victoria noted that 'Sunshine Tech was the first technical school to establish a specialised girls' school' but found that didn't matter because the Nash Block was built after the girls' school opened. 'There is nothing in the remaining fabric which indicates the school's importance as an innovative girls' technical school.' And other girls' schools, in particular Emily McPherson College and MacRobertson Girls' High School, Heritage Victoria found were sufficient to demonstrate girls' education.' We do not accept this. MacRobertson was an elite school, not a technical school; and Emily McPherson College aimed to train girls in 'domestic arts', as future wives and mothers, hardly technical or vocational education.

We argued that the buildings were significant for their association with the leading industrialist H.V. McKay, who gave

five acres of land and £2000 towards the establishment of the Sunshine Technical School in 1912. McKay remained president of the Sunshine Technical School Council until his death in 1926. After his death, members of his family and senior staff of Sunshine Harvester Works continued to sit on the School Council.

The Nash and Henty Blocks together were the fulfilment of McKay's vision and the Nash Block was the fulfilment of the idea of girls' technical education. That alone gives the buildings state significance.

What went wrong here? The fundamental problem is that the local Heritage Overlay is constantly swept aside. The Education Department doesn't even note it. Councils and VCAT routinely find reasons to ignore it. Therefore, to save buildings, people resort increasingly to nomination to the Victorian Heritage Register. Heritage Victoria want to limit the Register to truly important buildings and are pushing back in the hope that the Heritage Overlay can be reinvigorated. This is understandable but we believe that these buildings should not be rejected as part of this push. They represent an aspect of Victoria's working-class history which should be cherished for the future.

Charles Sowerwine,
Chair, Heritage Committee,
11 March 2024.

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We warmly thank the following generous individuals and foundations who, in 2023, supported our day-to-day work and also ensured that the RHSV has a strong future through their support for the RHSV Foundation.

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HSSC Report

Succession-planning: Keeping and caring for collections about us all



Quite some years ago, at an historical societies conference interstate, I was looking forward to one speaker whom I had not previously encountered and whose topic was the challenges for societies. As the speaker progressed, the audience heard about the oft-quoted challenges of an ageing demographic and too few volunteers taking on support and leadership roles. The speaker named a large locale overall where several societies with collections over a century in the making had closed their doors or were soon to do so. Collections were being stored, where possible, in council repositories, at other societies or in people's garages before the possibility of dispersal permanently to libraries or other societies nearby. In some cases, there was 'cherry-picking' from collections, hence the loss of collective appeal and context. The grimmest comment was that some excellent collections of histories from over a century ago were not wanted or valued because they were about the lives of people with whom newer people in the locale had no connection. The audience mood was glum.

I kept waiting for the speaker to offer solutions to the challenges but, to my alarm, there were none. The speaker took slightly more than the allocated time, concluding to the effect that 'We need to find solutions. There were no questions or comments invited from the floor and the audience was ushered to a warm morning tea.

One audience member did, however, stand to offer her society's approaches to similar challenges in her community but, because of the tight venue configuration and poor acoustics, not everyone heard her and many had left the room.

The woman reported that her society was actively and positively inviting families of new cultural groups to display something of their family and cultural histories on a regular rotational basis in her society's foyer. The activity had been a long-term one with positive outcomes of many kinds. I caught up with her over morning tea and asked for more details. Here is her story.

The society's members first approached friends or business people they knew

comfortably well enough, for example shop-keepers they saw regularly, of cultural backgrounds in their community different to the backgrounds predominant in the collection.

The community members were asked if they would care to display several non-precious objects that said something about their family or cultural history.

The objects would be displayed in a glass case in the centre of the foyer where anyone entering the building would see them.

With all permissions granted, there was a brief overview of the family's story and cultural background placed in the case as well as brief captions of the objects on display.

The glass case displays lasted for one-two months before being replaced by another set of family and cultural stories.

The objects, including photos, in the glass case were photographed for permanent recording by the society.

There was more.

The displays were 'launched' at regular evening meetings or events, with the families invited to bring other family members and friends. The families were invited to say a little more about themselves and their objects if they wished; all families had done so. Much of this was done in the foyer and not as a formal presentation exercise unless the speakers felt comfortable.

The occasions were special and joyous. Refreshments were served which, in some cases, included finger foods brought by the visitors.

The displays became a regular feature in the society's newsletters.

The project had additional benefits and took on a longer life of its own.

- *People who might never have otherwise entered the society's premises were doing so.*
- *Sometimes, people associated with the family and culture on display came to see it on separate occasions for themselves.*
- *At evening events, more society members began attending and mingling with the visitors because something 'new' was on offer.*
- *The family members and friends of the monthly display were also offered a brief tour of the society's exhibition at the evening event. My own mind began*

to swim at this point: What objects would I have shown if leading a little tour? I would not have tried to tell everything; I would have focused on stories associated with diverse landmarks and street names which the visitors might encounter regularly in the community. And in telling the stories, I would also have thought to foreground the common humanity; the shared human experiences.

- *In some cases, objects were donated to the society for more permanent keeping.*
- *All up, there was respectful dialogue and learning.*

I cannot report that the above activities resulted in many newer and younger financial members deciding to volunteer or assume leadership roles in the society, nor that all parties were better-equipped to speak out for the collection of older and newer objects if ever under threat. However, I do imagine that the society became more active beyond its doors in cross-cultural events in the community. I am sure that the society had done itself and its community an enormous favour with potentially many more positive outcomes for all.

To this day, I wonder if the speaker at the conference was being deliberately provocative and hoping participants would follow-up. That opportunity was not at all easily provided at that time, but the RHSV exists to provide such opportunities.

If your society has a story of success in the above regards, HSSC would value sharing it with the RHSV community: hssc@historyvictoria.org.au. HSSC also has a variety of exciting events planned for 2024 where such topics will be discussed, as well as speakers available to your society to encourage discussion about this and other topics. Look out for details in *History News*, emailed 'Old News' and updates from the RHSV office and on the RHSV website: <https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/>.

We look forward to hearing from you.

More in time,

Rosalie Triolo

Chair: HSSC

Email: hssc@historyvictoria.org.au

The extraordinary treasure trove: an ANZAC from Bendigo



■ Doch took this photo of Margot to Gallipoli, and it was still in Doch's little wartime case when Ross McMullin discovered it a hundred years later.

It occurred a decade ago now, but I recall the occasion vividly, which is hardly surprising.

A polite, sprightly, 89-year-old woman I had just met was inviting me to scrutinise the contents of a black tin box, which had been retained, and rarely looked at, by her family for almost a hundred years. The potential assistance for my quest was obvious.

Even better, this obliging octogenarian proposed to allow her inquisitive visitor, who seemed to have an unending array of challenging questions about the distant past, to take this precious material away for proper appraisal.

What was in her black tin box proved to be remarkable. It remains the richest private treasure trove I've ever encountered in more than four decades as a biographer.

My fascination stemmed from an interest I had developed long ago in forgotten Australians who exemplify our lost generation of World War I. The national focus on the collective effect of the numbing number of losses from that ghastly conflict has been understandable, and appropriately consistent with our democratic traditions, but I had a different purpose in mind with this project.

I wanted to retrieve the stories of these talented, short-lived and forgotten individuals. I wanted to write their biographies in a way that highlighted their prewar promise, illuminated their wartime experiences, and underlined the magnitude of their nation's loss when they did not survive the conflict. My multi-biography *Farewell, Dear People: Biographies of Australia's Lost Generation* was published in 2012.

With a second volume under way, one inclusion was certain. A classic example of Australia's lost generation was Murdoch Mackay, a brilliant barrister from Bendigo who also excelled as an officer before he died in France aged 25. "Doch" Mackay is unknown today, yet he could have attained Victoria or Australia's very highest positions in the law and politics.

He had married Margot Watson in Melbourne shortly before he departed for the war, so naturally I was keen to see if I could ascertain more about him through her. Might she have had a longer life than Doch, perhaps much longer?

I found that she had remarried and had become Mrs S. Hill of London. This was not a very encouraging discovery for a Melbourne-based biographer. A rueful conclusion about my prospects of finding out more was unavoidable. 'Good luck with that', I remember thinking.

But I had a go. Hours of genealogical research began to pay dividends. It gradually became evident that Margot and her second husband, Solly Hill, had a daughter, who was known as Judy. Moreover, Judy had married a naval officer from Western Australia who was based in London during the Second World War, and after the conflict they had settled in Australia.

Further ferreting revealed that not only was Judy apparently still alive at an advanced age, but also residing not far away in a Melbourne suburb. This seemed incredible after my pessimism about ever being able to connect with Margot. With minimal delay I contacted Judy and arranged to visit her, and I found her willing to be as helpful as she could.

The nature of my quest had prompted Judy to retrieve her black tin box. As she knew, it contained everything that Margot had decided to retain about her connection with Doch: his arrestingly frank letters, his wartime diary, his postcards from overseas, numerous photos, plentiful newscuttings, various certificates, even an admirer's poetry about him, together with various documents relating to her bereavement such as condolences, obituaries, death notices and official expressions of sympathy, including from the King and Queen of England.

Judy could enlighten me about aspects of Margot's relationship with Solly, as they were her parents, but she had minimal knowledge about her mother's previous husband. She was not incurious about

Doch, but she and Margot had rarely talked about him. Such conversations, they both felt, would be unfair to Solly.

Similarly, Margot and Judy had also been disinclined, for the same reason, to peruse the contents of the black tin box. Margot wanted to retain her mementos of Doch, but delving into them was another matter: as well as being disloyal to Solly, it would be painful for Margot. Moreover, even after Judy inherited the black tin box following the death of her parents in London during the 1970s, she still felt reluctant to pry into it.

But Judy was happy for me to do so. The upshot, then, was that I had been given the green light to proceed with a thorough examination of the black tin box that had been rarely scrutinised in almost a century. And the contents, especially for someone in search of insights into Doch's relationship with Margot, proved riveting.

Margot had kept many of his letters. They included his initial awkward letter to her in 1910; his ardent missive not long afterwards declaring he was in love with her; his frustrated epistle four years later, when he was still waiting for her to commit; his adoring correspondence after their marriage and his departure; his fervent response, having just endured the worst of Pozières, to her 36-page letter, number 64, that she had partly written, she assured him, in her 'very thin pink nightie'; and his extraordinary farewell love letter from beyond the grave that he had arranged for a friend to send her in the event of his death.

On one aspect, though, the black tin box was silent. It contained nothing about Doch Mackay's crucial role in one of Australia's most momentous victories at the Western Front. But that's another story.

Ross McMullin's second multi-biography about Australia's lost generation, Life So Full of Promise, includes the story of Doch Mackay and Margot Watson, and has been shortlisted for the Nib Literary Award.

Ross McMullin



■ Left: Colin Hunter IV and Richard Broome
Right: Lynette Russel delivers Billibellary 2024

3rd Billibellary lecture at RHSV

On 20 February ninety people gathered in the Drill Hall and on Zoom to hear Professor Lynette Russell AM deliver this third Indigenous History RHSV Lecture. The Welcome to Country was given by Colin Hunter IV of the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Aboriginal Cultural Corporation and a descendant of Jessie Hunter one of the last residents at Coranderk mission.

Professor Russell's lecture was entitled: 'Where we are at now and where are we going? Thinking about Australian Indigenous Histories and their Future'. Her Indigenous ancestors were born on Wotjobaluk country and she also has convict ancestry. She is ideally placed to comment on Australian history and does so from a cross-disciplinary perspective being informed by archaeological training and her interest in museums studies, gender and environmental studies as well as practising as an historian.

Professor Russell reviewed the changing knowledge of Aboriginal people and their histories since the 1990s. Whereas few students knew the names of any Aboriginal groups in the 1990s, this has changed largely due, she believes, to the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders map, now widely dispersed and found at <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia>

Professor Russell spoke about other digital resources which are now revolutionising knowledge of Indigenous groups and their cultures.

- The year 12 VCE 4 volume textbook of Cambridge University Press edited by Richard Broome and Ashley Pratt is both in hard copy and digital: <https://www.cambridge.edu.au/education/series/Analysing-Australian-History>
- 'The Australian Wars' a documentary by Rachel Perkins on SBS was a powerful example of digital storytelling: <https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/tv-series/the-australian-wars>
- The interactive massacre map developed by a team headed by Lyndall Ryan at the University of Newcastle has also applied digital means to history exploration: <https://c21ch.newcastle.edu.au/colonialmassacres/map.php>

Finally, Professor Russell talked of her project at Monash University on 'Global Encounters & First Nations Peoples. 1000 Years of Australian History' <https://www.monash.edu/arts/monash-indigenous-studies/global-encounters-and-first-nations-peoples>

This work is expanding through Australian Research Council funding into a huge long term multidisciplinary project with multiple partners <https://globalencounters.net/>

The lecture will appear in the *Victorian Historical Journal*.

Richard Broome

Australia Day Honours

The RHSV would like record our appreciation for the following dedicated women and men who have worked tirelessly to build the history sector in Victoria. They have been justly rewarded with Orders of Australia.

AM

Dr June Factor, Ivanhoe, Vic

Significant service to literature, history and the community.

Expert on the 'lore and language of childhood'. Compilations of schoolyard rhymes such as *Far Out*, *Brussel Sprout* (2016). Published a variety of literary reviews and essays. Prominent in and past president of Victorian Council for Civil Liberties.

OAM

Mrs Maria Stella Cameron, Port Fairy, Vic

Service to veterans and the community.

Involved in tracing graves and previously unidentified soldiers killed in World War I and World War II. Port Fairy Cemetery Trust: trustee since 2004.

James Andrew Claven, Oakleigh, Vic

Service to veterans and community history.

Lemnos-Gallipoli Commemorations Committee: secretary since 2012. Researcher and Project Manager: creation of nine new ANZAC commemorative memorials in Greece since 2018.

Mrs Lynette Edith Franklin, Nathalia, Vic

Service in a range of roles.

Chief researcher Nathalia and District Historical Society for over 20 years. Chief researcher Nathalia Genealogy Group for over 20 years. Compiler of *Nathalia Township Street Names* (2022). Various other community groups including secretary of the Barwon Homestead for 25 years.

Mr Loc Huu Lam, Vic (no suburb given)

Service to the Vietnamese community of Victoria.

Director and chair of fundraising: Vietnamese Museum of Australia.

Mr Andy Huu Nguyen, Camberwell, Vic

Service to veterans.

Vietnam War Memorial of Victoria.

Mrs Elizabeth Karen Wynne, Yarram, Vic

Service to the community of Yarram.

Yarram Historical Society: vice president since 2013, and committee member. Yarram Eisteddfod volunteer since 1980s. Yarram Agricultural Society.

What's on at RHSV

continued from page 2

Where possible we offer all our events as hybrid: both in our premises at 239 A'Beckett St, Melbourne and via Zoom. Information on booking tickets to all our events can be found on our website.

ENGINEERING HERITAGE VICTORIA LECTURE

Date: Thursday 18 April

Time: 5:30pm for a 6pm lecture, ending at 7pm

Cost: \$10/\$20

Event type: hybrid - in person and on Zoom

This will be the first of the 4 events we co-present with Engineering Heritage Victoria each year.

HSSC SEMINAR IN MORTLAKE

Date: Saturday 18 & Sunday 19 May

Time: Sat 18 May 3:30pm until late, Sun 19 May 9am - 4pm

Cost: \$35

Event type: in person

Ready for a Western District weekend adventure? If you are involved in an historical society, please join us in Mortlake for lots of lovely history and heritage add-ons on Saturday 18 May followed by a one-day seminar on Sunday 19 May. The seminar is presented by the RHSV's Historical Societies Support Committee in partnership with Mortlake & District Historical Society.

The full program and accommodation options can be found on our website. Mortlake is in the heart of the Western District and the seminar is a marvellous excuse for a weekend getaway.

Speakers include Robert McLaren, Richard Broome, Helen Laffin, Rosalie Triolo, Craig Proctor, Paul Fearon, Peter Yule and Rosemary Cameron.

CATALOGUING CLINICS

Date: 2 May (this is a week later because of Anzac Day the previous week)

23 May

Time: 11am - 12noon

Cost: FREE

Event type: Zoom only

Join Jillian Hiscock, the RHSV Collections Manager, each month in this informative and easy-going Zoom forum on all aspects of cataloguing collections for historical societies.

Jillian has a different topic each month and is happy to be guided by those who attend as to what they would like covered in upcoming clinics. Bring your questions, no matter the topic; this is an interactive space where questions are encouraged. The RHSV does not endorse any particular cataloguing software as we believe it is horses for courses and Jillian will talk about issues that impact on cataloguing whether you are using cataloguing cards or software.

AGM + WESTON BATE ORATION

Date:

Tuesday 28 May

Time: AGM 5pm - 6pm

Refreshments

6pm - 6:30pm

Weston Bate Oration

6:30pm - 7:30pm

Cost: FREE

Event type: Hybrid: in person and Zoom

Speaker: Dr Fiona Gatt

An agenda and other papers for the AGM will be sent to members 2 weeks prior to the meeting.



The Weston Bate Oration is one of the RHSV's Distinguished Lecture Series.

Shopkeepers owned the businesses where residents obtained goods, from basic daily needs to the flights and fancies of an emerging modern consumer culture of 19th century Melbourne. Echoes of their presence live on in the shopfronts and main shopping streets. This lecture investigates and compares the shopkeepers who operated in three distinct, representative suburbs of 19th century Melbourne: genteel Malvern, inner urban North Melbourne and industrial Footscray. In doing so it provides a genuine comparative cross-section of the urban retail trade in this period and reveals the subtle differences between these localities in terms of the prestige and identity ascribed to shopkeepers within the socio-economic fabric of these local societies. Yet across all three towns, today's suburbs, shopkeepers held an important and unique role, one which cannot be understood through the same lens as the working class or middle class.

Dr Fiona Gatt is a professional historian who works on commissioned histories for clients such as the National Trust of Australia (Victoria). She teaches history at La Trobe and Deakin universities and undertakes research for history projects at universities across Australia. Her particular areas of interest include urban history, class, migration, housing and First Nations history. Her work has been published in *History Australia*, *Postcolonial Studies*, the *Victorian Historical Journal*, and shortlisted for the Victorian Community History Awards. The 2024 Weston Bate Oration will present Fiona's research findings as Historian in Residence at the Royal Historical Society of Victoria 2023-2024.

Holsworth Local Heritage Grants 2023

We'd like to congratulate the following organisations which were awarded 2023 Holsworth Local Heritage Grants. The number of applications for these grants has grown considerably since they were opened for digital as well as print projects so the competition has been fierce.

- Ballan Shire Historical Society
- Horsham Historical Society
- Poowong Historical Group
- Snake Valley & District Historical Society
- Tallygaroopna & District Historical Society
- Trentham & District Historical Society
- Wangaratta Historical Society
- Warrnambool & District Historical Society
- Wycheproof Historical Society

The Holsworth family has decided to take a new approach from 2024 onwards. Equity Trustees are asking rural and regional societies to apply directly to them: activephilanthropy@eqt.com.au

Equity Trustees are reaching out directly to see what assistance can be offered and ask that your society provide:

Outline of any projects that need support immediately after 2024

Outline of any projects that might be on your wishlist in the coming years

For the projects above, please include a project description, timeline, grant amount required etc.

Please note, the projects no longer need to be specific to digital or published works.



Around the societies

Prepared by volunteer Glenda Beckley on behalf of the Historical Societies Support Committee.

We welcome societies to submit an article or event details of around 50 words or email your newsletter to us and we will write up around 50 words for you around twice per year. If your Society has a logo you would like attached to your information, please send along a high-resolution image. For the June 2024 issue, please send details to office@historyvictoria.org.au by 24 April 2024.

BRIGHTON CEMETORIANS: April 19: Flag Commemoration at 10am. A further 50 flags are going to be placed. These flags commemorate the roles of our men and women during the Boer War, WWI and WWII. If you wish to attend, please ring Lois on 9558 4248. April 21: Anzac Walk at 2pm. Meet near the top gate on Hawthorn Road. On this walk we get to know just a few of those lying within the walls who are part of the Flag Project at the Brighton Cemetery. May 5: Australian Heritage Festival at 2pm, Ned Kelly Connections. There are many people interred at the Brighton General Cemetery whose lives were interwoven with Ned Kelly and on this walk we will visit their graves to tell their stories, including the Sherriff of Victoria who signed Ned's Death Warrant. May 26: Law Week. "GUILTY OR NOT" You be the Jury, at 2pm meet near the office. As with all our walks, booking is required: cost \$15 per person, members \$10 www.brightoncemetorians.org.au



BROADMEADOWS: The Museum is now open on the second Sunday of each month. We will be open between the hours of 1-4pm. Pop in and see some of the exciting changes and additions to the collection and displays. We are situated in the Broadmeadows Town Park which fronts Pearcedale Parade. We are behind the Leisure Centre and Youth Central buildings. Visit our Facebook page at facebook.com/profile.php?id=100083309853904

DONCASTER TEMPLESTOWE: Heritage Festival 2024: 'Cooks In The Kitchen'. A display of kitchen appliances and tools used by the early settlers from the mid 1800s through to the 1920s and beyond. Schramm's Cottage Museum, Muriel Green Drive, off Victoria Street, Doncaster East. Sundays 21 and 28 April, 5 and 12 May 2-5pm. Free admission

facebook.com/DoncasterTemplestoweHistoricalSociety



ESSENDON: You can visit the Court House Museum at 768-770 Mount Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds from 2-5pm, most Sundays until 15 December 2024. The Museum's current display features children's toys across the Years. You can also ask us about the district's history relating to houses, people and organisations. facebook.com/EssendonHistoricalSociety



HAMILTON: The History Centre is dedicated to the collection, preservation and cataloguing of historical records of Hamilton and the surrounding region, which are made available for research purposes. Our collection includes over 2000 local historical photographs, cemetery records, German settlement history, war records, family history records, parish maps, pastoral properties, records of Hamilton residences, shops, businesses as well as church and school records. Artefacts, memorabilia and a lovely lace collection, among other items, are on permanent display in the Rippon Room which may be viewed during opening hours or by appointment. We are at the Mechanics Institute Building, 43 Gray Street, Hamilton. Our hours are 2-5pm Sunday to Friday. We are closed on public holidays and during the Christmas to New Year and Easter periods. Saturday and other times by appointment. hamiltonhistorycentre.org.au

HEATHMONT: We see documenting the present as an important and enjoyable aspect of our local historical work. Heathmont, like many other villages,

towns and suburbs, has a shopping centre which developed around the meeting of the railway line with the main road. In our case this is Canterbury Road, where an extended shopping strip has developed. Annually we list the changes in shop use. These often reflect changes in community lifestyles and customer preferences. Video rentals and banks have gone, beauty and well-being centres have come. Also, against long sketches and photos of the strip, we stick the business card of each commercial enterprise. We have found this to be a simple and effective way of identifying and recording the present. Thirdly, because of the healthy number of cafes and restaurants in Heathmont, we collect menus. The collection of business cards and menus brings the History Group to the attention of the traders as well as providing raw material for social analysis: food costs, nature and range of customer eating and purchasing habits. We wish we had the changes, cards and menus for the shops fifty or sixty years ago and hope all the current information we are collecting will be interesting and useful to folk fifty or sixty years in the future. gerryrobinson039@gmail.com

ITHACAN: We've been working hard to build our new website, and we're thrilled to announce it is now ready for you to explore. Immerse yourself in captivating stories from the past, engage with insightful guest lectures and documentaries, and discover valuable resources for your own research. Whether you are simply intrigued by Ithacan history, have a family connection to Ithaca, are doing professional research, or tracing family history, our website is for you. ithacanhistorical.org



KILMORE: The Society will be conducting a family tree workshop on Sunday 5 May. The workshop will open to those aspiring to trace their ancestries. Topics for the workshop will include: Comparison of some of the more popular commercial and free family tree building programs:

accessing historic Victorian records on early immigrants; accessing births, deaths and marriage records; accessing historic wills and probate; DNA technology; society resources which can help in tracing family histories. Our website will soon provide details of the workshop, plus registration details. kilmorehistory.wordpress.com

KOO WEE RUP SWAMP: Our museum, Mallow House, at 325 Rossiter Road, Koo Wee Rup is open the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 1.30-4pm. facebook.com/kooweerupswhamphistory

KOROIT: The 2024 Koroit Irish Festival will be held on 26-28 April. Koroit is Australia's Most Irish Town. The theme of this year's Irish Festival is 'Irish Love'. Please look for us. We hope to have a stall selling our books and photos of buildings of yesteryear. We also take our place in the street parade. Any member is welcome to come and swell our numbers. facebook.com/koroithistoricalsociety



LEONGATHA: Our April 24 Annual Anzac lunch will be at 12pm at the Leongatha RSL with speaker Jillian Durance. Jillian has written about the Moyarra Honour Roll and School as well as Kongwak history. Her talk will be on the Kongwak Avenue of Honour. May 11 at 8pm Magic Lantern Show by John Hyett in Meeting Room One at the Memorial Hall. John is a collector and presenter of magic lantern slides and an expert in the field.

These were important forms of entertainment in days gone by. In the next few weeks, we will be setting up a display on small schools in the former Woorayl Shire. if anyone can help with photographs, memorabilia and information please contact us. We will also organise a program of speakers including former principals, teachers and students. leongathahistory.org.au

MORWELL: In March the Society launched a 'Step Back in Time Conversation Cafe'. We would love you to pop in, say hello and enjoy a cuppa and light refreshment with us. In April we will be opening up the school photo albums and in May we will reflect on a 'then and now' of the Morwell CBD. So, grab a friend, a neighbour, a family member or come in by yourself, we will have members onsite and we look

forward to welcoming you. Open 11am-2pm on Wednesday 17 April, Sunday 28 April, Wednesday 1 and 15 May and Sunday 26 May.

facebook.com/morwellhistoricalsociety

NARRE WARREN FAMILY HISTORY:

On Sunday 21 April from 10am to 2pm we will join with other groups from the Casey Cardinia Local History Reference Group and our local history librarians from Cranbourne and Pakenham in the National Trust Heritage Festival as we showcase Casey Cardinia Connections at the Senior Citizens Centre, High Street Berwick. On Saturday 18 May we will celebrate our 35th birthday and in conjunction with the National Trust Australian Heritage Festival the Lorraine Taylor Research Room will be open for free for five days Monday 13 May to Friday 17 May, 11am to 2pm. Visitors, members and past members most welcome.

<https://www.facebook.com/NarreWarrenDistrictFamilyHistoryGroup> or nwfhg.org.au

POOWONG:

Poowong is turning 150. The celebrations will kick off on Friday 19 April with an old-time dance in the Public Hall. Over the weekend local groups and organisations will be open for people to reacquaint and rekindle memories. The recently renovated Pioneer chapel will have displays of historic farm machinery, photographs and other items from the district's past, as will the public hall, Uniting Church, Mya Mya café, and local landcare group. There will also be plenty of activities for children to enjoy. facebook.com/poowongHistoricalGroup



RICHMOND BURNLEY CREMORNE:

18 April, 2.15pm: 'Richmond - a place of many firsts'. Delve into the rich history of Richmond, one of Melbourne's early suburbs, which was a place where many firsts took place including: the introduction of cable cars, the first balloon flight, its first Prime Minister, and much more. With change comes opportunity and innovation, as many firsts take off to lead the way in manufacturing and growth. To be held at Theatrette, Ardency Kennedy Place, 1 Khartoum Street, Richmond. Booking, limited to 30, on Eventbrite: Richmond - a place of many firsts. 26 May, 2.15pm. Ray Watson will discuss growing up in Burnley and present his book, *Chronicle of a Burnley boy: an autobiography*. Ray was a teacher and then an inspector for the education department. He has written an amazing number of books on family history with the key focus on Burnley and Richmond. Studio One, Barnett Way, Richmond. To RSVP for these events, email: richmondhs@optusnet.com.au or call 9427 1800 facebook.com/RichmondBurnleyHistoricalSociety



RYE: The Rye Historical Museum, 'The Old Schoolhouse', is in Collingwood Street Rye and is **open on Sundays 2-4pm**. On 22 April the General Meeting will be at St Andrew's Church Hall, 35 Lyons Street, Rye at 2pm. Speaker will be Ian McBeath on 'Stories from the Rye Cemetery'. facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064820256125

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Windows on history: the Peter Mac mystery glass



It was precisely 75 years ago, in April 1949, that ‘Peter Mac’ opened in Melbourne. Since the 1920s there had been attempts to establish services dedicated to cancer treatment and research, but more than two decades passed before the Victorian government introduced a ‘Cancer Institute Bill’ to formally create ‘one of the best and most modern institutions in the southern hemisphere, if not the world’. The Bill became law in December 1948.

The new Cancer Institute was set up in buildings recently vacated by the Queen Victoria Hospital on the corner of Little Lonsdale and William Streets, near Melbourne’s Mint. Peter MacCallum Clinic was the name given to the hospital outpatients component in recognition of this man’s forceful and determined advocacy for the establishment of the centre and his contributions to pathology and oncology, and as Chairman of the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria as well as his extensive contributions to other medical organisations. He served as a Board Member of the Foundation until his retirement in 1964 and was knighted in 1953.

Renamed the Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute in 1986, the quickly expanding facilities encompassed radiotherapy treatment, a research department, diagnostic services and clinics, with some regional services in Victoria and Tasmania. It was high time for consolidation and the Institute moved into the former St Andrew’s Hospital in East Melbourne in 1994, bringing together operations

formerly spread through fourteen different Melbourne sites.

Twenty years later, Peter Mac was preparing yet another leap forward; a consortium, STHDI and MCR architects (Silver Thomas Hanley, DesignInc and McBride Charles Ryan), was designing Peter Mac’s first purpose-built state-of-the-art-facility, the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre, on a triangular corner site at the Haymarket, just to the north of the city centre. Plans were well advanced when Peter Mac received an unexpected relic from its past: a dismantled entrance way that included a dismantled door and decorative glass panels which had been in storage at Heritage Victoria for decades. But there was no information on where it was installed originally, or who made the unusual deposit. The only clue was that it had been salvaged from ‘a Peter Mac building’.

The quality of the joinery and the glass design had convinced someone of its aesthetic value and so began a search of all those sites occupied by Peter Mac over its long history. The architectural drawings of Melbourne’s celebrated hospital architects, Stephenson & Turner, formerly Stephenson & Meldrum, at the State Library Victoria, revealed one building that was a distinct possibility, the Jessie McPherson Community Block designed in 1930-31 by Stephenson & Meldrum. Completed prior to Arthur Stephenson’s landmark tour of America, which brought his distinctive Modernist style to the fore, this earlier work reveals attention to patient and staff comfort and movement through the spaces, and opportunities to look into the world beyond the hospital. Detail plans of the

entrance way revealed a foyer with a glass-panelled entrance which matched the dimensions of the mystery entrance way.

The entrance to this building was impressive with six Sicilian marble steps to the low wide arch, angled inwards. The designer and maker of the distinctive glass remained a mystery, but the idea for its distinctive design was adapted from the plaster cornice that enhanced the entrance foyer and inner hall. The glass was a mix of machine and handmade glasses, all in the pale greens and ‘whites’ preferred by Art Deco designers at the time, however the design is unique and unlike the bevelled geometric formats popular in the 1930s. Larger pieces of glass were cut from handmade rounds that show the ‘punty’ marks at the centre, which were held together with wide lead comes to accommodate the different glass thicknesses. The rest of the glass panels were made from good quality handmade ‘Venetian’ glass, reminiscent of the skin of a pineapple, and rolled ‘Waverley’ or ‘Flemish’ glass, now almost unobtainable.

While it cannot be confirmed, it seems likely that the components of the entrance way were salvaged when the Jessie McPherson Community Block, and other buildings, were demolished around 1969 to make way for Melbourne’s new County Court building, sited on the corner of William and Lonsdale Streets. One can only wonder who convinced Heritage Victoria that the timber and glass was worthy of preservation.

Peter Mac’s art curator, Svetlana Karovich, immediately recognised the entrance way as a rare remaining link with the cancer clinic’s past. The architects were convinced too, and this single remaining architectural

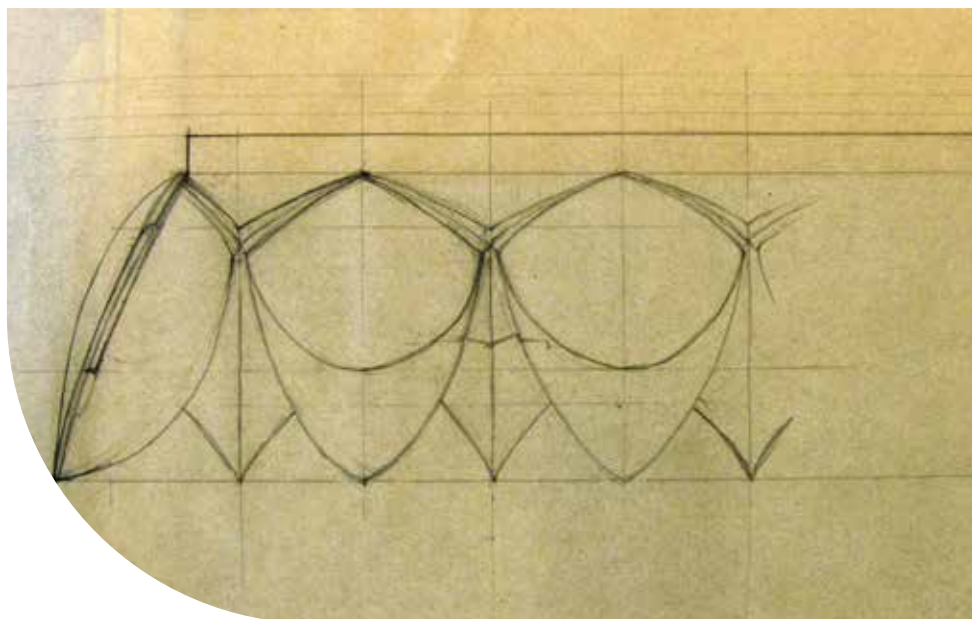


■ William Street c1960-1969
Photographer K J Halla

element connects Melbourne's hospital designers of today with that of award-winning hospital architects of the 20th century, Stephenson, Meldrum and Turner. In 2017, the STHDI and MCR consortium received both the Victorian Architecture Medal and the William Wardell Award for Public Architecture for this dynamic and fluid building that diverted so markedly from the sterile or clinical institutions of the past.

While new joinery was commissioned and the glass panels were conserved by Bruce Hutton at Almond Glassworks, before they were reinstated into the tall timber doors leading into Peter Mac's Reflection Space. Situated on the ground floor, the space provides a quiet refuge in which to sit, reflect or meditate. In the same way that the entrance way at the old William Street building welcomed people into the interior space, the new doorway provides a similar reception, with the added advantage that the green and white glass panels in the otherwise solid doors provide a gentle diffused light into the room, and shield visitors from the constant activity within this busy hospital complex.

Bronwyn Hughes



Victorian Community History Awards

On 5 February the winners of the 2023 Victorian Community History Awards were announced and it was a splendid line-up of projects from every corner of the state. We have chosen brief quotes from the winners' citations and the full citations can be read on our website:

<https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/victorian-community-history-awards/2023-victorian-community-history-awards-winners/>

Most of these projects are available for purchase through our bookshop. All the titles are hyperlinked to the bookshop when you click on the above link.

Victorian Premier's History Award

St Kilda 1841-1900: Movers and Shakers and Money-makers by Carmel McKenzie, Manneton Publishing 2023

'*St Kilda 1841-1900* is a beautifully presented and profusely illustrated social history of one of Melbourne's best-known bayside suburbs. ... This book is social history at its very best, and a worthy winner of the 2023 Victorian Premiers History Award.'

Judges' Special Prize

Frontier Magistrate: The Enigmatic Foster Fyans by John Cary, Australian Scholarly Publishing 2023

'John Cary has produced a highly readable study of Fyans, which places him within the wider context of the moving frontier of the European invasion of First Nations' country. The text is well researched and balanced; the author does not refrain from referring to the prejudices and attitudes displayed by his subject. This is a "warts and all" biography, of a superior kind.'

Collaborative Community History Award

On Bunurong Country: Art and Design in Frankston by Lisa Byrne and Dr Jane Eckett, McClelland 2023

'This excellent work has the potential to transform people's perception about the cultural heritage of greater Frankston and inspire young people living in the area.'

Local History Project Award

Houses of North and West Melbourne by Elio Sarpi, Instagram 2023

'This Instagram account is an exemplary model of how social media can be used to lift the profile of local history. The captions accompanying each carefully selected building demonstrate detailed research and an abundance of engrossing, intriguing and little-known fact.'

Small Organisation History Project Award

Precious Objects: Shared Memories of our Collective Past by Willaura Modern in association with Willaura Historical Society 2023

'The judges felt that the documentation submitted for this project conveyed the spirit of Victorian community history. The exhibition was impressively curated so that it told a multitude of narratives about a small country community and its past. The judges were impressed by the genuine commitment to community collaboration both through the exhibition and its launch.'

History Publication Award

Staging a Revolution: When Betty Rocked the Pram by Kath Kenny, Upswell 2022

'Kenny balances the complex issues and agendas of 1970s feminism against the backdrop of the independent theatre scene with all its own dramas and vulnerabilities. As well as being an important episode in Melbourne's history, this is a rich and valuable record of a significant group of women who, through theatre, were making history.'

Small History Publication Award

Flinders Cargo Shed: Heritage and Environs by Flinders and District Historical Society, 2023

'This small volume reveals the importance of this space's natural history, the early Bunurong-colonist relationships in this area of Bunurong Country, and the role of the site in industry, telecommunications and defence.'

Digital Storytelling Award

Unknown Melbourne by Julian O'Shea 2023

'*Unknown Melbourne* is a beautifully researched, produced and presented series of short-form videos shedding new light on the well-worn streets of the great city of Naarm/Melbourne.'

Community Diversity Award

Nyernila by Charlton Community House 2023

'Nyernila means to 'listen, hear, understand and know continuously'. This Djaara word reflects the efforts by

the Charlton Neighbourhood House community to understand the history of Country on which the neighbourhood house and its members reside. It is an exciting community project that will lead to ongoing collaboration.'

Oral History Award

Don't Be Too Polite Girls by Richard Lowenstein and Martie Lowenstein Documentary, 2023

'Combining vivid film footage of political and cultural movements and from home movies, audio interviews with Wendy Lowenstein, and riveting filmed extracts from many of Wendy's recordings, the documentary captures the irascible energy, determined politics and insatiable curiosity of one of Australia's oral history pioneers. It evoked the excitement of creating new ways of listening to the histories of so-called 'ordinary' Australians.'

History Interpretation Award

The Lost City of Melbourne by Gus Berger, Gusto Films, 2022

'The success of *The Lost City of Melbourne* in elevating the history of Victoria is evident through its wide-spread appeal beyond the field of professional and community history, and the responsiveness of the general public to this work.'

History Article Award

'No Mention of the Great Famine: Interpreting a Gap in Dr John Singleton's Autobiographical Narrative' by Sylvia Morrissey, *Victorian Historical Journal* 2023

'Sylvia Morrissey's analysis of the context and content of the memoir of Dr John Singleton and his wife who arrived in Victoria in 1851 is deeply researched and fluently written, offering insights that have bearing on both the past and the present.'

Victorian Community History Awards 2024 and beyond

Once again, we find ourselves mounting an advocacy campaign to convince the State Government that the VCHA and their PROV stable-mate, Local History Grants program, are worthy of funding. Indeed, we stress that it is essential that these awards and grants are funded not just in 2024 but into the future.

If you'd like to find out what you can do to shore up community history go to our website:

<https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/funding-for-victorian-community-history-awards-provs-local-history-grants/>

Victorian Community History Awards & Local History Grants Program 2024-27

These two low budget programs were saved in late 2023 following community action. In late 2023 the successful recipients of the small grants were announced. Also, the VCHA went ahead with the second highest number of entries in a quarter of a century, the awards ceremony taking place in February 2024.

However, despite this success the turnaround in the government's original decision was only for one year. We now face the same situation in 2024.

Please write to your local member and the Hon Gabrielle Williams, Minister for Government Services asking for these two small budget programs to be supported by the Community Support Fund over a four-year funding cycle. They are important to societies, to authors, publishers and your local printer and book designer. They not only affirm our identities and cultures, but stimulate local book and IT based

industries. The relevant contact details are:

- The Minister for Government Services, the Honourable Gabrielle Williams gabrielle.williams@parliament.vic.gov.au
- Details, for contacting your local member can be found by clicking on this link: [Parliament of Victoria: find a member](#) Search by electorate name or name of member and then click through and you'll find their email address.

We hope to save these two important programs.

Richard Broome AM
RHSV President



Two textbook authors lead the group's professional learning

Canberra Resources Immersion Program partnerships supporting VCE Australian History

RHSV proudly supports the teaching of Australian History at Year 12 in Victorian schools, and the support is nothing new.

By itself or in partnership with others, RHSV has spoken out against moves across time to remove Australian history from Victoria's VCE offerings when some curriculum officials have considered the subject 'too small' to sustain in a 'crowded VCE curriculum'. The reasons why Australian History finds itself too small in recent years are complex, a long time in the making, and not the focus of this article.

For two years now, RHSV has rewarded and resourced VCE Australian History teachers, some coming from very remote parts of Victoria, by providing an exciting opportunity for experienced and new teachers to network in person and enjoy inexpensive, yet quality-rich, professional learning in Canberra.

The Canberra Resources Immersion Program (CRIP) has been a partnership between RHSV and the National Capital Educational Tourism Project (NCETP), a not-for-profit entity funded by the ACT Government principally to bring school groups to Canberra's magnificent cultural institutions. Its manager, Garry Watson AM, and team, administer a variety of programs and have been doing so for 25

years. RHSV thanks them sincerely for the VCE programs they have most recently administered.

The institutions involved in the formal part of the CRIP have also been visited many times over the same period by a member of the RHSV Council. In knowing what the institutions offered and knowing many of the staff, the *VCE Australian History Study Design* was discussed with them, a document with which they were not familiar, so that the institutions might, where possible, focus as much as possible on *Study Design* requirements. The institutions enjoyed thinking about something different. And, in addition to the tailored educative experience, CRIP sought to develop the participants' resilience and skills of advocacy should VCE Australian History be considered too small at the next VCE review.

The 2024 program built on the successes of the 2023 program. All participants received materials in advance of the trip, as well as suggestions on how to make the most of their experience. The two CRIPs proved to be feasts of Australian History for past and present VCE teachers, curriculum parties, historians, textbook authors and some very lucky partners.

In 2024, 20 participants arrived in Canberra and were transported for free time at the National Gallery of Australia

(NGA): <https://nga.gov.au/> and to the National Portrait Gallery (NPG): <https://www.portrait.gov.au/>. Participants visited the permanent exhibitions, as well as temporary exhibitions of NGA's 'Emily Kam Kngwarry': <https://nga.gov.au/exhibitions/emily-kam-kngwarry/> and NPG's 'Archie 100: A Century of the Archibald Prize': <https://www.portrait.gov.au/exhibitions/archie100-2023> They were fascinated by the symbols and stories within Kngwarry's work, and identified continuities and changes in Archibald Prize winners across a century. At the welcome dinner, the lively conversations about the day included participants' discussion of what they could take from the day into the classrooms. The participants more formally introduced themselves at that dinner, identified where they taught and what they were hoping to achieve from the experience. They soon discovered people and places they knew in common, as like-minded communities do, while being introduced to education settings, often very different to their own, socio-economically and culturally. They were given further suggestions and resources, the latter including items from RHSV, on how to derive the maximum from their days.

Day two, Monday 18 January, began with a visit to the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House:

<https://moadoph.gov.au/> with a tour of the historic building, its permanent exhibition and its very clever 'Behind the Lines' annual exhibition, in this case of 2023's political cartooning: <https://moadoph.gov.au/visit/whats-on/exhibitions/behind-the-lines-the-year-in-political-cartoons>. This was followed by an afternoon at the National Archives of Australia: <https://www.naa.gov.au/> viewing the originals of significant documents mentioned in the *Australian History Study Design* and touring the permanent exhibitions, before a pre-dinner visit to the National Film and Sound Archive: <https://www.nfsa.gov.au/>. There, participants viewed its new permanent exhibition of Australian film and sound technology and ephemera, and a 1960s film, both humorous and disturbing in the eyes of 2024 viewers, promoting Australia's quality of life to potential migrants.

Tuesday morning saw participants at the National Library of Australia: <https://www.nla.gov.au/> with an overview of its collection and on-site and online services, a tour of the building then a curator-guided tour of the Treasures Gallery: <https://www.nla.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/treasures-gallery> and the temporary 'Grit and Gold: Tales of a Sporting Nation' exhibition: <https://www.nla.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/grit-gold-ales-sporting-nation>. The wealth of objects on display and colorful catalogues again captured much that was relevant to the participants.

The afternoon was spent at the Australian War Memorial: <https://www.awm.gov.au/>. A lecture on how Australians remember World War II prompted many questions, followed by a tour of highlights in several galleries and the very moving Last Post Ceremony. Here, the CRIP Australian History teachers were identified as a special visiting group and formed a commemorative line, with two teachers laying a wreath. One poignantly and emotionally wrote a tribute to teachers who have died in war:

<https://www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/last-post-ceremony>.

Tuesday evening was a special event of its own. One attendee from 2023, who had decided to visit again in 2024, had suggested to RHSV that the experience could have been enhanced overall if the practising teachers had been allowed time to discuss how they had been using the Cambridge University Press textbooks; especially as some of the teacher-authors were present: <https://www.cambridge.edu.au/education/series/Analysing-Australian-History>. She suggested further that the authors might explain the process of writing a textbook as an inspiration to others to consider the same. The conversation

was entirely participant-driven, then developed organically to address how some of the participants had been enormously successful over the years in securing grants or study tour opportunities. One teacher shared how taking up opportunities, being successful and meeting new people almost invariably led to more of the same. She concluded, "If you apply, what's the worst that can happen? You don't get it".

The Wednesday commenced at the National Museum of Australia: <https://www.nma.gov.au/> with a warm-up activity on how teachers and students might be their own historians, interpreting objects without simply reading summaries. All experiences built in free-time viewing for participants, and all facilitators invited questions.

As this article earlier asserted, RHSV has for decades supported VCE Australian History, and in different ways. It has hosted lectures, conferences and exhibitions which have incorporated key features of Year 12 documents and the work of Victoria's leading historians. Before Zoom, RHSV facilitated the comfortable mingling of teachers and historians prepared to drive into the city at the end of their days. And, in 2012, the then president of the RHSV and the then president of the History Teachers' Association of Victoria, each wrote to 'Letters to the Editor' of *The Age* following a spate of negative commentary on how boring Australian history was and how poorly it was being taught at Year 12, hence why enrolment was small. Neither president knew the other was writing until their letters were published beside each other. The pair argued that Australian History is far from boring, that only specialist-trained teachers or those with their own deep understandings and love of it should be privileged to teach it, and that better resourcing and unpacking of nuances and complexities at the senior levels would better encourage more students to select it. The wider community's responses over the next few days discouraged those who were thinking at that time to remove Australian History as an offering in Victoria.

Victoria is now the sole Australian jurisdiction offering a dedicated Australian History course at Year 12. Programs such as RHSV's and the NCETP's CRIP, along with the commitment of many others who know and value Australia's history in all its diversity, intend that the situation will continue.

Rosalie Triolo
RHSV Councillor

Fellowships and Awards of Merit: calling for nominations

At our AGM in May each year we honour those who have given service, above and beyond, to the RHSV and those who have served our affiliated member societies across the state.

There are several categories in which members and historical societies can nominate people for these awards. If you go to our website, <https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/>, and scroll down to the footer menu you'll see links to more information about the following. Also, when you visit our website you'll be able to see the names and citations for previous award recipients.

Fellows

A Fellow should have made a distinguished contribution to the history movement such as through a body of significant publications or curation of exhibitions and in some way enhanced the standing of the RHSV. Fellows should have some recognisable academic, administrative or leadership skills which have been devoted to the cause of history in Victoria.

Associate Fellows

The RHSV approved this new award in 2023. An Associate Fellow shall be a member of ten years' standing of an RHSV affiliated society who has rendered outstanding service to the member society and to the Australian history movement with special reference to the history of Victoria. Associate Fellowships are not intended to recognise normal long and faithful service to a member Society. Service should extend far beyond one historical society to a region and could in part be through networks of RHSV member societies. They should have some recognisable academic, administrative or leadership skills which have been devoted to the cause of history in Victoria.

Distinguished Service Award

The Distinguished Service Award honours people who have given distinguished service to the RHSV. Its criteria are:

- (a) an outstanding contribution to the work of RHSV
- (b) furthering one or more of the RHSV's objectives
- (c) a minimum of 8 years' service with the RHSV unless special circumstances apply

Award of Merit

To qualify for an Award of Merit, a person should have given meritorious service to an affiliated Member Society of the RHSV or to the RHSV. The service should be exceptional and go beyond the routine holding of office. The nominee should have been involved in the work of the Member Society or the RHSV for a minimum of ten years, unless special circumstances occur, in which case a minimum of eight years will suffice. In any year not more than one award normally shall be given to members of any one affiliated society.

Nominations for Fellows and Associate Fellows should reach Rosemary Cameron, the Executive Officer, by Thursday 28 March and nominations for Distinguished Service Awards and Awards of Merit should reach Rosemary by Friday 5 April 2024. Executive.officer@historyvictoria.org.au

Library collection: Wilkie, Kilner, and Co piano



The Ballarat directory (1869) compiled by John Windle, pii

An approach from a Kilner family member who wanted to look at a piano front we hold, started a wonderful chain of events which culminated in the discovery of a rare piece of carving and its restoration. As is the case with research, it also brought to life several Victorians.

Keith Kilner, a great grandson of one of the founders of Wilkie, Kilner, and Co, donated the piano to the RHSV in 1975. As you can see from the images on our front cover, the piano front has a beautifully carved timber work featuring two First Nations people, indigenous plants and animals, and a shield with various motifs flanked by a kangaroo and an emu.

The piano was entered in the Intercolonial Exhibition of Australasia 1866-67 by Wilkie, Kilner, and Co., formerly Wilkie, Webster, and Allan, of Queen Street. The event brought together exhibits to assist in the selection of items to be forwarded to Paris for the Exposition Universelle, better known in English as the 1867 Paris Exposition.

Wilkie, Kilner, and Co. had a music and piano saloon at 15 Collins Street and they imported the piano parts from the United Kingdom. In 1863 they set up a factory at 174 Queen Street so that they had space to build the pianos.

The company had entered a number of pianos, but the best, and most highly priced, were two Cottage Grand upright pianos with carved fronts, the work on one of them by wood carver Felix Terlecki. The work had taken him a year to complete.

Felix Terlecki had been born on Podolia, now Ukraine, Poland in 1829. His obituary notes that he had taken part in the Hungarian war in 1848 and 1849. He escaped Poland to Turkey with the Polish leader, Lajos Kossuth, and they then went on to Britain. Felix migrated to Australia, possibly to join his brother, Peter, and he was naturalised in 1859.

Felix was living at 191 Lygon Street in 1864 and advertising himself as a general

carver. In 1866 he and another wood carver, Pilickowski, had decorated a sideboard 'of a character so extraordinary as to merit inspection' which was also entered in the Intercolonial Exhibition by Peter McLean of Capel Street, Hotham. Felix died, age 40, at home in 1869 in comparative poverty and at least one event was held to raise money for his widow and 6 children.

Wilkie, Kilner, and Co. had wanted to change 'the prejudice which exists in so many minds against the Victorian article. Almost the whole of the material used is colonial, and representative of colonial labour. Some of our best woods have been found eminently suitable for the internal machinery, and [nothing is] more beautiful than the silken-glossy grain of the Blackwood, or finer than the musk wood used for the cases'.

'Our' piano was also exhibited at other events, the Intercolonial Exhibition in Victoria in 1872 and the Philadelphia Exhibition of 1876 where it won a medallion for best entry in its class. The RHSV has that medallion in its collection.

The front has been stored at the RHSV for almost 50 years, but not fully assessed or examined. The frame and glass were too heavy and dirty inside and out. This obscured the beauty and detail of the work. The carving itself needed repair. In 2023 we conducted an end-of-financial-year fund-raising activity for specific projects and the conservation work on the piano front was successfully funded.

The conservation removed the heavy frame and glass, cleaned the wood behind the carving and repaired and cleaned the carved pieces. For example, sections such as the leaves on the trees are held in by wooden pegs and dressmaker's pins which needed replacing. All the conservation took a couple of months, but as we received update images from the conservator, you could see the beauty of the front emerging.

To ensure the work was fully visible we chose not to restore the old frame and

glass, but replace it with a floating museum acrylic cover which ensures we can see the depth of the work. Conservation costs are high, and we could not have done this without the donation from the Boak family last year; donations make a huge difference to our work in ensuring our collection is safe. More recently, the Kilner family have also donated their family history research and digital images relating to their piano business which was eventually absorbed into Brashes in 1970.

Join us for a sparkling morning tea and celebration with the Kilner and Boak families at 10:30am on Thursday 4 April to welcome home our beautifully restored piano front.

Jillian Hiscock
Collections Manager

Heritage collections grant

The RHSV has received a substantial grant over five years to incorporate two significant heritage collections, that of Graeme Butler and Allan Willingham into our own collection.

Collections are virtually useless if they remain uncatalogued. This grant will pay for cataloguing, digitisation and image management of these collections. It will also fund two exhibitions and two short term historians-in-residence to disseminate material from the collections to wider audiences once catalogued. A book on our multicultural history will be produced as well, to broadcast further knowledge of Melbourne and Victoria's cultural heritage. The RHSV gives thanks to the Gidleigh Foundation for this important assistance.

Richard Broome AM
President RHSV

Bookshop

All our books can be browsed at our on-line bookshop:
www.historyvictoria.org.au/bookshop/

Or pop in to the RHSV to browse our new and secondhand books. You can also order via phone (03 9326 9288). Australia Post delivers books ordered on-line or you can choose Click 'n' Collect. We can also do gift vouchers and gift wrapping.



One Hell at a Time

Tracee Spiby
 PB 299pp \$34.95

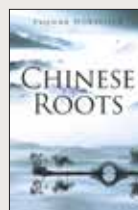
Albert Spiby, who had just turned 18 when he signed up to fight in World War I in 1915, was not a 'hero' in the traditional sense. This book reveals the humour, humanity and exasperation of Albert and his fellow diggers. The reader is privy to the transformation of Albert over four years from a naïve 18-year-old, into Alby, a war weary veteran questioning himself and what he is doing, and just wanting to survive the next hell and go home.



Look for the Red Umbrella

Geoff McArthur
 PB 209pp \$32.95

Of those who headed to the Australian Goldfields in the 1850s to find riches, not all would search for gold. With fortunes to be made in these booming populations, only those with the courage and fortitude to survive in a ruthless commercial environment would eventually succeed. *Look for the Red Umbrella* tells the story of a woman who achieved this and more, overcoming personal tragedies, family scandals and fierce opposition to make her mark as a leader in a new city dominated by men.



Chinese Roots

Yvonne Horsfield
 PB189pp \$26.95

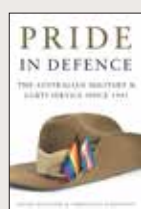
A biographical account of the well-known Ballarat Tong Way family from 1863 onward. Striving to become accepted, this account is filled with the historical impacts of a family looking to find a home while they deal with the battles of religion and the introduction of the White Australia Policy. *Chinese Roots* is an honest and at times confronting telling of the challenges faced by each generation, laced with real world impacts of Australian and global history from the 1900s to the modern day.



Port Fairy Walkabout: Volume 1

Pamela M Marriott
 PB 80pp \$17.99

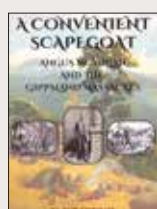
In this book, Pam Marriott examines five of Port Fairy's historic buildings and the people who worked and relaxed in them. Take an easy stroll around the central precinct of Port Fairy and enjoy the tales of the people, who once called this village home. You will be surprised and maybe shocked at the choices they made or what was forced upon them. Pam and her husband, resulting in some delightful before and after photos, restored two of the buildings mentioned in this book.



Pride in Defence: the Australian Military and LGBTI Service since 1945

Noah Riseman and Shirleene Robinson
 PB 272pp \$34.99

A depiction of the diverse ways LGBTI members have navigated life in the Australian Defence Force. Since WWII, the Australian military has undergone transformations in the way it has treated LGBTI service members: from persecuting to embracing them as valued members who enhance the Force's capabilities. *Pride in Defence* features accounts of secret romances, police surveillance and traumatic discharges. At its centre are the courageous LGBTI members who served their country in the face of systemic prejudice.



A Convenient Scapegoat: Angus McMillan and the Gippsland Massacres

Rob Christie
 PB 234pp \$49.95

Was Angus McMillan really the "Butcher of Gippsland", or was he a convenient scapegoat? McMillan's name has become associated with the massacres of Gippsland's First Nations people whose land the white settlers violently took as their own. This book, written with respect and insight, with evidenced research, and acknowledgement and understanding of the clash of characters and cultures that can lead to conflict, aims to prove that while involved, Angus McMillan was not the leader and instigator of the atrocities.



Buxton: its Past, Present, People and Places

Julia Foletta (ed.)
 HC 320pp \$66

Buxton, a small town with a population of 591, sits 100 kilometres north-east of Melbourne in the Murrindindi Shire. It has a rich history of agriculture and timber, and since its conception has become a desirable place for visitors and permanent residents alike. This unique book is a compilation from photographs and personal recollections, written and provided by the people of Buxton themselves, for the Buxton History Group. Their stories provide accurate insights into their lives, past and present.



Squizzy: the Forensics, the Man, the Vendetta

Roy Maloy
 PB 584pp \$45

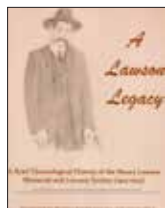
Squizzy, takes us on a 150-year journey, from his father's upbringing in Sandhurst through to the pistol fight that took his life. We learn about his adolescence as a street pickpocket, violent thug and standover man, and see his yearlong escape from the law with Ida Pender. Comparable to Al Capone and Bonnie and Clyde; this is a truly epic and spectacular work, which preserves and presents the father of modern Australian crime, prolific and iconic criminal: Squizzy Taylor.

Books received

John Schauble

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Please note: these books listed are not necessarily offered to the bookshop by authors, please check the shop catalogue.



A Lawson Legacy: a Brief Chronological History of the Henry Lawson Memorial and Literary Society (1923-2023). Kathy Andrewartha and Leigh Hay, Henry Lawson Memorial and Literary Society, Brighton, 2023, pp. i-78, ISBN 9780646877457.

Henry Lawson died in 1922. Since 1923 the Henry Lawson Memorial and Literary Society of Victoria has celebrated his life and work. Lawson was a Sydney-based writer so it is interesting that the society was founded in Footscray. The attachment to Footscray has been long lived, with a Lawson memorial erected in Footscray Hill Park. This slim volume chronicles a century of activities, including lectures, meetings, celebrations and the involvement of many celebrated Australian writers. Members of Lawson's family have also been involved over the years.



Still on Track: 100 Years of the Melbourne Women's Walking Club. Keng Chong, et al, Melbourne Women's Walking Club Inc., Melbourne, 2021, pp.1-169, ISBN 9780646848983.

This centenary history of the Melbourne Women's Walking Club celebrates not just the pioneers of women's bushwalking in Victoria but all of those who have followed in their footsteps. Organised walking has a long history in this state and, as no walking club would accept women as members in 1922, the MWWC was born of necessity. This richly illustrated addition to an earlier volume, *Uphill After Lunch* published in the 1980, records decades of walks here and abroad.



Timber, Tragedy & Toil: a History of Leeson's Logging & Cartage. Erik Eklund with Garry Leeson, Gippslandia, Traralgon, 2022, pp. 1-130, ISBN 9780646866178.

This history of Leeson's Logging and Cartage comes at a time of profound change in the Gippsland timber industry, most notably due to the end of native timber harvesting. Leeson's have been involved in plantation harvesting for many years. Garry Leeson's father, Ian, was tragically killed unloading logs at a mill in Bullumwaal in 1956, aged just 31. The family business survived this and other tragedies and has since grown and prospered in a competitive and changing industry. This is an important account of a rural industry and its transition, of innovations that have sustained it and of a family's contribution to a local community.



If the Shoe Fits. George Kyriakou, the author, Port Melbourne, 2023, pp.1-187, ISBN 9780646878010.

This engaging, chatty memoir traces the life of George Kyriakou from the Greek-Macedonian village of Ethnico to Melbourne. It is a unique story, yet in many ways typical of the European diaspora after World War II. George's family was one of many that abandoned the tumult of the old world and came to Australia looking for a new life. After life in the shoe business and establishing his own family in Australia, a search for the grave of his sister back home led George on a voyage to discover his family story dating back seven generations. This warts-and-all tale is a window into lives and experiences that speak to the diversity of Melbourne and Australia.



Aristocracy, Squatters and Presbyterians, Reverend David Kay and Caroline Hoste: A Journey Through Scotland, England, Italy, Australia and New Zealand. Robert McLaren, privately published, Leopold, 2023, pp. ii-136, ISBN 9780977554232.

David Kay, a working-class lad from Barry in Scotland, studied medicine and theology before travelling the globe as a Presbyterian minister in the 19th century. Reverend Dr Kay married into the British aristocracy, served as a minister in Europe and the Western District of Victoria before retiring to New Zealand. The family tales are many: infidelity, a lawsuit for slander, personal tragedy and the amassing of a fortune. This is, in many ways, a rich story. Among its quixotic twists was a scholarship bequest to the University of Melbourne which later kick started the career of eminent historian Dorothy Shineberg.



Flos Greig: Australia's First Woman Lawyer. Iola Mathews, Cornwalls, Melbourne, 2022, pp. 1-60, ISBN 9780646847726.

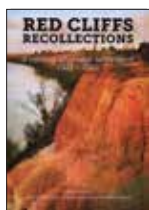
Flos Greig came from a family of formidable achievers; her sisters, Jane and Janet, were pioneering women doctors. Their father brought his family to Melbourne from Scotland largely to enable his daughters to attain the tertiary education still denied them at home. It was not all plain sailing for Flos. There was considerable opposition to women in the law: in NSW and the UK they were not admitted to practice until after World War I. To enable Flos to practice required a change to legislation in Victoria. She went on to work as a solicitor until the 1940s. Iola Mathews is Greig's great-niece. The only shortcoming of this account is its brevity.

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John Schauble

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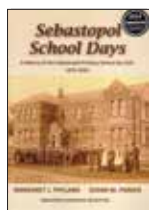
Red Cliffs Recollections: a Century of Soldier Settlement 1921-2021. Helen Petschel, Christine Cook and Matthew Cook, (compilers) Red Cliffs & District Historical Society, Red Cliffs, 2022, pp.1-194, ISBN 9780646856377.

This collection of stories, photographs, anecdotes, snippets and cartoons relates to the settlement of Red Cliffs, 16 kilometres south of Mildura. The town owes its existence to the Murray River and an ambitious plan to settle 1000 returned soldiers after World War I. The merits or otherwise of opening mallee scrub to agriculture have been explored elsewhere. At least Red Cliffs had the advantage of an established irrigation scheme to sustain it. In time, the settlement flourished to become an important centre of grape, citrus and other fruit growing. This is a co-operative community publication arranged chronologically.



Forgotten For Too Long: the Gippslanders in Lark Force 1941-42. Lyn Skillern, Leongatha and District Historical Society, Leongatha, 2022, pp. v-160, ISBN 9780959323160.

Lark Force, a military garrison force, was raised to defend Rabaul, Ambon and Timor during the early stages of the war with Japan. Overrun in 1942, the capture of 3000 men and women marked the darkest phase of the war for Australia. Local historian Lyn Skillern became interested in the fate of 79 men from Gippsland who were part of Lark Force. Thirty were among more than 1000 POWs killed when the *Montevideo Maru* was torpedoed by a US submarine on 1 July 1942. Eleven died in massacres around Rabaul. Fewer than 30 of the Gippslanders made it home. This is a well-researched and sobering memorial.



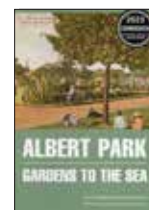
Sebastapol School Days. Margaret J. Phyland and Susan M. Parker, Sebastapol Historical Society Inc., Sebastapol, 2023, pp. 1-206, ISBN 9780645796308.

Sebastapol School No.1167 has served the community on the southern edge of Ballarat for just over 150 years. There were schools there before, under the denominational and common school systems, but such was the local demand for secular and free education that the new state school was welcomed. A handsome new brick school was among the first to be built after the 1872 Education Act with more than 1000 students attending. Interspersed with the recollections of former pupils, this thorough history traces the story of the school. Comprehensively illustrated, it is an excellent example of the genre. Commended in the 2023 Victorian Community History Awards.



Cool Change: The History of Venus Bay and the Surf Life Saving Club. Craig Watson, the author, Venus Bay, 2022, pp. 1-160, ISBN 9780646845807.

Venus Bay is among Victoria's favourite coastal destinations. This history of its surf life saving club captures much of the pull of the coastline there, beautiful but also fraught with danger. This attractive book is richly illustrated. The text is chatty, and sometimes irreverent. The first third of the book is devoted to this task and it captures the key events of the locale dating back to the First Nations people, custodians of the land and sea. But at its heart is the story of the club, its volunteers and the 12,000 rescues and 25,000 preventative actions performed since it was founded in 1961.



Albert Park: Gardens to the Sea. Gary C.B. Poore (ed.), Middle Park History Group Inc., Middle Park, 2022, pp.iii-228, ISBN 9780987224132.

This fourth publication from the Middle Park History Group is a delightful collection of essays which looks, for the first time, at the history of the locality through the prisms of landscape, environment, First Nations people, planning and design. There is a particular focus on the iconic St Vincent Place, the Victorian residential heart of the suburb, designed in the 1850s and heavily influenced by similar developments in England. It has become over time a place of significant heritage importance, not just locally but nationally. The St Vincent gardens, the houses, and the early inhabitants are all examined in detail. Commended in the 2023 Victorian Community History Awards.



The Lancefield Football Club 1873-2023. Fay Woodhouse (ed.), Lancefield Football Netball; Club and Romsey & Lancefield Districts Historical Society Inc., Lancefield, 2023, pp.1-240, ISBN 9780646876238.

Local football clubs are integral to many rural Victorian communities. The Lancefield club and the local historical society have pooled talents to produce this very professional account of the club's 150 years, with play beginning in the district just 15 years after regular games began in Melbourne. The Tigers, as they became in the 1920s, have won 22 premierships since the 1880s and been runners up 31 times. This beautifully produced book will be of interest to those with a stake in the club's history and to others interested in the district more broadly.